Examination report – December 2010 series

Paper no 2730 – 025 Software Engineering

Section 1 – Areas of good performance (question no/syllabus topic or reference)
Syllabus sections: 1.4, 1.5, The need for software engineering – software process - This question on the whole, was answered very well. Syllabus sections: 1.10, 1.12, Software specification – requirements analysis - This question on the whole, was answered fairly well. Candidates rarely provided **three** benefits of using system modelling. Syllabus section: 1.16, Software specification – requirements analysis - Overall solutions to part a) were good. In part b) few candidates provided any sort of description for the state diagram. Syllabus sections: 1.23, 1.25, Programming practice – and software tools - The majority of candidates provided excellent solutions to this very popular question. Syllabus sections: 1.38, 1.39, 1.40 – Software validation – testing - On the whole answered fairly well although some candidates struggled with 'equivalence partitioning'. Syllabus sections: 1.47, 1.48 – Programming languages - The majority of candidates provided very good solutions to this very popular question.
Section 2 – Areas for development (question no/syllabus topic or reference)
Syllabus section: 1.22, Software design and implementation – design methodology - In general, candidates had little knowledge of using Jackson procedural notation in part b). Syllabus sections: 1.28, 1.29, Programming practice – and software tools - Solutions to part b) and c) were very poor. Syllabus sections: 1.52, 1.53, 1.54, 1.55, Programming languages - This was the least popular question on the paper. Solutions to part b) were very poor. Syllabus sections: 1.60, 1.65, Programming languages - Candidates seemed to have very little knowledge of the meaning of a 'system call' as used in a Unix system. Even fewer candidates could describe suitable system calls in part b).
Section 3 - Additional comments
Candidates need to develop a better knowledge of Jackson procedural notation and its application in the design of a program. Other topics requiring further attention are Case Tools and Unix system architecture.