

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

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

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General Comments

The paper followed the format of a question and answer booklet. Students were required to respond in the spaces provided. There were 5 questions and 90 marks were 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. Students therefore needed to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and skills in vocationally related contexts. Students needed to use appropriate research techniques to obtain information to analyse vocationally related issues and problems. Finally students were required to evaluate information to make reasoned judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations about vocationally related issues and problems.

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

Question 1

Q1 (a) Most students scored 2-3 marks here. There were some good responses relating to EASA, however sometimes responses were quite general which restricted marks. For example, 'ensuring safety.'

One response that gained the four marks available;

'Licensing of air crew. This is where it approves staff, including pilots on planes to ensure they meet standards.

Training staff to ensure that they meet standards, for example, EASA monitors maintenance teams to make sure they have been trained to do their job efficiently and safely.'

Q1 (b) The vast majority of students scored the two marks available here for Civil Aviation Authority.

Q1 (c) This question clearly differentiated between students, with marks ranging from 0-5. If students did not understand the role of the CAA they struggled. One response that scored 5 marks;

'Because it is authorised to ground flights such as the 1600 flights it grounded in May 2011 it can lead to loss of profit for airlines and can cause many customers to be compensated as a result. Another potential conflict that could occur due to this role of the CAA is that passenger congestion can occur within the airport as well as traffic congestion due to transfers being disrupted and other forms of transportation being alternatives for grounded flights. This role of the CAA causes profit loss for airlines but can also cause them to receive a bad reputation.'

Question 2

Q2(a) This was a well answered question. Students were able to use the information provided to give the correct information and most students scored maximum marks.

Q2(b) This question did differentiate between students. Scores ranged from 1-6 marks. Weaker students suggested things like 'to keep track of people' or 'stops foreign people coming in' with no qualifying comments. One response that scored maximum marks;
'To make sure that the people travelling into their countries are eligible to come in. This is because it prevents illegal immigrants from coming into the country to stay. They also use visas and ESTAs to keep track of people that are coming into their country so they know how long they will be there for and when they need to leave.
This is also so they can see where the majority of visitors are coming from and also it is a way to make money for the government as they usually charge for visas.'

Q2c(i) This was not a particularly well answered question. To gain the two marks available students needed to refer to contaminated needles/infected people. Often they would state that HIV could be transmitted by sharing needles, missing the information that the needles needed to be contaminated; e.g. 'HIV and Aids are contracted when bodily fluids are mixed.'

One response that did score the two marks available;
'Having unprotected sex with a person who is already HIV positive. Also through the use of infected needles which have already been used and are not safe.'

Q2c(ii) Again a poorly answered question with many students only scoring two out of the four marks available. Some students suggested vaccination. One response that did gain the four marks;

1. Safe sex – use a condom
2. Do not get a tattoo abroad or off someone you do not know
3. Carry your own needles around and do not share
4. Ask someone before you have sexual intercourse whether they are HIV positive to protect yourself.

Question 3

Q3(a) Students either knew the correct answer or did not. Accepted EU Directive, EU Package Directive and EU Regulation Denied Boarding.

Q3(b) This was a differentiator question as expected. Many students simply repeated the stem and once this was removed there was little response left. Others provided generic responses that were not applied to the scenario provided.

One response that scored four marks;
'The implications that age discrimination laws have on travel and tourism organisations is that they can not just focus on one target market and need

to supply facilities for all ages and health. This could lead to a lot of money being spent to entertain the young ages and support the older ages. This could create difficulties for the organisation. This could also affect travellers, for example, if an organisation had a group of young loud teenagers and another group of OAPs together on a hike this could cause problems of the OAPs slowing the teenagers down and the teenagers being too loud and noisy for the OAPs. This can create everyone to not be able to get the best out of their trip. The Trades Description Act can create implications for the travel and tourism industry due to them having to focus on their advertisement and what they are selling is all correct otherwise customers will not be receiving what they paid for and will complain and want to sue the organisation which creates loss of money for the organisation and bad feedback.'

Q3(c) This was another question that differentiated between students. Some students did not construct their answers well so they gave more suggestions in the justification section and therefore lost marks. Many students could make one valid suggestion with justification but struggled with a second example. One student did gain the full eight marks available; Suggestion:

'Staff could be trained to ensure they do not sell these types of excursions/tours to passengers who do not look like they have that level of fitness or stamina.'

