PROGRESS OUTCOME 4

A computer for the shearing shed

Context

The school farm has a shearing shed on the grounds. The farm is constrained by tight budgets but wants to have a working computer system in the shed with basic functionality for recording farming data.

In consultation with the farm manager and the school network manager, Zoe has been given access to some computer equipment no longer needed by the school to develop a system.

Insight 1: Design decisions

I sketched out a plan of the components, hardware, and software I would need to create a working computer system and discussed this with the network manager and farm manager. I then checked the available components to ensure interoperability and safe use and was able to confirm that I had all the necessary components.

Insight 2: Installation and testing

I configured the computer system hardware by installing and testing the internal components. The computer didn't respond, so I knew there was an error and had to troubleshoot to discover that the problem was the RAM seating and the internal cable connections. I attached the other computer peripherals (mouse, keyboard, and screen) and made sure all components initially functioned.

Following consultation with the farm manager and considering the budget, I selected Linux® as the operating system because it's open source with no cost for using it. I explained to the farm manager how Linux compares to proprietary software. I downloaded and installed the most recent version and ensured all components were recognised by the system.

Insight 3: Meeting end-user requirements

After discussing storage requirements with the farm manager, I determined that he needed some spreadsheeting software. I installed Open Office, which again is non-proprietary and has no cost associated with its use.

The farm manager tested the system. It met his requirements, but he was concerned about security when students were in the shed. I installed a BIOS password and got the manager to set a password.

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