

Description of ict systems essay sample



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Introduction

Organisations today rely on ICT systems that are efficient and effective. ICT is used to communicate with suppliers and customers, manage finance and stock and to market products and services successfully.

In this assignment I am going to show the different in this assignment I am going to write about two organisations. One is about Hornsey School for girls and the second is a work experience placement in which I will be working in the Islington Council in the parking services and development management. Both of these organisations use ICT in many different ways which helps run the organisations.

Hornsey School for girls

Hornsey School for girls has 1450 students on roll. The number of planned admissions is 243. The school has a main purpose which is to teach over 1450 students including post 16 students which are over the age of sixteen. There are many departments in the school which use ICT including all subject areas for instance maths, English, science, drama, music, history, geography, dance, PE, etc. but the main areas are the library ICT rooms and also other classrooms where tutors and subject teacher use the computers for taking the register and also other important systems. The school also has partnerships with other schools such as Highgate wood school which are both specialist in performing arts. The school is very multicultural; it has many students from different races and religious backgrounds.

Hornsey School uses ICT in three different ways. I am going to compare each way and write about their different features and why they are a main importance in the school and how they help including their advantages and disadvantages.

There are three systems that are used with ICT in Hornsey School for girls. The three of the ICT systems used in Hornsey School for Girls is the library software, SIMS and finance software.

Alice library software

Sandra Yusuf is the office manager for Hornsey School for girls. She is responsible for the line management of eight members of staff within the admin team, she also is responsible for the efficient running of the school office. The admin team provides high quality admin support through out the school. She uses various systems to carry out her role as Office Manager, which include email, fax, telephone, Sims system and MS Office package. The school office communicates with the staff through email and the telephone voice mail system. The staff does not have to leave their learning areas to come down to the main office. The admin staff can also transfer data and documents throughout the school using the shared staff areas on the computer system.

The Hornsey school library contains 15, 000 books and 1, 600 clients within the library.

The hardware used in the system are computers, printers, fax machine, photocopier, frankin machine and weighing scales, telephone system, electronic diary, label printer.

Software used in the system are word, excel, publisher, PowerPoint, Sims, Assessment Manager, Electronic diary, Internet and email. They are used to produce letters, memos, newsletters, bulletins, presentations, spreadsheets, and the internet is used for ordering goods and looking up information.

Expectations of the library

There are many expectations at the library's ICT system for example who has what book, When the books are due back, Whether a book is available or on loan or not available, reserving the book for another client, Finding a book by name, Finding a book by author and finding a book by subject. These are all important data and need to be kept correct and the system is easy to update this information when needed to be edited. A Microsoft program that would be used for these prices of data would me Microsoft publisher because it would be easy to make tables, queries, reports etc. to hold all this information.

Other expectations from the library is to alert when a client has reached a maximum limit, Printing out letters to send to clients with overdue books, creating reports on clients borrowing history and also creating reports on most popular loans. Microsoft publisher would be used to create these reports for the overdue books, the clients borrowing history etc.

How ICT is used in the system

In the library they use ICT to function effectively using barcode, User code, database, report function and mail merge these functions are important in the library and are used regularly on a day to day basis.

The Alice software is user friendly; it is preformatted to accept data, and it is compatible with SIMS there are several programs combined, programs such as the circulation, Enquiry, adding new clients and adding new books. This shows its importance and reliability for the library. The system also is connected with SIMs, which makes it even more reliable and efficient. It helps in adding new clients and adding new books which is useful for the librarians therefore there isn't a lot of paper work and mess and this organizing is really helpful so that it is easy to edit and delete specific information on the system.

It has a huge amount of reliability because the system contains all the important information that is needed for the library and if that information is to be lost it would be a huge problem because the system is greatly needed to check on all pupils book takings and also if they are late or overdue in returning the book they have borrowed.

Cost:

The Alice Library system for the softlink help line for technical support provides technical help for the staff and may be regularly used this comes at an expense.

Also the costs for the software are around £1800, 00.

Advantages and disadvantages:

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There are many advantages and disadvantages for the Alice library software some of the examples are as follows:

The advantages of the Alice Library system are that it has a good speed and it is accurate. The scanners are quick way of inputting data. And the system is also secure for using passwords. Also it is easy to use.

Some Disadvantages in the system are that it can't import data into other software, also there are massive problems which occur while updating client lists this will slow down the work and it could take longer because of the problems which slow down purposes.

