

Moderator's Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

January 2012

GCE Applied Business (6924)
Paper 01

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Moderation Process

The external moderation process was deemed to be straightforward. Overall centres forwarded samples on time and an accurate number of sample portfolios were provided.

Statements of authentication were present in the samples moderated for this series. However, these were often not signed by the student or the assessor. Centres should ensure authentication statements are fully completed when submitting evidence for external moderation.

Assessment Objectives and Mark Band Evidence

Better assessment objective and mark band evidence was seen this series. In general it was felt that the choice of organisation was better and as a result learners were able to access the higher mark bands.

Strand A

Evidence sampled included in-depth investigations, and as a result learners were able to generate better evidence of application and analysis. All aspects of this strand were well covered except, evidence of conflicts between organisations and individuals was limited and depended on the type of organisation chosen, and the research undertaken by the learner. There was good evidence of motivational strategies and the strengths & weaknesses of motivational techniques used within the organisation. There was stronger evidence seen of links made to theorists this series.

Strand B

The choice of activity often limited candidates in fully developing evidence requirements for higher mark bands. The assessment evidence requirement for this strand consists of an evaluation of a group activity focused on planning an event, or developing and implementing a new system or procedure.

The meeting element of this strand was often limited in the evidence submitted. Learners are required to submit a report on one meeting related to the activity. Reason for holding the meeting and advantages and disadvantages were often generic and not applied to the team activity. Evidence for mark band three requires the learner to suggest alternative methods of the planned outcome this was often limited.

The main weakness for strand B was where learners are required to evidence benefits and drawbacks of working in a team. The application of this aspect was limited, as evidence tended to be based on theory and tended to spoil what was otherwise very high standard work generated by learners. There was limited evidence of how the individual's objectives and needs are different from those of a team.

The second element of this strand focuses on leadership styles, although there was detailed theory included in most portfolios. There was insufficient application and evaluation of management style in relation to the team activity. Alternative leadership styles were addressed but the evidence was often fragmented as three or four alternative leadership styles were suggested.

Strand C

The evidence for this strand was varied, and was very much dependent on research carried out by candidates. Where candidates had carried out detailed primary research, there was good evidence of application, analysis and evaluation of the evidence. This was reflected in the mark gained by learners. In some cases the evidence was focused on training that the learner had participated in. This provided limited scope for development and evaluation towards the higher mark bands. In some cases learners included research for this strand but failed to use the results to support analysis and evaluation requirements in the higher mark bands.

Strand D

Evidence for strand D was weak this series, mainly due to learners not submitting the full range of research required for this strand. For example some centres did not include research on common formats, higher education or careers and as a result learners generated a basic PDP. As a result some centres were generous with their assessment, especially for the skills audit and rewarding candidates for research when little or no research evidence was included.

Centre Guidance

Strands A & C

Relevant primary and secondary research should be carried out to match the evidence requirements of each strand and mark band for strand A. The results of the research should then be used to form the basis of analysis and evaluation required in the higher mark bands. Candidates should be encouraged to select appropriate organisations and refer to the performance descriptors on page 187 of the specification.

Strand C

Clear evidence of researching a training programme for one individual should be included as evidence. The results should then be used as a basis for analysis and evaluation. It is also important to research training outcomes from the individual's perspective as well as the organisational perspective.

Candidates should be encouraged to use the same organisation to investigate motivation strategies and training for strand A and C.

Strand B

Evidence of one meeting should be included as an appendix. Evidence of submitted for the meeting should be applied to the team activity. Centres should encourage Candidates to select a team activity focused on planning an event or developing and implementing a new system or procedure.

Strand D

Research for personal development should include further/higher education and career routes. Candidates should be encouraged to use and include the research, to develop the analysis and evaluation requirements for the higher mark bands.

Evidence of common formats for skills audit should be researched, this should include study skills audit and work related skills audit. Both skills audits should then be used to develop the candidate's own skills audit as well as analysis and evaluation requirements for higher mark bands.

Assessment

Annotation of evidence achievement by assessor(s) was limited. Centres sampled in this series were found to be slightly lenient in the assessment of strand D and C.

Candidate Performance

At the lower end of marks, candidates demonstrated basic knowledge and understanding of key concepts of managing and developing people. At this level, candidates presented limited evidence of application, analysis and evaluation.

For strand A, candidates showed a basic understanding of motivational strategies, used in the chosen organisation, this was further developed by identifying strengths and weaknesses of the motivational techniques. Suggestions for alternative approaches were identified. Evidence of conflict was limited as Candidates often focused on conflict between individuals and not individuals and the organisation. Appropriate links were made to recognised theorists. Evidence of research was implied/limited at this level. For strand B basic/limited application of knowledge and understanding was demonstrated for team working and management styles. However, clear references were made to recognised theorists. Evidence of a meeting was limited. Strand C evidence of research for a training programme for one individual within the organisation was implicit/limited at this level. For strand D a basic reason for carrying out a skills audit was appropriate for this level. Evidence of research of common formats of skills audit and careers were often limited.

At the higher end, candidates were able to demonstrate in depth knowledge and understanding of key concepts of managing and developing people. Evidence was supported by good research, clear application, analysis and evaluation.

For strand A candidates demonstrated good knowledge and motivational strategies, used in the chosen organisation, this was then further developed by identifying strengths and weaknesses of the motivational techniques. Suggestions for alternative approaches and conflicts were addressed; appropriate links were made to recognised theorists. Analysis and evaluation was effective for this strand.

For Strand B Candidates demonstrated clear application of knowledge and understanding of team working and management styles, clear references were made to recognised theorists. Stronger evidence and analysis of a meeting was included in portfolios at this level, together with better evaluation of conflicts.

For Strand C Candidates evidenced relevant up to date research to demonstrate the effectiveness of a training programme for an individual within the chosen organisation. Stronger evaluation of the cost and benefits to the organisation and the strengths and weakness of the training programme was included at this level.

For Strand D at this level, candidates were able to apply research to their chosen career/development plan with stronger evaluation of alternative career routes.

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