Databases Coursework Design notes

**Reasons for using the types:**

* **Name –** Grouping the title, first name and surname together just to make the design much nicer, it makes sense to group these 3 values together and it makes for a very robust type that can be reused over and over again and inherited from in many situations.
* **Job –** Once again, splitting up the design into more types to make it much more readable, and these 4 values make sense to be together. This type will be used for the final employee type, which will make the employee type look much cleaner and ease up on the overall design of the system.
* **Address –** Used for multiple other types, such as Branch and Person. This makes the system way more readable and robust as this type is used twice in the system and due to 2 other types inheriting from person, it is actually 4 types that use address. This type is definitely the one that is used the most and it makes other types more organised and results in less redundant data.
* **Phone -**  Phone is an interesting type as it has a value for the home number and a nested table for mobile numbers. I decided to group these 2 into a type because this will also make the system more concise and this type can be reused for Branch and both customer and employee. A nested table was used so that the types that use this will not have to worry about running out of space for mobile numbers and honestly, some people have multiple mobile phones in real life and it would be nice to design the system in such a way that those people will be allowed to have all their mobile phone number sin while other people who have just 1 mobile phone number won’t be hindered by this.
* **Person –** This type is honestly the backbone of the Customer and Employee types. This contains all the necessary values to be used in those 2 types. I have decided to make this type to use inheritance in the system to reduce the amount of redundant variables in the design. This makes the design look less cluttered. pID will be renamed by the child types since they will be the primary keys of the types so it would be nice to have unique names as well.
* **Customer –** It inherits from the Person type and renames the pID to custID. This type will be used as the Customer table.
* **Employee -**  This type inherits from Person and renames pID to empID. It also will have a reference inside itself to have supervisorID. This will allow me to easily access the employee that is the supervisor and use it for many purposes. This type also has 3 methods and the uses of those 3 will be explained later.
* **Branch -**  Used as branch table.
* **CustomerAccount -**  Used as CustomerAccount table. Links Account and Customer together using references.
* **Account -**

**Using nested tables over varrays** – Varrays are ordered lists which are stored in line (in the table itself). I decided to use nested tables over varrays because nested tables have many more benefits in this problem. One reason I decided to pick nested tables over varrays is that we can easily extend a nested table, which means that we can have an infinite number of phone numbers for customers and employees, whereas varrays are limited by an upper bound. Another reason why I decided to pick nested tables over arrays is the fact that when you want to access an element in a varray, you have to retrieve all of the elements in the varray because a varray is stored as a single object, which is not the case in a nested table, where you can easily access a single element in a nested table.

**Using 3 methods to find the award for employee –** I decided to use 3 different methods to find the award that each employee will receive, one will calculate how long they have worked there for, another one will count how many people they have supervised and the final one will make use of the previous 2 and decide which award the employee is legible to receive. This approach makes the design much more readable and I believe makes it more modular as well so if you ever need the two first functions ever again, you can just reuse them.