Evaluating the development and testing process

Software development is not easy and it is likely that you will come across a number of issues as you develop databases. Here are some questions to ask to help you decide what to include in your evaluation of the development and testing phases of your database task.

Evaluating the development process

- **How did the development go?** Think about the problems you came across and what you found difficult.

  For example, did you have any problems getting the queries or forms to work as required?
- **How well does the final product meet the users' needs?** As a learner your 'users' will mostly be imaginary but you should still think about whether your database would meet all the users' needs.

  For example, what features and options would be very useful to a real user that you didn't have time to add?
- **What do others think of my database?** It's difficult to be critical of things you created so getting other people's feedback can be enlightening. You can't do this in the exam, so use your practice activities to gain an idea of the sort of things users might like or dislike about your databases.

The iterative process

Software development is usually an **iterative process**. This means you develop something, try it out, find some issues, do further development to resolve the issues, then try it out again.

You use this kind of iterative process to refine and improve software in stages.

In your evaluation consider how effective the iteration process has been. Is your database fully refined or would further iterations refine it further?

Evaluating the testing

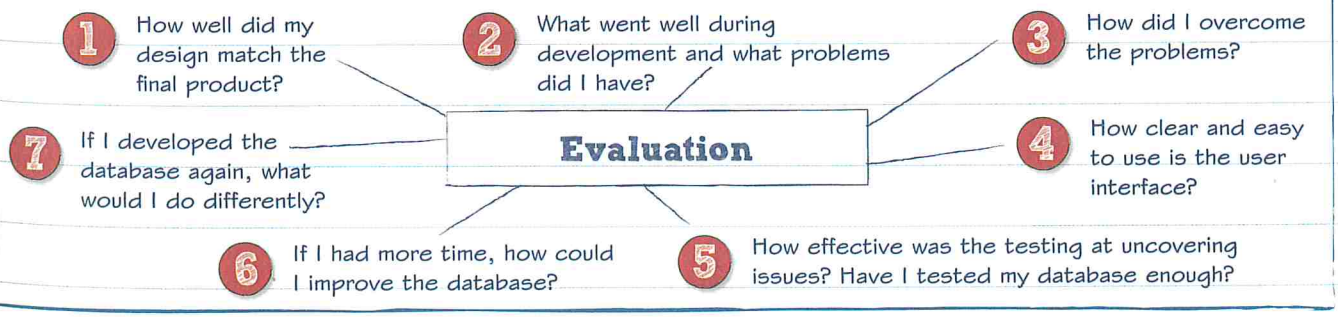
- Did I fully complete the **testing records**?
- Did I include **screen shots** and comment on the results?
- Which tests were met successfully?
- Which failed tests were not resolved?
- Where the actual result did not match the expected result, did I fully investigate and comment on the reasons for this?
- Did I use the **testing outcomes** to improve my database?

Make sure when writing an evaluation that any points you make are supported by evidence from the actual database/scenario.

Evaluating the final product

- What are the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of the final product?
- Is it **fit for** its intended **purpose**?
- Is it complete and fully functional?
- To what extent does it meet the **functionality requirements**?
- Is the user interface **intuitive** and **easy to use**?
- Is the database easy for others to **maintain**?
- Are there any **constraints** (restrictions) on how the database can be used?
- What will I do differently next time?

Checklist for your evaluation



Now try this

Write a list of headings you can use to help you structure an evaluation of your database.