

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2011

Applied GCE

GCE Travel & Tourism (6991)
Unit 5: Travelling Safely

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Introduction

This externally assessed unit is now well established within this qualification. There are reports available for each previous series available on the Edexcel website.

The paper followed the format of a question and answer booklet. Candidates were required to respond in the spaces provided. There were 6 questions in total and 90 possible marks available.

The questions only related to the travel and tourism industry. All questions linked to the information under 'what you need to learn' in the qualification specification.

The questions were linked to the assessment objectives. Candidates therefore needed to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and skills in vocationally related contexts. Candidates needed to use appropriate research techniques to obtain information to analyse vocationally related issues and problems. Finally candidates were required to evaluate information to make reasoned judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations about vocationally related issues and problems.

Most candidates attempted all questions and consequently they picked up marks across the paper.

Travelling Safely

Q1.

(a) In most cases an organisation that helps to regulate the airline industry in the UK was identified.

(b) The majority of candidates attempted this question, but very few candidates were able to gain full marks. Some confused ABTA with regulatory bodies in the airline industry. Many candidates gave vague answers which restricted marks. A typical answer awarded 2 marks is below.

1. They produce new airline laws.
2. They also make the airlines safe

A more specific response:

1. The CAA issues ATOLs to ensure financial protection for customers who book on ATOL protected holidays.
2. IATA globally standardises ticketing and payment systems.

(c) This was generally a badly answered question with much repetition. Some candidates did not read the stem properly and talked about sending passengers to places unlikely to suffer a force majeure. More able candidates did grasp the requirements of the question, tending to gain at least two out of the possible three marks available for each 'way'.

Typical 2 mark answers:

1. Accommodation principals should tell tour operators about repairs and refurbishment as the accommodation will be unusable for a while
2. Train staff so they know this ABTA rule including the 14 day alteration. This way they know all the rules and what to do if things change.

Q2

(a)i) This was a well answered question. The vast majority of candidates gained the full three marks and nearly all others gained two marks.

(a)ii) Again this question was generally well answered with most candidates gaining the full three marks available. Some did get confused and thought the nanny required a visa, but often they still provided enough correct information to gain three marks overall.

(b) The vast majority of candidates gained three or four marks for this question. Weaker candidates provided very vague answers just saying 'they need vaccinations' which is not specific enough in an AO2 question to gain marks.

(c)i) & (ii) Most candidates did gain the marks available for the causes of typhoid. This is an AO1 or knowledge based question so candidates tended to either know the answer or they didn't. Several thought typhoid was caused by a mosquito bite.

The vast majority of candidates were able to gain the two available marks for symptoms of typhoid.

Q3.

(a) Most candidates gained the mark available for identifying the legislation. EU Directive and Trades Description Act were both acceptable.

(b) Those candidates who could not identify the correct legislation did struggle with this question. There were, however, many responses that received the full four marks available for each. Repetition was an issue as many candidates were unable to identify two sufficiently different recommendations. 4 mark responses can be seen below:

1. All members of staff could receive appropriate training about accuracy and knowledge of the information they give. This explains the importance of accurate information and then this situation is unlikely to happen again.
2. They should ensure all their staff are knowledgeable and aware of the changes or updates to procedures. This would mean such mistakes will be avoided in the future. They will not be accused or penalized for breaking legislation

(c) This is a question that has appeared before and the majority of candidates did provide some good answers. Weaker candidates relied heavily on examples rather than looking at treating everyone equally, with no discrimination allowed against the disabled. A typical two mark answer:

'DDA states all areas must be accessible to the disabled. If there are stairs leading somewhere a lift must be provided.'

A more fully formed answer that scored the full 4 marks available:

'DDA makes sure everyone gets treated the same even if the person is in a wheelchair. Everyone has the same rights. A company cannot not take someone on because they are disabled. The company would have to make adjustments - automatic doors or a ramp etc'.

Q4

Q4(a) This question was a good discriminator. The majority of candidates did score well. Where candidates were weaker it tended to be in their misinterpretation of the check-in procedure. Instead they got confused with the actual purchasing of the ticket. Good 'A' candidates gained 5-6 marks by looking at the question from both the passengers and the airlines perspective and providing both advantages and disadvantages, so providing a balanced explanation.

An example of a 4 mark answer:

'For the passenger it is easier and quicker because they don't have to wait in line to book the tickets and it is easier because it is just like filling a form out at the airport

but its actually at home on the internet. Also for passengers they may have to have waited to be able to book online because the system is not working that day. For the airlines it is quicker because they can just take all the information off the internet rather than having so many people queuing with forms.'

An example of a 6 mark answer:

'There are many advantages for airlines and passengers checking in through the internet such as the passenger won't have to be at the airport so early because he doesn't have to wait in line any more. However a disadvantage is passengers need access to the internet and to a printer to print off the boarding card. An advantage for the airline is that they won't need as many staff sitting at the check in desks which will save the company a lot of money. There are also a lot of disadvantages, for example the airline won't know if the passenger is actually at the airport because he/she might have checked in already.'

More points are made in the six mark answer and all are carefully explained.

Q4(b) Weaker candidates had a problem reading this question correctly. Many stated that they knew airlines that did not follow this procedure and it was very wrong. Some said airlines were rushing which is why they were failing to implement. Clearly these answers could not be awarded any marks. Similar questions to this one have appeared on the paper before and centres that prepared candidates using past papers were more successful.

