13.2 IS and Organisations.   Essay question

.Information systems are the life-blood of any organisation. Discuss this statement with the aid of examples. Include in your discussion:

• the rôle and relevance of an information system to aid decision making;
• the development and life-cycle of an information system;
• factors which lead to the success or failure of an information system.

The quality of written communication will be assessed in your answer.
All points made in this essay gain a single mark. If they are well-expanded/described or exampled, the candidate can get a second mark. (Maximum of 6 marks in each area, to max of 16 for content marks.)

Students are to ensure they write an essay covering the following areas:

Rôle and relevance (R)
• Difference between data processing system and an information system
• Difference between IS and MIS
• Where data comes from/ Internal/external sources
• Examples of information systems
• What used for/ Keeping businesses operational
• Who used by/ Managers at all levels
• Currency of information
• Appropriate formats
• Decision making for planning/directing/controlling
• Tactical/short-term examples
• Strategic/long-term examples

Dev Life Cycle (D) (need description of a stage for 1 mark, if just listed, then 1 mark for 2 or more stages. Another mark for expansion/example)

• Feasibility study
• Requirements/systems analysis
• (Systems) design
• Project planning
• Programming/build
• Testing
• Implementation/installation
• Review and maintenance
• Different development methodologies

Success/Failure (S) (need description of a factor for 1 mark, a list of 2 or more gets 1 mark)
• inadequate analysis or other stage/use of development life cycle methodology
• lack of management/end-user involvement in design or testing or development/ good relationships with business managers and end users
• emphasis on computer system
• concentration on low level data processing
• lack of management knowledge of ICT and its capabilities/ effective project management methodology being used

• inappropriate or excessive management demands/good management communication links
• lack of team work/effective teamworking/team leadership/well-balanced teams
• lack of standards/ use of standards
• lack of training/ adequate training for all staff/users/managers
• problems with changeover/ consideration of staff who will be using new system/ having an implementation strategy
• documentation (user/technical) ready at the right time
(16 marks)

Quality of written communication will be assessed in this answer [Q]
 (4 marks)

Total (20 marks)

The candidate has expressed complex ideas clearly and fluently. Sentences and paragraphs follow on from one another smoothly and logically. Arguments will be consistently relevant and well structured. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
4 marks
The candidate has expressed moderately complex ideas clearly and reasonably fluently through well-linked sentences and paragraphs. Arguments will be generally relevant and well structured. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3 marks
The candidate has expressed straightforward ideas clearly, if not always fluently. Sentences and paragraphs may not always be well-connected. Arguments may sometimes stray from the point or be weakly presented. There may be some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling, but not such as to suggest a weakness in these areas.
2 marks
The candidate has expressed simple ideas clearly, but may be imprecise and awkward in dealing with complex or subtle concepts. Arguments may be of doubtful relevance or obscurely presented. Errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive, suggesting weaknesses in these areas
1 mark