Xday, XX May 2004.

9.30 am - 11.15am

University of Glasgow

DEGREES OF BEng, BSc, MA, MA (SOCIAL SCIENCES).

DEGREES OF Beng, BSc, MA, MA (Social Sciences)

INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS 3:
USABILITY OF WEB-BASED SYSTEMS

(Answer one question from Section A and one question from Section B).

Section A

1.

a) Briefly explain why many Internet users continue to become lost within the pages of a website.

[5 marks]

b) Yahoo uses a fee-based approach to directory listing while MSN uses a mixed approach in which client's sites are promoted about pages that are indexed for free. Briefly discuss the factors that should be considered in order to ensure the visibility of an ecommerce web site.

[10 marks]

c) You have been asked to help in the design of an e-commerce web site that will be selling cars to members of the general public. What are the main issues that should be considered when assessing the usability of a sitemap for this e-commerce website? How would you measure the success of such an interface feature?

[12 marks]

2.

a) Explain the way in which Cascading Style Sheets can support the **external** consistency of a website.

[4 marks]

b) Internal consistency can help users to transfer expertise gained in one part of a site to other areas. There are, however, situations in which this form of consistency can impair the usability of a web site. Briefly explain this apparent paradox.

[6 marks]

c) In evaluating the usability of a website, it is important not simply to consider the design of the content that is provided by a server. It is also important to consider the characteristics and capabilities of the users Internet infrastructure. Briefly explain why these factors have an impact on usability and explain how designers can consider these effects during the evaluation of a website that is intended to support e-government, for instance through the provision of information about a national health service.

[15 marks]

Section B

 [end]