

Examiners' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

GCE Leisure Studies (6967)  
Paper 01 Working Practices in Leisure

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Summer 2013

Publications Code UA035389

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## **General comments**

Performance on this paper was at a similar level to last year. The paper appeared to be accessible to students.

Most students were able to respond effectively to most questions. There was evidence that most students had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set, offering valid answers, although there is still a tendency not to apply their knowledge to the given scenarios. Almost all students answered all questions.

Students were able to use information taken from the WYNTL section of the unit, with better performance in the quality system section than in previous series. They appeared to be familiar with the command verbs as a whole. Students appeared to manage their time effectively and did not produce lengthy passages of irrelevant information. The vast majority of students appeared to complete the paper in the time available, with little evidence of rushed work towards the end.

Students still did not always make full use of the stimulus material. The emphasis in this paper will inevitably be on the application of their knowledge to a variety of practical situations and the higher marks, particularly in levels of response questions, will always be characterised by the ability to demonstrate application rather than theory. It will be important for students to have practice in doing this in their preparation for the assessment. They should also ensure that they apply it in regard to the question actually being posed. This is an 'Applied' GCE and therefore in the longer explain/analyse questions the mere repetition of generic material, however valid, is unlikely to achieve beyond a Level 1 response.

Exam technique is an aspect that requires improvement, particularly in the longer questions. There will always be a number of longer questions on this paper that have levels of response mark schemes. This will continue in the future so students should be made aware how these work. At the moment most students of E grade and above are reaching the top of level 1 (3 marks) in the 8 mark questions but higher ability students appear unable to lift this mark much further. Students must be able to use the stimulus material (the 'applied' bit) if they are to access the higher grades with ease, rather than repeat pre-learnt generic responses.

### **Question 1**

The scenario was that of Camney Park, a theme park. Students were able to engage with this very effectively.

Q1(a) The requirements of the Working time Regulations were generally well known. Most students were able to outline at least two of the requirements – although the actual figures quoted were not always accurate, the basic sense of the requirements is enough to meet the idea of 'key requirements'. Students were well aware of the limits to the working day and the working week as well as the need for breaks within shifts. Knowledge of the shorter hours and longer breaks for young workers was also good, often reflecting their first hand experience of these.

Q1(b) Most students identified at least one realistic measure to ensure safety. As in past series, development of them was rather vague at times, although there were generally better responses this time. As a further improvement on previous series there were relatively few unrealistic suggestions and students seemed to understand well the basic ways in which safety could be achieved. The most popular measures were the existence of safety and maintenance checks, together with the need to control who went on the rides – often quoting height restrictions in this context, again reflecting first hand experience! Centres should ensure that students are used to explaining both how and why the identified checks operate – it was often unclear and as a result the third mark for each tended to be elusive. All too many students suggested that ‘by having regular maintenance checks this would improve safety for customers’. As the last phrase is actually the question this would not achieve the developmental marks.

Q1(c) Responses to this question were highly variable. There seemed to be a significant proportion of students who did not know what sanctions were. These are a key part of the role of the HSE and should always be part of the delivery programme for this unit. For the rest, most students could identify one relevant sanction and could describe what it actually entailed. Reasons tended to be rather weak – this should be linked to the offence that has been committed. ‘Why is this particular sanction suitable for the offences given in the stimulus material’ is what they need to be addressing. The suggestion of closure was not a realistic option for the relatively minor misdemeanours stated here and centres should always ensure that students appreciate that linkage to the seriousness of the offence is included when seeking to apply the sanctions to situations.

Q1(d) Knowledge of the EU Directives was better than in previous series and most students could make some basic linkages to the stimulus material. References to the Workplace Regulations were generally sound in particular. As in the past weaker responses tended to ignore the existence of the regulations and simply stated what the organisation would have to do to improve safety. It is essential that students are given practice in applying information for this qualification. The linking of knowledge with a specific situation, and then joining the two together with a reasoned response as indicated by the question, is a difficult skill and without guidance students will tend either to recite the requirements of the legislation or give what should be done. It is how the former leads to the operation of the latter that is the key.

Q1(e) Although there is still a small proportion of students who did not, most students had sound scales, although some failed to gain full marks as they gave them rather random numbering, perhaps just giving a description of the criteria for 1, 5 and 10. There should be a description for each number of the scale so if it is a 1-5 scale there should be 5 descriptions as well. Generally the application was realistic, although students should ensure that it is relevant to their scale descriptions. A value of ‘2’ in the application may be relevant if the likelihood scale 2 is ‘unlikely’ but not where it is likely and the severity is a serious injury. In considering the potential seriousness of an injury it is vital that students take into account the specific scenario. Suggestions for measures were generally realistic and again reflected first hand knowledge of the theme park environment. The need to give people information about queue lengths or keep them entertained in some way in the queues was regularly stated. Measures to limit queue size were often rather vague – although only brief measures are required there does need to be some information as to how this might be achieved. Students

should also be made aware, as in past series, that 'have a risk assessment' is not a measure to minimise risk for a risk assessment!

