Coursework commentary 2017–2018

CO3353 Software engineering project management

Coursework assignment 2

General remarks

This coursework assignment consisted of three questions. Questions 1 and 3 carried an equal number of marks whereas question 2 carried less weight. Students are encouraged to take note of the apportionment of marks when undertaking assignments and determining their answers.

As in Coursework assignment 1, a major drawback in answering these questions was that students did not adhere to the recommended length of the assignment and that they failed to provide appropriate citations within the text. Many students simply provided a bibliography at the end of the assignment.

Overall, however, answers to this coursework were in general rather disappointing.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Many students chose in answering this question to relate it to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This was a good approach. Where students used this hierarchy, it was necessary however to ensure that for each of the stages in the hierarchy they were clear on how the individuals working in their team might be motivated – giving examples of what types of reward structures might be put in place to move them from one level to the next. Where students were specific about the types of reward that would be appropriate, they scored good marks. Some excellent answers also added a few short lines at the end of their discussion on the limitations and criticisms of using Maslow's theory that are widely cited in the literature.

Question 2

In general, this question was answered well. Students had taken the trouble to do book research and find a wealth of material on the appropriateness of individual versus team based payment systems. Many students correctly highlighted the importance of the context in determining which form of payment is the most appropriate. Some very good answers also provided examples of where organisations have followed each of these strategies. In some answers students had created a table of the two types of reward systems which was also appropriate in answering this question.

Question 3

This was a straightforward question and the answers to it were somewhat disappointing. Many students did not structure their answer to this question very well. Where students clearly identified the source of resistance to the change and then discussed specific measures as to how this specific source of resistance might be met, they scored well on this question. Many of the

answers tended to be vague and colloquial relying on the student's own opinion rather than on any well-researched and academic sources. This is not what was required. Good answers provided well-researched and cited examples in their answers.