Examination report – December 2010 series

Paper no 2730 – 012 Communication Systems and Digital Networks 2

Section 1 – Areas of good performance (question no/syllabus topic or reference)
Syllabus section: 2.5, OSI - Answered reasonably well by most candidates. Syllabus sections: 3.16/17, IP addressing - Answered accurately by most candidates. Syllabus sections: 3.24, 3.9, 3.15, DNS/ IP datagrams / IP ports - Answered reasonably well by most candidates although quite a few candidates confused DNS with DHCP. Syllabus sections: 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.17, TCP/IP, OSI - Both parts answered correctly by most candidates. Syllabus sections: 4.6, 4.8, Data transmission terms - Answered well in all parts showing a good understanding in this area. Syllabus sections: 4.12, 4.22, DTE/ IEEE frame structure - Answered reasonably well but marks were often lost in part c) through a lack of accurate explanation. Syllabus section: 5.29, Network filtering - Parameters listed accurately. Syllabus sections: 5.7, 5.4, 5.21, VLANs, routing methods - Generally these parts were answered accurately.
Section 2 – Areas for development (question no/syllabus topic or reference)
Syllabus sections: 1.14, 1.16, 1.9, Data coding and switching methods - Although some candidates answered well, many failed totally to accurately answer any of these parts. Syllabus section: 2.9, OSI layers - Many candidates simply listed the layer structure of the OSI model and did not give required answers. Syllabus section: 3.21, IP addressing schemes - There was a distinct lack of knowledge here illustrated by incorrect answers when attempted. Syllabus section: 4.7, Shannon & Nyquist formulation - Very vague and incorrect answers were given here indicating a distinct lack of knowledge in these areas. Syllabus section: 4.20, X25 - Incorrect facilities given by many candidates. Syllabus section: 5.27, Link state routing - Weak, incorrect answers were given to both parts, commonly confusing distant vector with link state. Syllabus sections: 5.24, 5.25, 5.11, Routing and routing metrics - Whilst some candidates gave reasonable answers, the majority failed to do so in all 3 parts.

Section 3 - Recommendations
To Review the areas for development.
Section 4 - Tips
Always read the question carefully, especially where a description or explanation is required. Ensure that answers do not simply repeat the question wording only.
Section 5 - Additional comments
Where diagrams are required, please make them clear.