

Examiners' Report January 2011

GCE

GCE Leisure studies (6968) Unit 3: The Leisure Customer

Contents

1. General Comments	page 4
2. Unit 6968 Report	page 5
3. Grade Boundaries	page 8

General Comments

Comments relate to the marking from the January 2011 series. This report comments on the assessment evidence requirements, the accuracy of the marking and the administration.

The tasks for the unit are set within the specification.

- AO1 (a) an understanding of how the leisure industry views the customer
- AO4 (b) an evaluation of customer service, in the leisure industry, through acting as a 'mystery customer'
- AO3 (c) an investigation into marketing activities used within the leisure industry
- AO2 (d) the provision of customer service, dealing with a range of customers in different situations.

Each task is linked to a specific learning outcome, which details the knowledge, skills and understanding that learners are required to demonstrate.

- AO1: Knowledge, skills and understanding
- AO2: Application of knowledge, skills and understanding
- AO3: Research and analysis
- AO4: Evaluation

Marks should be awarded within three mark bands, according to assessment outcome criteria, level of independence and depth and breadth of understanding. Marks should be awarded on a 'best-fit' basis, i.e. match the overall standard of work for an assessment focus to a band. It is not a hurdle approach, whereby the Assessor cannot award marks from the next band if one item for an assessment outcome from a lower band has been omitted, regardless of the quality of the rest of the work for that assessment outcome.

If a learner completes all they are asked to do in a band for an assessment outcome, they should normally be awarded the full marks for that band. If a learner has clearly gone beyond the requirements for one aspect of work required by a band, consider whether the learner can be awarded marks from the bottom of the next band. If a learner has completed less than required in any aspect of work for an assessment outcome, or indeed omitted an aspect, then the mark moves down within the band. Judgements are completely separate for each assessment focus - i.e. a learner can get marks in band 3 on one assessment focus, band 1 on another etc, then all band marks are added together for the unit total.

Progression across the mark bands will be achieved as learners are able to address the more demanding requirements of each assessment focus.

Key Issues

The key issues related to the assessment of this unit remain consistent with previous series and it is useful to identify the key areas where candidate's marks can be limited.

A - AO1

The marks awarded were generally appropriate for this outcome, with candidates selecting three appropriate leisure organisations. Centres are reminded of the importance of guiding candidates in the selection of appropriate leisure organisations for this outcome, for example: public or private leisure centres; gyms; cinemas; sports clubs; libraries. To award the highest marks, candidates should select a contrasting range of leisure organisations.

Candidates should be reminded that this assessment objective focuses on the candidate's ability to demonstrate **knowledge**, **skills** and **understanding** of leisure customers with links to policies and procedures.

B - AO4

All candidates carried out at least one mystery visit at an appropriate leisure organisation and had considered a range of customer service factors, for example: cleanliness; staffing; health and safety; range of facilities. In order to award the highest marks, candidates should be guided to ensure they include detailed descriptions of the products and services offered by the chosen leisure organisation and a range of examples of the information available to customers.

Some candidates had carried out and reported on more than one mystery visit and it should be noted that multiple visits are not required to meet the learning outcome.

Candidates should be reminded that this assessment objective focuses on their ability to **evaluate** evidence, draw **conclusions** and make **recommendations** for improvement.

C - AO3

All responses had been applied to appropriately selected leisure organisations. The highest marks were awarded to candidates who had explored a contrasting range of marketing activities, clearly linked to detailed information regarding the specific products and services these activities are designed to promote.

Centres are reminded of the importance of guiding candidates in their selection of a range of contrasting marketing activities, which can be from a range of different leisure organisations: a website for a gym, a flyer from a cinema, a press release issued by a local sports club; or contrasting activities used by the same organisation.

A small number of candidates did submit theoretical information and marketing theory, with little application to the leisure industry and assessors should note that this can limit the marks available.

Candidates should be reminded that this learning outcome is focused on their appropriate use of **research** methods to obtain information to **analyse** the marketing activities used by the sector.

D - AO2

Evidence was generally appropriate, with most Centres providing detailed observation records to support the assessment judgement. Centres are reminded of the importance that appropriately detailed and authenticated observation records play in the awarding of marks to this outcome. Generic records and comments which do not sufficiently highlight the observed skills of individual candidates can severely limit the marks available for this practical outcome.

Witness testimony evidence from employers, which is not authenticated by the assessor, is generally considered an unreliable piece of evidence to confirm the candidate's ability to delivery customer service against the specification requirements. A witness statement does not confer an assessment decision. The assessor must:

- consider all the information in the witness statement
- note the relevant professional skills of the witness to make a judgement of performance
- review supporting evidence when making an assessment decision
- review the statement with the learner to enable a greater degree of confidence in the evidence
- be convinced that the evidence presented by the witness statement is valid, sufficient and authentic

Centres are also reminded to ensure that a clear assessment judgement has been provided on each observation record, to highlight the levels of skill and expertise demonstrated. This assessment objective focuses on the candidate's ability to **apply** their knowledge, skills and understanding of customer service in the leisure industry.

