

1.2 SOFTWARE & SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT · 1.2.2

Applications, utilities & open vs closed source

Systems vs applications software, **utilities**, and **open vs closed source**. Spec 1.2.2(a)(b)(c).

01 Systems vs applications

Systems Runs the computer: OS, utilities, translators, libraries.

Applications Does a user task: word processor, spreadsheet, browser.

App types General-purpose (off-the-shelf) · special-purpose · bespoke.

Bespoke Exact fit, but costly & slow vs cheap, instant off-the-shelf.

02 Utilities

Defragmenter Reorganises files on an HDD for faster reads.

Backup Copies files so they can be restored.

Compression Shrinks files to save space.

Antivirus Scans for and removes malware.

App vs utility App = user task; utility = maintains the computer.

03 Open vs closed source

● Open source

Source code **available** to view/modify/redistribute (Linux, Firefox). Free, adaptable, community support; support varies.

● Closed source

Source code **hidden**, licensed (Windows, Office). Professionally supported, polished; can't modify, vendor lock-in, paid.

FINAL PASS BEFORE THE EXAM

Rapid exam tips

Seven slips on software-type questions.

01

An **application** does a user task; a **utility** maintains the computer. Spreadsheet = app; defragmenter = utility.

02

The **operating system** is systems software, not an application.

03

Open source ≠ just "free". The defining feature is the **source code is available** to view and modify.

04

For "most appropriate application" questions, match the task: spreadsheet for calculations, DBMS for records, DTP for layout.

05

Name a **specific** utility and its purpose (defragmenter, backup, antivirus) — not just "a utility".

06

Bespoke = exact fit but costly/slow; **off-the-shelf** = cheap, instant, well-tested but generic.

07

"Discuss open vs closed source": give benefits **and** drawbacks of each (cost, support, adaptability, vendor lock-in), then a justified recommendation.