
Coursework commentaries 2016–17

CO3318 Information Systems Management – Coursework assignments 1

General remarks

The overall standard of coursework this year was satisfactory. Students had taken on board many of the suggestions that had been made in previous coursework commentaries, in particular those comments pertaining to the way in which the report should be structured. Most students included an introduction to their assignment, then continued on to the body of the report and a conclusion.

However, there are still a number of issues that need to be addressed. First and foremost, students are reminded to put the word count at the top of their assignment. They are also encouraged to pay attention to the presentation of their work. In some instances, the appearance of the assignment was very sloppy.

There has been clear improvement in citation and referencing, but in some cases further attention needs to be paid to doing this correctly. You should be clear on the difference between a bibliography and a reference list – the latter is for sources you have used directly, and full details are required. You should also be aware of the importance of putting citations within the body of the text of the assignment. It is important that you acknowledge sources within the text for both paraphrase and quotation. Guidance can be found in the Study Support area on the VLE.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Good answers to this question provided an introductory paragraph defining what is meant by Knowledge Management Systems. They then went on to discuss a range of different Knowledge Management Systems available to organisations. Many of the descriptions of these were drawn directly from textbooks or other sources. You should aim to demonstrate your understanding by writing your own account, and drawing on a number of sources will give you more to build on. It may be useful to look at points of agreement/divergence. In some very good answers students referred more widely to other sources in addition to those given in the textbooks, and in particular sometimes included helpful examples. Where students applied this knowledge directly to the particular scenario of Malso, again demonstrating their understanding, they gained marks.

Question 2

This was a straightforward question and most candidates answered it well. In this instance, it was interesting that so many students used a wide range of sources to support their answer. In particular, good answers not only described the importance of aligning the Business and Information Systems strategy but also suggested criteria by which the success of this might be measured. Many students referred correctly to frameworks such as Top Down, Critical

Success Factor and Scenario Planning which would facilitate the alignment process. Another good reference was to the Strategic Alignment Model which provides a methodology specifically aimed at achieving alignment between the organisation and its information technology.

In some instances, students included too much information that was not directly relevant to answering the question. For example, while reference to Porter's Five Forces Model of Industry Competition is interesting, it is unnecessary to describe it in detail in answering this question.

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CO3318 Information Systems Management – Coursework assignments 2

General remarks

The general comments stated above in relation to coursework 1 also apply to coursework 2.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

In general, this question was well answered. Many students wrote an introductory paragraph setting out the major issues which they then discussed in the remainder of their answer. It should include a definition of what is meant by biometrics.

Good answers provided a description of biometric technologies and in some instances gave examples of real-life cases where these technologies had been used. There was no need to provide images of any or many of these technologies. (Incidentally, images, tables, etc. must also be properly cited).

The question asks for a critical assessment of these technologies. Where students only discussed the advantages of biometrics for security they did not receive as many marks as they would have done had they also discussed the limitations of these technologies. Some excellent answers gave real life examples where organisations had gained advantages or disadvantages from implementing biometrics.

Question 2

This was a broad question offering students the opportunity to approach it from a number of different perspectives.

Some students spoke about obvious difficulties for example, in communications, arising out of the scenario described and provided a range of ways in which the problems might be addressed.

Good answers referred to published materials, providing citations within the text to indicate where they were drawing the information from. Such acknowledgement provides support for the assertions that they were making.