

6.4 School management systems

Syllabus 2026 - 2028

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- School management systems are used to manage learner registration and attendance
- School management systems are used to record learner performance, including computer aided learning

Registration and attendance

- Learner details (name, class, contact details, medical information) are stored in a database
- Attendance can be recorded with a swipe card, an RFID card, a fingerprint scanner or an optical mark reader (OMR) register
- The system records who is absent and can send an SMS or email to parents automatically
- Attendance reports show patterns, such as learners who are often late or absent
- Registers can be checked quickly in an emergency such as a fire

Recording learner performance

- Marks, grades and teacher comments are entered into a database
- The system can calculate averages and rank learners, and produce progress reports
- Teachers can see which topics learners find difficult and give extra help
- Reports can be sent to parents quickly and in a standard format

Computer aided learning (CAL)

Computer aided learning uses software to teach and test learners. It may include video, animation, quizzes and games, and often marks answers automatically.

- Learners work at their own pace and can repeat a topic
- Feedback is immediate and learners can be tested as often as they want
- Content is interactive and can be more interesting than a textbook
- A teacher can see each learner's results and progress

Advantages	Disadvantages
+ Less paperwork and less time spent on registers and reports	- Equipment, software and staff training are expensive
+ Records are accurate, quick to search and easy to share	- Personal data must be protected from hackers and misuse
+ Data can be analysed to spot problems early	- A power cut or system failure can stop the system working
+ CAL lets learners study at their own pace	- CAL does not replace the help and encouragement of a teacher

EXAM TIP

Name the technology used and what it does, for example: a fingerprint scanner records attendance automatically, so no register has to be taken and no one can sign in for another learner.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Database	An organised collection of data that can be searched and updated.
CAL	Computer aided learning: using software to teach and test learners.
OMR	Optical mark recognition: reading marks made on a paper form.
RFID	Using radio waves to read data stored on a tag or card.