

# **Applied Information Technology – Examination strategies**

In the weeks before the exam, attempt as many questions as possible from past papers and revision questions that can be found on the Exam Revision page of the [www.appliedinformationtechnology.info](http://www.appliedinformationtechnology.info) website and also in the textbook, *Discovering Computers*. In addition strategies listed below should prepare you to make efficient use of your time in the examination.

## **Be organised before the start of the examination**

Have the necessary equipment (pens, pencils, eraser, ruler, shapes template, water) available and read the front cover instructions quickly. A sample front cover will be available from your IT teacher before the examination date.

## **Adding value to your reading time**

When you are reading the questions you should do so actively. This means that as you read, you should be making connections between the words on the page and the knowledge you have gained from the study of the course. All of the information provided in the questions has a purpose and there will be some words that should make bells ring very loudly and focus your thinking in a particular area. For instance, if you read that there are many errors currently being made in data entry for an information system, you might start to think about validation procedures. Another example might be the mention of security concerns relating to accessing an organisation's network, in which case you should immediately think about the adequacy of login and password procedures.

Reading time gives you the opportunity to get the feel of the examination paper, and hopefully draw confidence that you will be able to handle most of the responses with relative ease. You may think about the order in which you will attempt questions, or more likely, identify ones that may cause some problems and that you may possibly skip until the end of the examination.

If you have time you may wish to spend some moments at the end of reading time focussing on one of the longer response questions. You may formulate in your mind key elements of your response, and immediately begin this question when writing time is declared. Hopefully the ideas will be fresh and you may make a flying start to one of the harder questions

## **Make sure you know the time allowed for each answer**

- The number of questions on the paper is not important. They can vary greatly in length and marks.
- The multiple choice section is worth 20 marks and should take you about 15 minutes. The short answer section is worth 30 marks and should take you 30 minutes. The extended answer section is worth 50 marks so allow 50 minutes. You are then left with 85 minutes to complete the production section.
- Continually check the clock. Make sure you do not run overtime on any question.
- Try to gain some time by completing some questions (for example short answer responses) in less time than calculated from the marks allocated. Use this time at the end of the paper to check through your answers.
- When your time for a particular question is up, leave it and go on with the next question. You can always come back to an unfinished question if you have any time remaining at the end of the paper.
- You will often get a fresh inspiration when you go back to a question. Answering the rest of the paper will help to consolidate your understanding and may open your mind to an earlier problem.

## **Answer Every Question**

- It is important to have a go at every question
- Marks are not deducted for incorrect responses
- The order in which you attempt questions is not important
- You can skip a question and the space left on the paper will be your prompt to come back and answer the question later. It is a good idea to first attempt the questions you feel most confident about.

## **Depth of your answer**

- Read the question stem carefully taking particular note of the verb.
- If the verb specifies that you are to list, state, name, select or provide an example, then the response is a relatively short one. If the verb is describe, explain, justify or discuss, then a longer response is required.
- Generally, work on the notion that one thought equals one mark. If a question is worth three marks, then it is likely that you are expected to make three valid points.
- The space provided on the examination paper for your response gives a good indication of how much you are expected to write. If several lines are drawn then you should be writing more than one phrase or dot point.

## **Format of your answers**

- Answers may be written in point form. This is ideal for list, state, and indicate type questions.
- Be very careful when you are required to explain or describe a situation or issue. While you can respond to these in point form, there is a tendency not to provide a full answer. A paragraph response is more likely to provide the required explanation or description.
- In your answer refer to specific details from the case study.
- Do not repeat the question in your answer. This is a waste of time and space. Besides the marker will be reading several hundred answers to the same question and will not need to be reminded what the question is!
- Some responses may require you to draw diagrams, so use rulers or shape templates to improve the quality of your answer.
- If you wish to change any part of your answer, make sure you clearly cross out the material you no longer wish to be assessed.
- Your handwriting must be legible. If the marker cannot read what you have written, they cannot give you the marks. Take the time to ensure your work can be read.

## **Final words of advice**

Try to relax in the examination. The examiner is not going to try and trick you. If you have been working consistently throughout the year, you should have a good knowledge base for the examination.

Be confident in your own abilities.