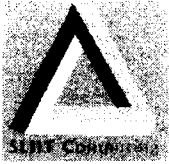


BIT No:



Bachelor of Information Technology

**Final Examination
Year 1, Semester 1, 2006**

**Business English & Communication Skills
(N103)**

11 May, 2006

Duration: 3 Hours

(Time. 9.00 a.m. – 12 noon)

For Examiner use
only.

Q1

Q2

Q3

Q4

Q5

Q6

Q7

Q8

TOTAL

Instructions to Candidates

- Answer **ALL** questions on this paper itself.
- Use the given space for rough work.
- Do not attach any other sheets.
- Use the given time wisely.

Read the text given below. Select from within the brackets the most suitable meaning for each highlighted expression to suit the text and underline it. (09 marks)

A computer is only a machine - a machine designed **to manipulate** and generate information. That is what computers do, and, therefore, they have an agenda and an **unmistakable** message.

The message is that through more and more information, more conveniently packaged, more **swiftly** delivered, we will find solutions to our problems. And so all the brilliant young men and women, believing this, create **ingenious** things for the computer to do, hoping that in this way, we will become wiser and more decent and more noble. And who can blame them? By becoming masters of this wondrous technology, they will acquire **prestige** and power and some will even become famous. In a world populated by people who believe that through more and more information, paradise is attainable, the computer scientist is king. But I maintain that all of this is a monumental and dangerous waste of human talent and energy. Imagine what might be accomplished if this talent and energy were turned to philosophy, to theology, to the arts, to imaginative literature or to education? Who knows what we could learn from such people - perhaps why there are wars, and hunger, and homelessness and mental illness and anger.

As things stand now, the geniuses of computer technology will give us Star Wars, and tell us that is the answer to nuclear war. They will give us artificial intelligence, and tell us that this is the way to self-knowledge. They will give us **instantaneous** global communication, and tell us this is the way to **mutual** understanding. They will give us Virtual Reality and tell us this is the answer to spiritual poverty.

However, there is no escape for us. The choice before us is as difficult as it has always been, and we solve nothing fundamental by **cloaking** ourselves in technological glory.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. to manipulate | work with facts, <u>work with data</u> , work with figures |
| 2. unmistakable | <u>easily understood</u> , with no mistake, full of mistakes |
| 3. swiftly | carefully, easily, <u>quickly</u> |
| 4. ingenious | <u>original</u> , novel, difficult |
| 5. prestige | <u>respect</u> , success, position |
| 6. As things stand now | in the future, very soon, <u>right now</u> |
| 7. instantaneous | delayed, slow, <u>immediate</u> |
| 8. mutual | <u>common</u> , general, overall |
| 9. cloaking | brushing, limiting, <u>covering</u> |

10. What message does the speaker give us in the last paragraph of the text? Write your answer in a paragraph of about 65 words. (10 marks)

Rough work only.

The memo from the Floor Manager is about:

- i use of the stairway.
- ii unauthorized visitors.
- iii students on the stairway.

c.

To : Employees in Research and Development Team

From : Project Manager

Topic : New Flexible-Time Policy

All employees can now enjoy the New Flexible Time Policy.

To be on the plan employees **must agree** to:

- o work 40 hours a week (except normal vacation time, sick leave, or holiday weeks)
- o work a minimum of 4 days a week
- o work no more than 12 hours a day
- o arrive at work no later than 9:30 a.m.
- o leave work no earlier than 3:30 p.m. (unless after completing 40 hours that week)

Employees may schedule work time as long as it fits the above criteria and those who wish to sign up for this new flexible time scheduling must declare their work hours during the previous week. The supervisor will take responsibility for recording each employee's work schedule.

Employees who wish to try this new plan must stay on it for three months before returning to the current policy.

According to this memo employees agreeing to flexible time schedules:

- a. may inform the supervisor beforehand.
- b. can get back to former policy as they wish.
- c. are not allowed to work for over 12 hours each day.

Test 3

10 marks

Each blank in the text below MUST be filled by the second half of a word. Complete each word to make a meaningful paragraph. There is one dash (-) for each missing letter.

Today, the knowledge agenda is worldwide, goes into every function and every industry, and has implications for industrialized and developing nations alike. It has evolved well beyond the borders of a nation; it has become a list of things for international collaboration. Today there is no such thing as a non-knowledge worker. The knowledge of all individuals is impossible. Knowledge is what makes companies unite even within the same industry. We have more to gain by building upon the strengths of one another as individuals.

Test 4**05 marks**

Given below is part of a conversation between a visitor and a receptionist at an exhibition on the Beauties of Nature. Using the given word construct the question to make the conversation meaningful.

- Receptionist : Welcome to the exhibition, Sir!
Can?
- Visitor : Why not? Please direct me to the photographs section.
- Recep.. : May.....?
- Visitor : Oh no, I can find my way. Just tell me where it is.
- Recep : Are there?
- Visitor : Oh yes. Birds, waterfalls and wild flowers of Sri Lanka
- Recep : And what?
- Visitor : The birds, of course.
- Recep : Wouldn't you?
- Visitor : Not at all. The order doesn't matter.
- Recep : Our stalls are such, Sir. Flowers first, birds second and
- Visitor : Just direct me to the stalls and thank you for the information.

Test 5**10 marks**

Complete the paragraph using words from the list given below. Use each phrase once only.

