Assignments 1 & 2

Assignment 1 – due 5pm Friday of Week 4
Assignment 2 – due 5pm Friday of Week 10

Assignments 1 and 2 are presented together as they are closely related. Note carefully their different due dates (refer to Academic Calendar for the current term).

These assignments require you to apply research skills and information systems theory to a case study. Read the "Assignments Brief" section first to get a general idea, then complete the tasks detailed for each assignment. Submit the reports specified by their due date.

Assignments Overview:

In Assignment 1, you will undertake a literature search to gather appropriate references to support your answers, arguments and recommendations for the Case Study Questions. You must submit your proposed list of references in the prescribed report format, in this case an annotated bibliography. You must do this assignment on your own, not in a group.

See Assignment Requirements further down in this document for more information about annotated bibliographies.

Assignment 1 will be assessed on the appropriateness of your choice of references and sources, and on your annotations.

In Assignment 2, you will write a non-technical report in which you provide answers to the Case Study Questions in detail. You will use the references chosen previously, adjusted appropriately according to assessment feedback if applicable. You must submit your report in the prescribed format. You may do this assignment in a group – see Group Work Requirements document for rules about working in groups.

Assignment 2 will be assessed according to criteria listed in the downloadable marking criteria sheet.

The detailed assignment requirements (presentation, formatting etc) follow directly on from the Case, and the Case Study Questions.

Correct Referencing

For both assignments, use HARVARD referencing style for in-text referencing and for the References List. Check the course web site for links to help with referencing and the Harvard referencing guide.

Copy detection/plagiarism process

On submission, assignments are scanned by the copy detection software, Turnitin. Your assignment is checked against all submitted assignments from current and previous terms for this course and other courses as well. Any copying found in the process of running this software may be investigated. On

investigation, marks can be deducted for any part of the work that is categorised as plagiarism, and further, any student identified in the copy detection process may be subject to penalties up to and including failing the course or expulsion from the University. Full details of the University's plagiarism policies are available from the CQU website.

The Case Study: 'Just Healthy Food'

'Just Healthy Food' (JHF) is a small business owned and run by Frank Smart, in a booming touristic town in Queensland. JHF prepares and supplies pre-packaged healthy meals.

Frank worked for over eight years in a similar business in a big city before he moved and started his own small business with his wife Maria in their childhood town. Soon after he arrived in town, he saw the business opportunity for healthy pre-packaged meals for locals, tourists, and workers, and started the business in his backyard kitchen converted from a granny flat. His wife Maria helped him with the preparation of the food. Frank did the deliveries by using his small van. The meals were designed by Frank as he was a qualified cook with a relevant certificate. JHF prepared, packed and delivered the packaged meals on a daily basis to participating local businesses such as convenience stores, service stations, cafes, corner shops and occasional lunch orders from business offices in the CBD area. Initially business was slow but it soon progressed significantly and they started making a good profit.

As business started to grow, Frank leased a bigger commercial place to continue his business and gradually hired 5 fulltime staff. JHF operates seven days a week, with kitchen staff working from 6am to 2pm, and delivery staff from 9am to 5pm. In the early years, Frank thought many times about opening the business on public holidays to take advantage of the increased visitor numbers in the town on these days but he decided against it, as based on his calculations, the profit margin was very small because of high staff wages during public holidays. However, over the years as business continued to grow and sales increased significantly, JHF started to open on public holidays as well. This helped JHF become a recognised business. Just 5 years after the opening of the business, JHF became a very well-known brand name in the town.

Frank had completed a small business management certificate course, which helped him in setting up and operating his initial business. Later, he bought a desktop computer with essential business and productivity software and used them to manage customer details, meal menus, pricing information, wages, details of fruits and vegetables and other raw materials, packaging material, other overheads, invoices and calculating the financial figures including accounts receivable and payable.

In 2012, the demand for pre-packaged meals had grown to such a level that Frank had to hire 4 more staff in the food preparation area plus 2 full-time delivery staff. Furthermore, JHF began to deliver their products to other close towns as well as their own and therefore had to employ another 2 casual staff members. This made 15 staff altogether including Frank and his wife Maria, who was the head of kitchen staff. It was beginning to become difficult for Frank, as the owner and business manager, to run operations smoothly with the existing PC and basic software. He was also having difficulty in managing the pricing information as it became much more complex than before, as well as managing the raw ingredients due to a growing menu and communicating with customers and suppliers. A lot of errors were occurring because the majority of orders from customers and to suppliers were via phone calls and fax. Furthermore, casual employees were often paid the incorrect amount due to wages calculation errors. It was not only operating the PC and the software, but time was also becoming scarce for doing things Frank was able to do when the business was quite small.