One answer that scored seven marks can be seen below:

'If an organisation in the airline industry fails to carry out this requirement it increases the risk of danger to the tourist. This is because anyone would be able to walk through the airport just by having a passport. This means that a person with no intentions of boarding a plane could walk on through the airport and cause harm or threaten the organisation. An example of this is terrorism, without a boarding card it will be hard to control and keep monitoring who is going where and this small action could make it much easier for an attack on a country. This small measure taken by organisations to require a boarding card brings down the risk of danger and terrorism by a large amount.'

Q5

This was a well answered question with most candidates scoring at least four marks. The weaknesses that could be identified were that some answers could not be credited because there was a lot of repetition with a previous action identified. Many other candidates just gave the actions and did not provide justifications which meant they lost half the marks available.

See the two answers below which provide examples:

An example of a 4 mark answer:

1. Adequate information and warnings should be provided for customers with children that it is not safe for children on the balconies
2. They should not place families with young children on top floors

3. Change the features of the balcony to make it more safe
4. Health and safety booklets could be left in the apartment

An example of a 7 mark answer:

1. Classic Holidays could employ someone to check the strength and infrastructure of buildings annually or monthly and check that they meet building regulations. This could prevent further accidents from happening
2. Classic Holidays could give information to customers about possible hazards to small children such as balconies or long drops. This would make parents aware that they shouldn't leave young children unattended
3. Rooms could be allocated more appropriately by the resort, for example, young families could be given rooms on the ground floor. This would avoid serious accidents involving long drops
4. The resort could state in the brochure if they think there are potential hazards such as balconies or high drops.

Q6

(a) Most candidates were able to identify four things that Endsleigh would immediately insure Bill for after the accident. A few, however, did specify funeral costs.

(b) Most candidates gained 1 out of the 2 marks available for this question. They got the mark for saying 'call the insurance company', however they failed to go on to gain the second mark 'to gain authorization to book transport'.

(c) This question was not well answered. This is an AO1 question about insurance policies in general. Stronger candidates gave answers such as 'loss of possessions', 'missing a flight and needing to book another', 'baggage loss' etc. Weaker candidates just regurgitated more from the extract about medical insurance which could not be credited.

(d) This question was a differentiator. Most candidates did gain some marks. However higher scoring candidates avoided repetition and gave specific detail in their answers.

The first example answer below gained 2 marks and is vague:

'Potential danger information on what could happen if failing to follow information. People will read the booklet and give them a sense of what can happen if they fail to do the right thing.'

An example of a 4 mark answer:

'To have insurance numbers and relative numbers on them at all times. Then when people find them if needed they can contact them quickly and then they can contact insurance, transport etc as needed.'

(e) (i) Overall this section of the question was answered well. Most candidates gave a detailed description of an emergency situation. Common responses linked either to the swine flu epidemic or the volcanic ash cloud. It was encouraging to see such up to date research. A recent event is considered to be one that has occurred in the last

five years. Candidates who use events older than this, such as the tsunami in 2004 or the 9/11 terrorist attack tend to be vague in their descriptions. This may be because they do not remember these events first hand.

The specification states candidates are to learn how to describe large-scale emergency situations.

(e)(ii) This question is challenging and is weighted towards AO3 which requires candidates to draw on research and show assessment. Many candidates showed a detailed knowledge of how each emergency was dealt with. Much of this knowledge, however, was not related to the travel and tourism industry - fire service, government and locals.

Whilst detailed descriptions from candidates were common, the question asked for assessment. Assessment was generally non-existent. Some candidates gave explanations rather than assessment but the vast majority of candidates provided descriptions.

One typical descriptive, and therefore Level 1, answer can be seen below;

'The travel and tourism industry dealt well with it ensuring that all passengers due to travel received alternative holidays or money back. They ensured all people stranded in the places where it happened returned home safely. Aid was given to those passengers over there to ensure their safety. Those with relatives who were killed were transported back to England at the appropriate time. Also medical treatment was given to all who needed it. Compensation did not cover loss of possessions.'

The specification states candidates are to learn how large-scale emergency situations were dealt with by organisations in the travel and tourism industry.

See below a response from June 2010. January 2011 answers were not so detailed.

One candidate response that was current and did achieve level 2 marks can be seen below;

- i) The 2009/10 Icelandic volcanic eruption. Small eruptions began on 19th Dec 2009 which didn't affect anyone. However by April 2010 the eruptions became a lot bigger and the wind direction changed meaning all the ash clouds were being blown over northern Europe. This resulted in all the flights within Northern Europe being grounded causing chaos for all travellers as they either couldn't go on holiday or were stuck abroad not being able to return to their families or work. Travel companies were losing thousands by the second. The travel industry lost £30m a day.
- ii) The whole situation caused airlines loads of angry passengers but there was nothing anyone could do about it for the first week or so. The government decided that a plane could fly and see if aircraft were safe to fly in an ash cloud. After the test flights were allowed to fly again. So I think the situation was solved slowly but in the long run it was effective. The Travel and Tourism industry put the needs of passengers first and grounded all flights. They put themselves at risk of injury just to see if they could get the aircraft flying again and they ended up getting aircraft flying again so it was effective, just slow.

Please note that candidates are expected to research two or more emergency situations that have affected the travel and tourism industry.

In preparing candidates for the exam, centres are reminded to advise candidates to read the first page of instructions. Centres are advised to ask candidates to ensure that they have attempted all questions. Candidates must make sure they follow the instructions of the question i.e. describe, explain, assess, analyse etc.

Grade Boundaries

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