## **Question 2**

Q2(a) Knowledge of the key principles was highly variable. Although quality systems in general seem to be better understood than in past series by most students, the differences between accreditation processes and the basic principles was at times confused. These are key areas in delivery of these systems for centres. Most students did have an idea of the basic process and could at least identify the 4 stages. Although this was the expected approach, students also scored by outlining the principles of what they were trying to achieve.

Q2(b) This question showed an improvement compared to past series also, although there was a substantial proportion of students who still stated that customer feedback forms would be appropriate. The basic difference in approach between IiP and Quest should be made very clear to students in delivery of this unit.

Q2(c) Students seemed much better informed about the framework that IiP operates under than in past series, allowing them to access the upper levels of the mark scheme in this question. Whereas in the past IiP has often been seen as a rather amorphous organisation that somehow managed to either invest or 'make the organisation do something' the basic ideas of its role in improving employees and the communication between them, was far more evident here. As a result there was also more secure application of this to the stimulus material. Responses tended to focus on the role of staff training in directly improving behaviour towards customers, as well as the indirect role of preparing them for new systems so they were not frustrated in the first place. The effects on the structure of the organisation were less clear but overall it was pleasing to see a clear improvement in understanding of the topic.

Q2(d) Responses were rather vague overall here, reflecting that although student knowledge of what IiP does has improved, the way in which a quality system such as this operates was less certain. Suggestions that it might be introduced a bit at a time reflected this lack of understanding. A number of realistic suggestions were made, however, and these centred around the possibility of a meeting with staff in which information about the system was disseminated and in which staff could raise any concerns that they might have with the new system. As in question 1b, which has a similar structure, although the ideas were often identified, the follow through explanation was imprecise with much implied but not actually said in detail. Students should be reminded that questions where there are 3 marks per answer will require a problem and sustained development – at least 2 further ideas in order to achieve the maximum mark.

Q2(e) Knowledge of the Customer Service Excellence quality system was generally rather weak. There are five basic standards for this system and they should be the starting point for delivery of this part of the specification. Many responses suggested rather vague things about customer service as its name implies. Slightly worryingly, a minority of responses seemed to refer to Charter Mark, which disappeared from the specification 2 years ago. Centres should ensure that they have the most recent copy of the specification when preparing schemes of work.

### Question 3

Q3(a)(iii) A majority of responses showed accurate understanding of what liabilities are and could indicate that the park must have spent money on a capital project. Many of them accurately applied this understanding to the scenario and linked their responses to the introduction of a new entry system and rides. In weaker responses there was some confusion between liabilities and expenses. Centres should ensure that students have a sound understanding of the difference.

Q3(a)(iv) Most students successfully identified that the park 's financial position had deteriorated and were able to use the figures correctly to back up the statement.

Q3(b) The majority of students could provide at least one reason why financial records should be kept confidential. Usually this was that otherwise competitors would be able to see them and take some sort of competitive advantage from the situation. Slightly surprisingly, the fact that it would be required under the Data Protection Act was seldom stated. A substantial minority of students failed to score any marks because they did not read the question carefully and ignored the last word. Hence they talked about the need to keep records for tax purposes or their accounts. The need to impress upon students the necessity to read the whole question is paramount to avoid this.

Q3(c)(i) Most students were able to identify at least one characteristic of a stock control system that would be useful in the situation described in the stimulus. However, all too often these were expressed in very general terms such as 'they enable the organisation to see how much stock they have'. This makes it much more difficult to apply rather than specific information such as 'the system will give warnings when stock is running low'. This makes it more difficult for responses to be successful in explaining how the stock control system can help and there were many vague responses because of this. Few students scored 3 marks for individual sections. As in question 1b, which has a similar structure, although the ideas were often identified, the follow through explanation was imprecise with much implied but not actually said in detail. Students should be reminded that questions where there are 3 marks per answer will require a problem and sustained development – at least 2 further ideas in order to achieve the maximum mark.

Q3(c)(ii) Responses here were generally sound with students understanding the issues well. The most effective responses related to the need to train staff and the cost and time implications that this might have, together with issues that might occur in the changeover period. These were seen as the potential for staff to make mistakes or the time and staff effort needed to populate the new database. As in the past, a significant number of students became rather obsessed with systems breaking down – this is to be discouraged as occurrences are in reality rare. This should be made clear to students.

Q3(d) Pleasingly, many students were able to apply the information in the stimulus effectively, in contrast to some of the earlier questions. The characteristics of membership schemes were well known and linked for much of the time to the ideas in the stimulus. Although there was a substantial minority who simply suggested how the ideas in the stimulus would benefit the park, these were fewer than in the past. The potential linkages between membership systems and internet sites for promotion and ease of ticket sales were well known, in addition to the use of personal data to be

able to target promotional packages at various groups. The most obvious omission at times was the real evidence to show the benefit to the park of these being achieved.

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