Moreover, in early 2014, a competitor had entered the market; another small business owned by a regional company which started to challenge JHF's products. With Frank's problems in managing the business, the competitor had started to take some business away from JHF. Despite this fact, Frank is still confident that he will sustain his competitive advantage and even expand his business further as he believes in the quality of his products and the competitive prices. For this, Frank realised he had to introduce new technologies into his business. Frank knew that computers and IT could help him in managing the business well, but did not know much about them and how computers and various business application software might be more helpful. Therefore, he made the decision to introduce IT into the business and use it to support business operations, information management, strategic planning, decision making and marketing, including an intention to develop an online presence to provide a better service to their customers and suppliers. One day he contacted a local IT consulting company which is owned and run by you and asked for your expert help in answering some key questions in a business report. These are covered in the Case Study Questions.

Case Study Questions

(Please Note: First, read the following questions carefully, do the necessary reading or research, then answer the questions in your own words. When answering the questions you may not only refer to references but also use your own experiences and skills, as well as your imagination. Do not quote from the Case study text as part of your answer – we already know what is in it).

1. Identify the business problems faced by JHF and make a list of these problems (Hint: use your experiences to identify problems in similar businesses in addition to what has been explained already in the Case Study).

2. In order to help JHF management, define what information systems are and briefly explain how information systems could be important to JHF. In answering this question, explain which types of information system(s) can help JHF in managing the business problems and fulfilling their business operations? Be specific in how they will help.

3. What are the key information requirements of JHF? How would this information support their strategies for competitive advantage? What business processes should JHF consider computerising? Why?

4. Explain how JHF may utilise information technologies (IT) to collaborate and communicate with the key stakeholders. Include an explanation of the strategic use of intranets and extranets, as well as the Internet, to serve their needs.

5. How should JHF manage the organisational changes that may occur during the implementation of new information systems?

6. How will business decision-making at JHF be supported by the information systems you are suggesting?

7. For various stakeholders at JHF, including its customers, suppliers and employees, what are some of the possible security, privacy and ethical issues that may arise with the introduction of their information system? What could be done to resolve such issues?

Assignments Requirements and Report Structure Details

FOR ASSIGNMENT 1 (<u>10 marks</u> and due COB Friday of Week 4)

First, read the Case Study and the questions carefully. Next, you must identify a minimum of <u>six</u> references that will help you to answer the Case Study Questions in the next assignment. Your list of proposed references must include **at least** three academic (scholarly) references and **at most** three general references. This means you can use more academic references and fewer general references, but not vice versa.

Some websites are not acceptable as reference sources in research tasks. These include general encyclopedic websites such as Wikipedia, and the numerous student study sites that publish papers in various school or university study categories.   Likewise, general printed encyclopedias, popular magazines and newspapers are not considered to be scholarly references.

Using multiple quotes or material from different pages in the same reference is only counted as one (1) reference. You may use your prescribed textbook or any similar IS textbook as one of your general references.

Complete this assignment in the form of an annotated bibliography. In an annotated bibliography, each reference, properly formatted in Harvard format, should be followed by a paragraph describing how that reference is relevant to the Case Study, which Case Study question it is relevant to, and how it could be helpful and pointing out any negatives as well. For an example of an annotated bibliography, see
http://www.library.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@lib/documents/doc/uow085511.pdf
or
http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/onlib/pdf/anno_bib.pdf

At least six credible references must be used and at least three of these must be from academic (scholarly) journals. The maximum three general references may be from industry magazines or books. The references can be from printed or online sources and must be current (i.e., within the last five (5) years). You can use material from organisational web sites as an example to support your arguments but these will not be counted towards the references' quota (i.e., 6 references). **A library guide is available for this course that you can access via the link from the course Website**. The guide walks you through using <u>scholarly databases</u> to locate suitable reference sources, and by using this guide, you will find it much easier to locate suitable sources and you will also be able to observe the types of references that are acceptable as academic research sources. Note that any information in the guides that may refer to previous assignments or to other instructions do not take precedence over instructions contained in this assignment.   At all times your assignment must conform to instructions in this document.

<u>**Your assignment must include the following sections as shown:**</u>

• **Title page** -- must include: assignment title, a suitable report title, your name and student number, course code and name, term and year, name of your tutor, due date, and the date submitted. Place title page on its own page.

