Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

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GCE Leisure Studies (6970)
Paper 01
Employment in Leisure

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# Unit 5 6970: Employment in Leisure

## General Comments

The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates and there was an improvement in performance compared to last January.

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

It would be beneficial to remind candidates in preparing for the exam that it is not necessary to repeat the question when they start an answer – this wastes time and lines. A typical example was 'One of the advantages for Neodo of asking applicants to complete an application form rather than send in a CV…' which could take up to 3 lines. Whilst in theory this could help them focus on the question, using up a quarter of the lines like this is not beneficial in general.

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 C and D. This 'bulk' has moved up in comparison to past years, but there is still a problem for a substantial number of candidates in using their knowledge and understanding to the best advantage 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.

It is the applied nature of the GCE that is still an issue here. 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 candidates 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 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 has been 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 Neodo cinema complex. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

**Q1(a)(i)** Most candidates were able to suggest 2 items together with at least one reason. Candidates should be encouraged to go beyond the 'salary …so they know what the salary is' type of response.
They need to say why they would need to know that in real life– perhaps so that they can decide whether it is more than they are getting paid.

**Q1(a)(ii)** Although there is still some confusion amongst candidates as to whether the person specification is written by the applicant or the organisation, this is becoming less of a problem. Taking the candidates through an actual complete recruitment process as part of the delivery of the course would help to eradicate the remaining problem. Most candidates were aware of at least one way in which it was used, either in terms of developing criteria/questions or for somehow reducing the number of possible applicants. Again, going through the process from an organisation's point of view would help them see this happening.

**Q1(b)** Most candidates had a sound basic understanding of the characteristics of an application form that might make it better than a CV on some occasions, but development was often only implicit.
For example, many stated that it enabled the company to ask for the information that it would need – but didn't explain the importance of this in enabling the selection procedure to narrow down the list or perhaps highlight those with most potential.
Similarly, comments on the 'easier to read' format often stopped short of indicating that this was cost effective in reducing time needed to read them.
A little more developed explanation could have turned the large number of sound answers to really very good ones.

**Q1(c)** This question brought out a whole variety of both positive and negative responses. Many candidates regarded it as a poor decision because it might evoke a response from only a narrow range of people but, as in Q1b, this was often not developed as to why this might be a particular problem for this job.

Some good balanced arguments also were presented, especially based on the popularity of the website stated in the text. This was seen as positive but often qualified by the fact that this popularity may well be only for seeing films – and perhaps most of this was from younger people/people who wouldn't be interested in a job at manager level if at all.

Much of the work was well considered, although it is surprising that the perception of many well qualified people not having access to the internet is still so strong. It is important that candidates stick to the realistic here as elsewhere – often the fact that the internet reaches a large audience was seen as a disadvantage as so many people would apply.

**Q 1(d)** The first 'long' applied question on the paper elicited some very good applied responses but also a large number of generic ones. The latter repeated their learnt characteristics of job shares well at times, although there was confusion as to exactly how it worked.

A substantial minority still seemed to think that both would be working at the same time and so you get twice as much work done as with one person. However, to access the higher mark bands it is necessary to apply this knowledge.

Good responses concentrated on the possibility of sharing the antisocial hours and so improving motivation/efficiency as a positive. Negatives included problems with complaints being lost between the two – or that customers preferred to talk to one person, not two – and that it might cause issues with their teams who would have to get used to two styles of management above them

**Q1(e)** Most candidates knew what the checklist was for, although a few did not pick up the 'pre' part and ran through the list of questions/activities in the room. The main barrier to achievement was in lack of precision. They should try to ensure that it is clear what has to be done. For example 'inform candidates' is only of value as 'inform them of time and place of interview'

**Q1(f)** Most candidates were able to access the upper end of level 1 or the lower end of level 2, but again the limited application was a barrier to achievement. It is not sufficient to say 'a role play will show what they are like in a work situation' – why is the important for the position of Customer Service Manager? It is the link to the actual post that should be spelt out – the fact that will be meeting customers' difficult situations or dealing with a team of 5 people. The clinching factor for really top level responses is that a prolonged interview session such as this ensures that an overall view of the candidates is achieved as it is important in a position such as this to get the right person as they are so valuable to the company.