Robustness

The Alice software system is a very stable system. If a problem occurs and the machines become problematic then they are replaced.

Cost

The SIMs uses phone support at i½10, 000 each year. The technical support costs around i½50, 000 – i½60, 000 per year. The replacement of machines if needed is every 2 years at the cost of i½1000 each.

How information is verified

Admin staff from Sims prints the student's information and the data sheets are sent home to parents yearly, which verifies the address and other contact information. The admin staff input the changes into student files on the system and the paper copy is filed in the student files in the school office. The staff and the parents are expected to inform the school of

changes. All documents are produced by the school office are proof read for errors also the person who originally writes the document proof reads and double checks typing.

Reliability

There are very few breakdowns, however the school has several ICT support staff that provide excellent ICT support and the system is backed up every evening. There are a set of back up tapes that are kept by the office manager in case of emergencies which might occur in the system.

The financial administration system

The financial administration in Hornsey School for girls has an important role in the Hornsey school ICT system. The financial responsibility is on school bursar is Brida Donoghue.

Features with the uses of ICT

The features of the use of ICT are the RM cash accounts which are used on a day to day financial administration. The system specialises in accounting packages, also setting up and amending budget accounts, it also allocates budgets also the system records income and expenditure. This does a lot of difficult sums for the accounts and has to do it all correctly for the system to be successful the system can process orders, invoices and petty cash claims. It also can print cheques automatically. These features are a huge help to the financial administration and how everything in the system functions. It is very helpful in organising the way the invoices, cash claims and also in printing the cheques automatically which saves time and is simple and quick.

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Emailing system

The emailing system is increasingly being used for general commutation also budget preparation. It can also be used for problem solving to solve many problems that may occur in the system. This solves many technical problems in which may occur in the system.

The emailing program can also create cash flow spreadsheets to have all the data of something specific in the schools system. These spreadsheets keep all the data of specific data which is used in the schools system. The impacts on working practice are that the administration is faster than the manual process. The same number of staff can perform more tasks in the same time span. Also the documents can be shared and reused and this saves time so that the procedure of retyping a similar document is not needed. There are also faster reporting methods which also save time instead of going through long procedures. Also there are faster communications by there being speedier decisions. Home, medical, attendance, school and examination assessments and results this holds all the data and saves time for the school to access the student's information. This shows its importance in its organisation for keeping all the data of the students correctly in a safe way.

Advantages and disadvantages in the RM cash accounts

Advantages in the system are that the RM cash accounts are faster than the manual bookkeeping methods. Other advantages of the RM cash accounts system are that using the system it is easier to handle large amounts of accounts. Also at a glance it would show the overview of accounts. Using the system also means that there is less paperwork which is very helpful in

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organisation. The system can also be used by several people at once this saves a huge amount of time which makes it all a lot quicker. The system also uses audit trails which make it easier tracking and this also saves time while making it easier. The system also warns of overspending which is a huge amount of help because it warns them if they are overspending and they are informed automatically through the system. The system can also do automatically cheque printing and is relied on supplying one cheque per supplier.

There are very few Disadvantages that occur with the system, unfortunately disadvantages do occur with the system for instance when the network goes down there is no access to the system. Also the audit trails can make few human errors which make it sometimes unreliable. Another disadvantage of the system is that the reporting system is very basic.

Advantages and disadvantages in the emailing system

There are many advantages within using the emailing in the financial system, for instance the emailing system is faster than the postal system. The emailing also allows for easy amendment and return of documents this is helpful because so the documents can be amended and then returns the document. The emailing system is also an easy method of transferring documents or data files and it also saves paper which saves a huge amount of money.

Disadvantages of using the emailing system are that it is not possible to intercept it once it has gone so no amends can be made to it after it is sent and it isn't possible to get back it would go straight to whom it was sent to.

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Also the documents can get corrupted if email settings are not right. The emailing system can also increase paper usage if the documents are needed to be printed off. Another disadvantage of the emailing system are that it can introduce a virus easily in some cases however sometimes you would get warned if an email contains an virus.

The impact on working practice:

The system impacts on the working practice are that the administration is faster than the manual process. Also the working practice can use the same number off staff however perform more tasks in the same time span. Using the system is helpful because documents can be shared and reused this saves time. Other ways in which time is saved is that there are faster reporting methods. There are also faster commutations which means that there are speedier decisions which speed up the process and saves time. The system also has increased efficiency and effectiveness.