Justification:

'This means that customers are aware of the tours which require that level of fitness and stamina. Also they will not waste their money being sold a holiday which they are not suitable for.'

Suggestion:

'Tours 4 U could advertise the excursions with a rating of energy and fitness level for the tour so staff and customers are aware of fitness level required.'

Justification:

'This means customers are aware of the more active excursions right from the beginning and saves confusion between staff and customers when making a decision on which tour best suits their needs.'

Q3(d) Students generally scored well here, most scored 3 marks. The weakness arose because they did not read the question fully and see the emphasis on taking out travel insurance at the time of booking.

One response that just scored the four marks available;

'Certain insurance can take effect as soon as the policy has been paid for and so this can cover anything before the holiday such as not being able to get to the airport due to the car breaking down. If this happened the customer can claim on travel insurance and get their money back.'

Question 4

Q4(a)(i) The vast majority of students gained the mark available here.

Q4(a)(ii) This question differentiated well between students. The weaker ones did not understand that the bonding system comes into effect when

organisations go out of business, so many referred to cancellations and changes to bookings which do not come under the remit of the bonding scheme.

Some gained two out of the four marks available because their answers were vague; 'protects money, the company cannot spend it.'

One response that clearly showed the student's knowledge and gained the four marks available;

'The bonding scheme protects customers because members of ABTA pay for membership. This payment helps to transport customers back home if the company were to go bust and forced to abandon the customer.'

Q4(b) The majority of students gained the two marks available and identified that the full cost of the holiday plus the insurance premium would need to be paid.

Q4(c)(i) Most students gained at least two of the three available marks here. One response that gained all marks available;

'As Mr Brown is the lead name on the booking, written notification must be given by Mr Brown that Mr Jones wishes to cancel his place.'

Q4(c)(ii) Most students correctly identified that the cancellation charge would be 60% of the tour cost.

Q4(d)(i) Most students did not score the three marks available here. Some students could not link the information provided in the stem to the information on 'If we change your holiday.' One response that did gain all the marks available;

'It is considered a major change as the star rating is completely different. If they were moved to another 5 star it would be a minor change but this is a 3 star.'

Q4(d)(ii) All students were able to provide the correct answer £40.

Q4(e) Students scored well here. Only two did not gain the mark available.

Q4(f) Many students did not gain any marks for this question. Some stated a force majeure is something that happens abroad. One response that did gain the two marks available;

'A force majeure is a large scale emergency situation. Examples of a force majeure include natural disasters or terrorist attacks.'

Question 5

Q5(a) Many students repeated parts of the stem rather than tackling the question asked. Practice with these types of questions may help them move away from description. Again some students did not justify their suggestion and instead provided more suggestions.

One response gaining the four marks available;

Suggestion:

'Book with an ATOL accredited travel agent to make sure the holiday/flight is ATOL protected.'

Justification:

'This means customers do not need to worry as they have been careful to book an ATOL protected flight within the travel agent not on a website which may not have financial protection for passengers.'

Q5(b) Too many students are still thinking a medical assistance company is an insurance company. This question has appeared on papers before so this common mistake is disappointing. One response that scored the full four marks available;

'Can fly him home in a private plane/helicopter which includes a pilot, trained doctor/nurse to assist him during the flight and will also have medical equipment on board in case of emergency in the air.'

Q5(c) (i) Most students scored well here. Popular choices of a large scale emergency situation were the Icelandic volcanic eruption and Hurricane Sandy.

One response gaining the four marks available;

'This is a large scale emergency because much airspace was unusable which meant flights all over the world were cancelled due to this. It affected many 1000's of people in different ways such as their holiday being cancelled, delayed or even customers being stranded abroad not being able to get home.'

Q5(c) (ii) This question tended to differentiate between students. It was in a slightly different format from previous papers.

The best student scored six of the available marks;

'The BA strikes occurred in 2012 and lasted for approximately 6 days. They caused a large amount of disruption to the travel industry particularly the airline industry because at least 1500 BA members went on strike. This led to many flights being grounded which caused a large profit loss for the airline.

To improve its response in the future they could have extra staff on standby to ensure better cover. Another improvement could be that alternative transportation such as coaches is organised to replace UK mainland flights. In the case of the French strikes in 2003 for example, the channel tunnel acted as an alternative for ferries. Another improvement would be better communication with customers. The use of social media could warn customers to stop them travelling to the airport so reducing congestion.'

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