

# Examiners' Report

## Summer 2010

GCSE

### GCE Leisure Studies (6970) Employment in Leisure

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### General comments

The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates and there was a similar performance compared to last June.

Most candidates were able to respond effectively to most questions. There was evidence that most candidates had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set, offering valid answers, although many candidates did struggle to achieve the higher levels in extended responses. Almost all candidates answered all questions.

There is still a tendency for candidates to be able to cope with the demands of the paper comfortably at a basic level without managing to raise their mark beyond the level of grades D and E. although a greater proportion achieved this than in the past. There has been pleasing evidence of improvement in exam technique, with less pure recall given when not required.

The applied nature of the GCE is still not fully grasped by candidates, however. The purpose of this GCE is to give learners an applied, work related approach to the leisure industry, involving active learning and the ability to take basic principles and apply them in unfamiliar situations. A few questions will always be aimed at AO1, straightforward recall of knowledge and understanding, but the majority - particularly the longer questions - will require learners to apply this. This is the key skill that they need to tackle this qualification successfully. More are achieving this each time but there is still a considerable amount of generic material offered in the longer applied questions. It involves active use of the stimulus material as indicated in the 'indicative content' parts of the mark scheme for levels based questions. Without this application responses cannot get beyond 3-4 marks out of the 8 available for longer questions, i.e. a grade D/E level.

Whilst in preparing these papers we will always try to keep as much of the information needed for a specific question on the same page, candidates should be aware that for the later questions information from the earlier parts could be useful. The papers are designed to focus candidates on one organisation/person so that they can get a feel for them i.e. a possible real-life situation. Candidates should be made aware of this.

The requirements of some of the command words were generally known by candidates, although many did not manage to access the higher marks in the longer questions as a consideration of terms such as 'analysis' did not show enough depth in response.

It is worth noting that from June 2010 onwards there is a requirement for Quality of Written Communication (QWC) to be assessed on this paper. The marking criteria for this will be integrated into the level descriptors for two of the 8 mark questions, usually the first two that appear on the paper.

## Question 1

Scenario for the whole paper was of Thodis Park, a leisure park. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

**1(a)** Candidates showed a far better understanding of the purpose of a job analysis that in previous series. Many also tried to apply it to the given scenario and did this successfully, linking its use to questioning the need for a new staff member and sometimes to the decreased demand for the role due to the reduction in visitor numbers.

**1(b)** Most candidates could identify 3 or 4 items expected in a job advert.

**1(c)** There was considerable variation in performance on this question. The last time that this, or similar question, has been used the advert required has been for a senior post. This time it was for a junior post but a considerable minority of candidates did not take this in and repeated similar response to those in the past - specialist magazines, national newspapers. This is unrealistic for this post, which would benefit from more local advertising, if only for the sake of keeping the cost down. There were some very good responses along these lines, but candidates should be made aware that they need to consider the type of post and not just use pre-learned responses. A number of candidates are still tending to put 'the internet' as a means of advertising. This is not precise enough as a response - some indication of the type of website (in this case perhaps the Park's own) is required for it to be acceptable

**1(d)(i)** This question produced some thoughtful and well applied responses. Many linked the use of the essential criteria to the role of customer service, stressing the value of confidence and communication in dealing with customers and projecting a good image of the organisation. The use of the desirable criteria tended to be the one that differentiated between the top levels of responses, with the better candidates accepting that for a junior post it was not actually desirable, with some even going as far as to say that personality was far more important as that couldn't easily be taught whereas experience could be more easily gained.

**1(d)(ii)** Responses were a little vague at times here. Many candidates knew roughly where the criteria would be used, either in short listing or in preparation of interview questions, but the mechanics of tick lists etc were often not clear. Rather too many candidates went beyond the requirements of the command verb for the question and explained why they were used. This did not gain credit - the requirement was for a description of how they were used. The importance of responding appropriately to the command verb given should always be stressed to candidates

**1(e)** The use of this type of selection day was almost unanimously welcomed by candidates. There were many good responses that linked the given tasks with the possible role, suggesting that role play exercises would put them in actual situations so that the organisation could accurately assess their potential. Many also pointed out the role of a presentation in terms of communication skill and this was another way of using the information about the day, linking it to the essential criteria given in Q1di.

There were a couple of weaknesses generally in responses. The first was a tendency to add unnecessary generic comment along the lines of 'not a good idea as some may get nervous and not do their best - this is true of any interview process and, in fact, probably less true when it is in this format rather than as a single 'all or nothing'

interview. the second is that, whilst a number of candidates did point out that this is actually a costly process in time and money, it was a rare candidate that related this to the fact that it was a junior post and that in those terms it was not quite such a good idea. Asking to carry out role plays on customer service for a post where full training is to be given could be classed as not being appropriate. As in Q1c, the level/type of post should always be considered in a question of this type so that full application occurs.

1(f) As in Q1ci (another 'describe' question) responses tended to be rather vague at times. Most responses included somehow the need to inform the successful candidate that he/she had got the job, but candidates should try to ensure that a precise procedure is given. For example, many said that 'they had to inform successful and unsuccessful candidates of the outcome' without giving any idea as to which should happen first. Similarly the way in which the candidates would be ranked after the day, and thus one selected, was often very vague/ candidate should be encouraged to be precise in questions such as this.