The costs:

The costs of the hardware are £800 x 13 Admin and finance staff. It can be replaced on a three year cycle or even sooner if necessary. There are also training in ICT packages that are needed and they usually cost for the hardware at around £800 x 13 for Admin and Finance staff. They are also replaced on three year cycle or sooner if necessary which would cost every three years. Also training ICT packages would cost around £200 and £600 each. The RM cash accounts cost around £1500 for initial licence. The RM software support for £800 per year. The visits to the site have an additional cost of £1700.

Security

All the computers in the system are password protected and are locked down when away from workstation to avoid misuse.

Security in the software Sims and RM cash accounts are that there are levels of access assigned when needed. An also nightly it is backed up on a ten day cycle. The back up is taken off the site monthly.

Reliability and support

Reliability in the system is generally good. Technical support is provided and the school office staff is given priority. The telephone support is bought in for software packages for the SIMs and RM cash accounts. There is also additional support available at a extra cost.

SIMs

The Sims system stands for (school integrated system).

The SIMs database is used in Hornsey School for girls to enable the school to do many things that includes the access to the student's important information. Also the SIMs system keeps a list of student's exam results and any assessments in which they may have. The SIMs system also helps in the finance that is carried out in the school. It is also used t keep track of the student's punctuality and attendance this is through the school register which is used by every member of staff so that the data is kept secured and correct. The system also enables the teachers to keep a diary and writing letters using the name of the student from their lists each teacher is also

able to view information from other departments in the school. All these data is stored in the system and each student is recognized by an unique ID number which after being typed brings up personal information of the student such as their address, contact number, registration details, medical information, their school history and also including the punctuality, attendance and behaviour of the specific student.

How SIMs is organised:

The SIMs database holds the personal information of individual students and also the student's family links and also all the students registration information and their confidential information which is used in the system.

Costs of the SIMs system:

The SIMs system has very high technical support costs. The SIMs phone support costs £10, 000 each year. Technical support costs £50, 000 to £60, 000 per year.

Robustness:

When the system is under stress or an invalid input is used the system incorrect data is not allowed to be put in by the SIMs system it will validate and inform the user about the incorrect information that is being checked. This does not create any problem for the system because there is enough memory and storage capacity to prevent the system from crashing down. This ensures that if incorrect data is continued to be used it won't cause the system to crash or any problems to develop, instead it will robust an error message would be sent out to the user. The computer would contain

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memory protection hardware to allow the software from being forced to be confined in the memory space.

Tracking information through the SIMs system:

Each student in the school has an unique UPN number and this number is issued when each student has started school.

The UPN number allows the school access to all the information that is held for example the students home, medical, attendance, school and examination assessments and results that they have throughout their school years at Hornsey.

Security of the SIMs system:

Only the systems manager and the schools bursar has access to the SIMs system. Office staff in the school has access to star and the packages they are responsible for. Including MIDAS.

The teacher in the school has access to MIDAS and they can only write into the conduct and event logs.

All the access given is by a PASSWORD.

Advantages of the SIMs system

The SIMs system is fast and efficient. All information needed from the Sims system is available from any computer in the school, which makes the system seem easily accessible. The SIMs system can also search for information easily. The system is user friendly and reports can be printed.

However there are few breakdowns but backed up at end of day-data can be restored.

Disadvantages in the SIMs system

Disadvantages of the system are that the information can be updated if we are told which means that a lot more hard work has to be done in order for it to function properly. Also if the server is down the school cant access anything which may cause delays e. t. c.

Impact of SIMs system on the organisation

The impact on the organisation from the SIMs system is that it is a more efficient way of working, errors can easily be corrected using the system and staff at the school is able to research information. The organisation is smooth running and is government required. This causes the school to be more organised and up to date.

Access and security

To access the system there are different levels of access. The teachers can only view information by the read only access. The office staff read and write access to the records and they can edit records however this depends on their roles. The staff in the system are given username and passwords to access the system.

How information is processed

The SIMs is attached to a scanner so that information can be directly scanned. The registers are scanned using the scanner. Queries are used to

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print reports. The scanner enrolls new students and is also used to scan pictures and it also updates and edits data.

Verification

The data sheets are sent to parents. Staff and parents are expected to confirm any changes. Everything in the system is proof read which makes everything certain.

This is the school register used at Hornsey School for girls that stores all the students' attendance and punctuality for each period everyday that they attend school throughout the year.

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