• **Your annotated bibliography** -- use the page heading "Annotated Bibliography". REMEMBER THAT FOR EACH REFERENCE, YOU NEED TO INDICATE WHICH CASE STUDY QUESTION(S) IT IS RELEVANT FOR. If you omit this, you may lose marks for lack of relevance.

<u>Other formatting requirements:</u>

• Header (Assignment title, centred, and page number, right aligned)

• Footer (student ID and your last name, left aligned, and course code/term/year, right aligned)

> • Header and footer should start from the page containing 'Introduction' heading. Use section breaks to control this.

• Text formatting (Times New Roman, 12pt., single-spaced. You may also make use of appropriate emphasis such as bold, italics, and underscore)

• Paragraph formatting (left aligned, single spaced and 6 pt space after each paragraph)

• Page formatting (should be in A4, portrait orientation, with 2.54cm margin all around)

• Do not number or bullet-point Headings and Sub-headings.

• Other report components such as Executive Summary, Introduction or Abstract, Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions are NOT required for Assignment 1.

FOR ASSIGNMENT 2 (<u>30 marks</u> and due COB Friday of Week 10)

As the consultant, your brief is to advise your clients on the possibilities that would best suit their requirements. You do this by writing a non-technical report that addresses the questions raised in the Case Study Questions and making full use of the references you identified in Assignment 1 **plus four more scholarly references, making a minimum total of ten (10) references.**

Note that your use of the references should fully incorporate any feedback received from Assignment 1 assessment. For example, if a reference was marked as inappropriate in Assignment 1, then that reference cannot be used in Assignment 2. You must select a new reference to replace the inappropriate one. Assignment 1 will **not** be marked again so do not re-submit it – the replacement reference(s) will be marked on its merits in Assignment 2 with no further opportunity to change it.

The four (4) additional references must be scholarly references only, and must be selected to support your discussions, that is, they must be relevant to one or more of the assignment questions. You may use more references if you wish to do so, provided they are appropriate.

As previously stated, some websites are not acceptable as reference sources. These include general encyclopedic sites such as Wikipedia, and the numerous student study sites that publish papers in various school or university study categories.

<u>Assignment 2 must include the following sections in the order shown</u>:

• **Title page** (must include: assignment title, a suitable report title, your name and student number, course code and name, term and year, name of your tutor, due date, and the date submitted. Place title page on its own page).

• **Executive summary** (state the purpose of the report, summarise your major findings, conclusions, and explicitly state your specific recommendations.) Place this on its own page.

• **Introduction** (identify the purpose of the report and what will happen in the report, no need to have further sub-headings within 'Introduction' heading).

• **Discussion** (this is where you will address the Case Questions, using your own words in a discussion style, but supported by your references. Use suitable headings and sub-headings).

• **Summary and Recommendations** (brief wrap-up of your major points, and then based on your discussion and analyses, state explicitly what your recommendations are).

• **References** (a complete reference list at the end of the report using Harvard referencing style – refer to the Harvard reference guide available from course website).   Place this on its own page. Correct in-text referencing is expected.

Other formatting details:

• Headers (Assignment title, centred, and page number, right aligned)

• Footers (student ID and your last name, left aligned, and course code/term/year, right aligned)

• Text formatting (Times New Roman, 12pt., single-spaced. You may also make use of appropriate emphasis such as bold, italics, and underscore)

• Paragraph formatting (left aligned, single spaced and 6 pt space after each paragraph)

• Page formatting (should be in A4, portrait orientation, with 2.54cm margin all around).

• Header and footer should start from the page containing 'Introduction' heading. Use section breaks to control this.

• Headings and sub-headings should not be in number or bullet style.

Notes:

• The assignment will be marked on the criteria listed in the marking guides that can be found on the course website. Use these marking guides to ensure that you haven't forgotten anything.

• Do not discuss hardware and software specifications, such as memory or response times etc. Remember you must focus on addressing the concerns of management as detailed in the Case Study Questions, in a way that is understandable by non-technical managers.

• Make any assumptions that you find necessary; however, be sure to state your assumptions within the report.

• There is no fixed "correct" solution for the report. It is possible for students to make different recommendations. What is crucial is that the argument presented is logical and consistent, and clearly addresses the questions that were raised.

• The work submitted **must be in your own words**. Lengthy quotes, even if referenced correctly, are not considered to be your own work. Direct quotes should not form more than 40% of the report.