This is an area that few candidates got to, preferring the negative that it was expansive in time and money.

**Q1 (g)** There were many good responses to this question with a wide range of ideas suggested. Many correctly dealt with the fact that new equipment – or even new buildings might be acquired, whilst others considered the possibility that the staff themselves may have changed roles through promotion or even redeployment. Only a few candidates misread the question and answered as if it were the original induction.

## Question 2

**Q2 (a) ( ii)** Candidates displayed sound understanding of what notice period involved and most managed both positive and negative comments. The former were along the lines of the new manager being able to learn from the leaving one and the latter suggested that because she was leaving then the existing CSM's work rate might not be great and she might negatively influence either the new manager of the team.
In order to gain the higher marks, candidates need to develop these ideas further as explanations. For example, in the positives that being able to carry out the induction the existing manger would ensure the new one is trained and so the handover would be smooth with no loss of efficiency and continued good customer service. It is the depth of explanation – really explicitly stating the benefits for Neodo that is important.

**Q2(b)** Most candidates were able to access this question at the lower levels, with simple suggestions of installing lifts, ramps etc. many also lifted their responses to level 2 by linking it to the characteristics given – on 3 floors etc – or to what might be needed in a cinema. This was good use of real life applied material. However, in dealing with the equal opportunities side, many candidates lost sight of the question in that it asked for changes to the actual complex and not their procedures.

## Question 3

**Q3 (a)** Apprenticeships appear to be an employment type that candidates have difficulty understanding, as many are unclear as to whether they are internal to the organisation or external. In terms of this question, the introduction of the idea of a training school seemed to imply that they were not in the organisation. However, most did suggest benefits such as being able to train them as they would want but, as in other questions, did not really develop this to show why this was such an advantage.
As ever, the idea of cheap labour was prominent, but candidates should retain a sense of realism – they are only cheap because they are not yet trained, at least until the latter stages of their training.

**Q3 (b) (i)** Candidates were well aware of the basics of casual staff, although there was some confusion with flexible working at times.

**Q3(b)(ii)** As in earlier questions, candidates often started along the right lines, but analysis together with application tended to be weak.
There were many rather general statements about part-time workers being more committed and they had set hours so could be trusted to turn up, but these were not developed to indicate how this benefited Neodo given the roles they were carrying out. The fact that they were meeting customers or in administration roles was picked up by only a few candidates, indicating that it would be better to have part timers as they would give improved service as it would have been worth training them either on the equipment they were using or in customer service. Again, it was the application that was lacking in most responses.

## Question 4

**Q4 (a)** This question elicited a large number of rather weak responses, indicating that candidates had not really taken in the exact scenario.
Many of them stated that as he was good as his job he wouldn't need training, perhaps ignoring the fact that management training is something rather different from the skills training they were suggesting. Most achieved at least top of level 1 with comments relating to this and to the fact that training was not addressing the issue of disappointment with others and/or his lack of being appreciated in monetary terms.
Some good responses did develop this, but also occasionally got side tracked into suggesting what could be used instead, which is not what the question asked for.

**Q4(b)** Candidates were able to put their alternatives here and most did it, achieving the lower end of level 2 by suggesting that some sort of performance related pay would be in order.
Occasionally this was slightly simplified as bonuses, but most could see that if he performed better then he should get paid more and that this would motivate him. Stronger candidates indicated that what he did was measurable and therefore this type of payment was the right way to go.
Good responses went on to suggest that this might help motivate the rest, whilst those with less comprehension of the system suggested that it might be unfair to the others.
Similarly, good candidates suggested that this worked for the company as well as they were getting the benefits of his ideas, whereas less able responses thought that it would cost them a lot if he had many good ideas.
The use of appraisals was also a possible method, although these responses tended to be rather generic, describing what an appraisal did rather than linking it directly to Raul.

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