Administration

OPTEMS forms and Candidate Mark Record Sheets were completed correctly. Samples received were also accurate, with Centres submitting the highest and lowest scoring candidate evidence. All Centres submitted Candidate Authentication Records. This is a JCGQ requirement and copies of all the forms required are available on the Edexcel website.

Annotation on coursework was found to be consistent. Annotation is most helpful to the internal and external moderation process.

Marking

This series found the majority of the marking to be appropriate, although a very small number of Centres were too lenient in awarding marks where the evidence did not meet the specification requirements.

Candidate evidence should be assessed against the assessment criteria in the specification. For each task there are three marks bands. Assessors should first determine the mark band statement that 'best fits' the evidence submitted. A note should be taken of command verbs and discriminators for each statement. For example, for A (AO1) where candidates have produced a lengthy **description** of how the leisure industry views the customer, marks would generally be limited to mark band one. Mark band two requires an **explanation** and mark band three a **comprehensive explanation**.

Section D (AO2) is generally an outcome where assessors most frequently award marks too generously. Care should be taken to ensure the candidate has independently demonstrated skill and expertise in the provision of customer service to a range of customers in a range of contrasting situations.

Assessment Evidence

AO1: The Leisure Customer.

This task addresses AO1 - *demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

This assessment outcome requires candidates to explore how the leisure customer is viewed by leisure organisations and to understand the importance of the customer and customer service to the industry, supported through the review of appropriate policies and procedures.

A very small minority of candidates were still choosing three similar organisations, for example three visitor attractions or three leisure centres. In order to award the highest marks, evidence must relate to a contrasting range of leisure organisations. Candidates could be encouraged to examine how leisure centres, gymnasiums, cinemas, theme parks, visitor attractions, libraries, sports clubs etc. view customers, supported and illustrated by a review of their customer service policies and procedures and how these contribute to customer care.

AO4: Operational aspects related to the leisure customer.

This task addresses AO4 - *evaluate evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

The marking criteria requires candidates to present information related to customer service provided by a leisure organisation, gained through a 'mystery visit'.

All candidates undertook a mystery visit of one, or in some cases two or three appropriate leisure organisations and presented details of their findings. There is no expectation that candidates will carry out a mystery visit on more than one appropriate leisure organisation and candidates should be encouraged to focus their time and efforts on provided detailed example of customer service gained through the one visit.

Centres should note that to achieve the highest marks in this band, candidates should be evaluating the success of the provider in satisfying customer needs and be able to comment on the **tangible methods** the provider has in place to measure standards, for example customer comment cards or surveys.

All candidates this series provided a description of the products and services the organisation provides and was an improvement on previous series.

A03: Marketing activities and the leisure customer.

This task addresses A03 - *use appropriate research methods to obtain information from a range of sources to analyse leisure industry vocationally-related issues.*

In providing evidence for this outcome, candidates are required to research a range of marketing activities used in the leisure industry, applied to specific products and services from a single leisure organisation or many. In order to award the highest marks, Centres should ensure that at least three **different** marketing activities have been explored.

A very small number of candidates provided evidence which is was not applied to the leisure industry. As this outcome focuses on the candidates research and analysis skills, candidates should be encouraged to make reference to their information sources used.

Where candidates are producing a high standard of response for this outcome, evidence relates to a range of contrasting marketing activities, clearly applied to specific products and services provided by a leisure organisation or a range of contrasting leisure organisations.

A02: Dealing with leisure customers.

This task addresses A02 - *apply knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of industry vocationally-related issues.*

This assessment outcome should demonstrate the candidate's ability to provide effective customer service to leisure customers. The outcome lends itself to practical activities such as customer service role-plays; face-to-face, over the telephone, responding to customer letters and emails, or through technological or visual means; giving presentations, creating displays etc.

Centres are reminded of the importance of detailed, candidate specific and targeted observation records and witness statements used to provide evidence of competency for this outcome.

Individual observation records, for each scenario, should reflect the range of customer types and situations dealt with, the different methods used in dealing with leisure customers and the level of independence demonstrated. Detailed assessor comments should clearly reflect the candidate's ability to work independently and to reflect the different customer types and situations dealt with. Each record should be completed, signed and dated by the assessor.

If the candidate is engaged in leisure industry employment, as a part-time job or during a work experience placement for example, line managers and supervisors could complete witness testimonies to support the candidate's ability to deal with a variety of customers in different ways. Witness testimonies should always be authenticated by the Assessor and would ideally be accompanied by evidence of a summative and holistic assessment judgement of the candidate's provision of customer service to leisure customers.

A range of example scenarios and documentation templates are available in the Teacher's Guide available to all centres at Edexcel Online www.edexcel.com.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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