## Question 2

2(a) In contrast to much of the rest of the paper candidates reverted to dealing with this question in a rather generic way rather than applying it. Many simply described/explained the differences between the two types of employment rather than answering the specific question as to explaining how they were used 'at Thodis Park'. Candidates should be aware that the stimulus material provided is there to be used - there were 4 lines of information and this should be a clue as to the need to use it. Similarly, the phrase in the question 'at Thodis Park' rather than just at any leisure organisation, should be recognised as an indication that it is an applied and not generic question

2(b) Similarly, this question required application and, although more was forthcoming here, many responses dealt only in terms of the generic benefits. However, these were quite well known and many candidates scored up to 3-4 marks for comments on their potential suitability as they had been specifically trained. There was greater understanding of the financial benefits in terms of funding for apprentices, although a large number still stated at one time or another that it was essentially 'cheap labour'. This should always be qualified as cheap in actual terms does not always provide the best value for money in staff terms. They are, at least at first, unskilled so will contribute little.

2(c) This is a question that still causes problems for candidates. With a significant minority there are still too many misconceptions - for example, that they will have to pay 2 salaries and therefore it is expensive. The fact that they will only get half each seems to be ignored. Many of the generic benefits of the system seem well understood, but this again tended to mean that they were offered rather than much application. To achieve a high level of response it is necessary for candidates to retrieve the relevant information from their knowledge and then apply it to the given scenario - at times it appears that they start by putting down all the generic benefits and then - if there is room - try to apply it. 8 mark questions on this paper will not require this type of approach - it is the application and analysis of 2-4 points that is the key to level 3.

### Question 3

3(a) Most candidates understood the basic principles of scheduled breaks, with only occasional confusion when responses suggested that they were their for the employers direct benefit, i.e. to ensure that employees were not all taking their breaks at the same time..

3(b) Candidates arrived at many different conclusions as to the relative benefits and disadvantages of this pattern of work, in most cases quite correctly. Many saw the benefits of not working the same hours each week - or even the same shifts - in that there was variety both in terms of hours and colleagues they worked with. Others quite rightly perceived the problem of not having a regular schedule as the main issue. In both cases the way in which this affected the employees tended to be left rather implicit and would have benefited from being developed further.

3(c) As in past sessions, grievance procedures still posed problems for candidates. It is not clear from many of them that this is a set procedure that has defined rules. Misconceptions range from the belief that if it is raised then immediately someone will cure the problem (with the assumption that the grievance is always valid) to the implication that it leads straight to an industrial tribunal - the latter seems to be the default mode for weak candidates. The purpose - curing the problem rather than punishing the company/individuals - should be spelt out clearly to candidates

3(d) In contrast to Q2c, this question produced well applied responses with good use of the stimulus material. Most candidates managed some sort of application. This varied from the benefits to the company of having 'ready made' staff for their other parks, to saving money on redundancy and perhaps bringing them back when numbers rose again rather than re-employing. Candidates also looked at the employee side, with most concluding that, whilst they would still have a job, the distances involved were potential problems to the is solution in reality. This enabled a greater proportion of the candidates to achieve level 2, although the lack of real evaluation limited those that could achieve level 3. With any evaluative question some from of final judgement should be made - was it a good decision or not, perhaps differently from the two points of view in this case.

### Question 4

4(a) Most candidates attempted some application to the stimulus information, suggesting ways in which a change of management style might solve some of the problems that had been experienced by staff in the past. This was successful up to a point, but in a question that centres on staff motivation it is not enough to achieve the higher marks in level 2 and level 3. Some further link must be made to its effects on staff motivation. As a result, many responses were limited by focus on this.

4(b) This suffered from a similar lack of focus as the previous question. This part of the paper is concerned with motivating staff, not just with how the techniques given might improve their work. In this question there were many sound assertions that training would improve their work, but the effects on motivation were often left implicit. This was unfortunate as often there was application to the scenario in suggesting that the new members would gain from learning on the new rides and that staff development such as bonding days would improve the cooperation between them. Some disadvantages were also seen, although at times these were based on the rather simplistic premise that all staff would get the same training, whether they

had been there a long time or not. The focus on motivation need to be explicitly set out by candidates to complement the good work they are doing on application in question such as this.

4(c) Responses to this tended to be rather predictable - give them more money and they will work harder! The focus on the specific situation was rather lost and most reasoning was generic. Although some candidates did argue well for the introduction of appraisals to sort out individual issues and perhaps set targets, many also suggested performance related pay, which, in a leisure park scenario as described, could barely be justified. Many justifications were only generic.

# Leisure Studies

## Unit 1 - The Leisure Industry

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	47	40	34	28	22
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

## Unit 2 - Working Practices in Leisure

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	60	52	45	38	31
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

## Unit 3 - The Leisure Customer

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	47	41	35	29	23
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

#### Unit 4 - Leisure in Action

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

#### Unit 5 - Employment in Leisure

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	60	53	46	40	34
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

#### Unit 6 - Current Issues in Leisure

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	25
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

#### Notes

**Maximum Mark (Raw):** the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

**Boundary mark:** the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

**Grade boundaries** may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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