Thanks to the computer, my father has finally overcome his phone allergy. A couple of months ago, I heard Dad's gruff voice -----, "Why didn't mum answer?" I asked. "She's with the computer. I'm the receptionist now", he replied. Dad and I have had more phone conversations ----- than we've had in -----.

----- of being her child, I was finally the one with the knowledge to share with mum. But even now, I realize that she continues to teach me. I'm learning that no matter how old you are, ----- is capable of anything. I'm learning that with the great Scrabble game of life determination is just another way to spell success.

during the last two months, a willing spirit, when I called, After a lifetime, the previous twenty years,

Test 6**20 marks**

You are to address an audience on the topic ‘Why Many IT/IS Projects Fail’ and collected the following information for your speech. Prepare your speech for 1 minute using about 100 words. Follow introduction, body and conclusion format in your speech.

Many professionals, academics and analysts have addressed the issue of failed projects but still many projects fail. IT and IS projects are complex by nature, and each is unique. It is very difficult to plan with complete certainty something that has never before. 10 common factors contributing to real IT project failures are listed below.

Factors	%
Time/resource estimate unrealistic	75
Objectives not clearly defined or measurable	71
Project manager : poor communication skills	64
Objectives changed during project	61
Project manager : poor leadership skills	59
Senior management : not showing strong support	56
Stakeholders : not taking ownership of the project	56
Role and responsibilities of the project team not defined	54
Resources not defined/made available at start	54
Project team : did not work as a team	53

Rough work only.

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Test 7

10 marks

Read the text below and complete the answers that follow.

The dawn of digital communication networks has brought about many changes in economic activities. It was only a few decades ago, that each currency note was backed by its value in gold – as an assurance of its value in trade. This is no longer the case and currency has value simply because we all perceive it as ‘valuable’. Now it is possible to store monetary value as bits of data over a computer network across countries. While this has enabled fast and efficient transactions to take place across the globe, it has further blurred our perception of what money or currency is and the measurement of its trade value has become more complex and difficult.

On the other hand, the global economy has come to depend on computers and their networks. The Internet itself is virtually indestructible because of its Web-like structure which links its nodes with each other through multiple redundant pathways, and offers reliable connectivity but the problem lies with the fact that businesses seem to have been woven up with computers and networks. Those of us who still remember the chaos that was caused by the “millennium bug” would bear testimony to the fact that the level of reliance that even third world economies such as ours had on technology was quite significant. This is heightened by the fact that the millennium bug only threatened computers that were decades old and even then it was not perceived as a threat to home PC users, but mostly to large and medium scale businesses. To consider the effect that an extremely powerful computer virus could have on the global economy is quite disturbing.

Computers were first identified for their potential as business accounting tools and as databases. They have come a long way since then to value change management services. Perhaps the real breakthrough was their adaptation as management information tools leading up to their use being realized as expert systems, not only by businessmen, but by many other professionals as well.

- a. According to the text, currency, nowadays,
 - i. has lost its value.
 - ii maintains its value.
 - iii has its value in gold.
- b. The business world now.....
 - i destroying the Internet.
 - ii depends on computers and networks.
 - iii can cause chaos with the use of computers.
- c. The "millennium bug" was not a threat to
 - i. computers and networks.
 - ii large and medium businesses.
 - iii computers used in homes.
- d. 'Come a long way' as given in the last paragraph means.....
 - i. open to the World Wide Web.
 - ii are better used as accounting tools and databases.
 - iii have developed themselves to provide better services.

Test 8

20 marks

Read the text below and write a summary of it in about 125 words.

Cybernetics

Cybernetics is the field of study about a living entity, which is part natural and part synthetic. Cybernetics is the one field of study, which promises to deliver to humans a better form of existence free from pain, suffering and disease.

Although humans achieved civilization several centuries ago and have been growing technologically ever since, the fact remains that humans are very fragile. We are easy prey to natural hazards such as heat, cold, bacteria, viruses and ageing. We cannot live without food for more than sixty days, without water for more than three days and without oxygen for any more than a few minutes. All in all our life heavily depends on the environment that surrounds us. Cybernetics attempts to change all this. It promises a world free from all such problems.

Cyborgs, or the products from cybernetics are made up of artificial synthetic parts. Their interaction with the external world is completely different from ours. Able to control emotions and feelings such as fear and tension, they would have telescopic vision, which would let them see great distances. Human life always evolved around "work". In the world of 'Cyborgs' there is no need for work since all Cyborgs will have life support systems. This would give rise to an environment, which is free from needs for survival, because survival is ensured. So, Cyborg will be of only thought and experiences. Through Cybernetics, all minds of Cyborgs can be linked. This will pave the way to a collective combination of thought.

The question asked by many, then, is what Cybernetics and Cyborgs will do to humanity from a humanitarian's point of view. Humans have distanced themselves from nature and most of us live in large metropolitan cities and live a mechanical form of life. The step towards Cybernetics will cut off the mere link we have left with nature. Is this good? Will humans cease being humans? Will they tend to be more machine than man? What will happen to feeling such as love and care? These are only a few questions waiting to be answered. Only time and experience will have the answers.

But one thing is sure. Whether we like it or not, we are heading towards a world of Cyborgs. The question is, are we ready to accept it?

Rough work only.

[illegible]