

# Examiner's Report

## January 2010

GCE

### GCE Travel & Tourism (6994/01)

### Unit 8 - Current Issues

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## 6994: Current Issues

### Materials available

Support materials for assessors including a marking portfolio guide are available on the Edexcel website.

This report will summarise the key issues and then comment on the assessment evidence requirements, the accuracy of the marking and the administration.

### Key Issues

#### Task a)

Overall there is an improvement. More centres are awarding the appropriate mark bands. Few learners focused on an event which was encouraging. Some evidence for task a) however was unclear in terms of defining the issue i.e. some learners described a topic rather than selecting a specific issue to be the focus. Those learners who described the issue clearly tended to do well in all tasks.

Most research plans gave some detail as to when aims would be achieved and activities to be undertaken to meet aims. These tended to be more detailed than in previous series. Where learners did not consider timescales this tended to impact on task b). Many learners were starting to give some detail in the description of the methodology to be used although few described in detail as to how the aims will be met. Some learners were able to explain how the aims will be met and the methodology to be used although in some cases evidence was limited.

#### Task b)

There is some improvement compared to previous series and much of the evidence was characteristic of the higher marks bands. Some learners still however included evaluative rather than planning evidence i.e. an evaluation of how well activities were achieved rather than show they using and updating their plan. Overall most learners showed some changes and some updating.

#### Task c)

Overall most learners used a range of sources of research including primary and secondary sources. Many learners referenced work although use of the sources within the body of the text varied. Analysis also varied between learners but overall most demonstrated some analytical skills. Those learners that set clear perimeters in task a) and selected a clear issue were often the learners that gave a clear and or comprehensive analysis of the issue and were able to clearly consider the effects on the travel and tourism industry.

#### Task d)

Overall there was improvement in a number of centres. It was clear those centres that had followed the guidance in the previous moderators report. Whilst there were a significant number of learners now considering all aspects of the project there were still some cases where evaluations lacked breadth and mainly focused on the methodology used. Evidence was more evaluative rather than descriptive which is encouraging. Recommendations however in some samples lacked detail.

## Assessment Evidence

The tasks for the unit are set within the specification. There are no requirements for how evidence of completing these tasks is presented except that in task a) learners are required to produce a plan and in b) show evidence of using the plan. There are four tasks for the unit as shown on page 97 of the specification. Each task targets one of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) for the qualification. These AOs are given on page 155 of the specification.

It is recommended that an original plan is submitted for a) and an updated plan showing any of the changes updated by the learner and regularly reviewed by the assessor be submitted for task b). The evidence for task b) should be evidence of a working document rather than a reflective account of changes.

### Task a)

A research proposal that includes a description of the issue and a plan that shows the project aims and the research methodology adopted, including timescales and planned sources of reference.

The evidence expected for this task would therefore include a description of the issue selected for the focus of the research study. This should be an issue, which can be defined as -

*'an important question that is in dispute and needs to be settled'.*

(source:<http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=issue>)

The other evidence expected for this task would be a plan that shows the project aims and should consider the parameters of the study. There should also be consideration of the research methodology. To access higher marks then learners should consider the level of detail included in the plan. For mark band three an explanation of how the project aims will be met and the research methodology used should be evident. Learners should therefore demonstrate an awareness of the methodological tools available to them and show some understanding of which methods would be suitable for their research project. There should be consideration of both primary and secondary research.

There were a number of different topics covered. Most included a topic that would lead to an issue i.e. a topic was described however the issue within the topic was not described or clear. For example 'the effects of the credit crunch on the travel and tourism industry' rather than an issue such as 'do airlines need to cut costs due to the credit crunch?'. Issues can focus on the travel and tourism sector or an industry within the industry such as the accommodation sector.

The plans were varied in presentation. Some showed detail although this varied between centres. The methodologies were often the strength in the evidence and were described in some detail. In some cases learners made an attempt to give an explanation of how the project aims will be met and an attempt to explain how the research methodology to be used. Fewer gave theoretical evidence i.e. general advantages and disadvantages of using questionnaires for research. Parameters were evident in most samples but not all and the level of detail varied. Timescales

were usually given and were realistic. There were however a few learners that did not set timescales and this impacted on task b). The plan should be submitted before the project is carried out. The plan should not be retrospective as was the case in a few samples. Task d) provides the opportunity for reflection and proposals for change.

#### Task b)

How the learner worked independently and followed the research plan to meet the aims and timescales. How the learner dealt with the changes to the plan.

Evidence expected would show how well the learner worked independently and how well the learner followed the research plan to meet the aims and timescales. Evidence could be presented as an updated plan with details of what was completed and which deadlines were met or, a statement from the learner. At mark band two it is expected that the learner will update the plan not just state what they did. There were some plans that just included a description of what was achieved or not achieved i.e. a reflective account. More plans appeared to be followed and had some updating although in many still the updating was limited. Those learners that did show some changes to the plans often did not show the rescheduling of any aims or timescales. There was overall limited evidence relating to contingency plans. Most learners achieved aims set although those learners who gave really focused plans with clear perimeters in b) tended to be the learners that clearly achieved their aims.

The plan could consider the following:

- Dates
- Aims and objectives
- How aims and objectives will be met?
- Research to be used to meet aims and objectives
- Target date
- What could go wrong? What could the learner do to sort this? Contingency
- Achievement dates
- Changes needed and why?
- Additional research required and why?
- Assessor comments

#### Task c)

Research undertaken as indicated in the plan for the project. Analysis of the issue and its effect on the travel and tourism industry or one of its component sectors.

There should be evidence of research undertaken that links to the research proposal issue. The research should be that as indicated in the plan (task a). For many learners the methodology used did follow the plan and often additional sources used but there was no indication why i.e. the plan was not updated to indicate why additional research were necessary (task b). Alternatively the evaluation in most cases did not address the need for additional resources. There were very few explanations given.

Evidence expected for this task is a bibliography and or referencing indicating the sources used. For higher marks awarded at least some sources would be referenced in the evidence submitted. It is not expected that the learner would use the Harvard referencing system precisely although some similar format would be expected. At the higher mark range then the text should reflect and use the research rather than simply state the source used. There should also be evidence that the learner has obtained sources independently. This could be a statement from the learner or the assessor indicating how the sources were obtained to confirm the level of independence. There was limited evidence of this.

This series most learners did attempt to reference and source work as well as submit a bibliography or terms of reference. There usually was a range of different sources used rather than just a range of websites. Most used both primary and secondary research. Some learners exceeded sources identified in plan however many learners gave no explanation of why these sources were required (task b).

Evidence of the effect of the issue on the travel and tourism industry or one of its component sectors should be analytical rather than a description of findings of the issue. The quality of the analysis varied. There was some very detailed analysis in some samples yet in others the evidence tended to be basic facts or not consider the effect on the industry or component sector. At the lower end of the marks awarded evidence basic analysis rather than descriptive which has been evident in the past series. Whilst some learners did relate the analysis to the effect on the travel and tourism industry others were general in the content or did not consider the effect instead how the industry had affected the issue.

#### Task d)

An evaluation of the project and the research methodology with recommendations for approaches to be adopted for future projects.

Evidence did vary across centres. In some samples there were good detailed evaluations that clearly addressed the requirements of the task. There were still some samples where learners did evaluate the project as a whole however the content was brief. There were some learners that just evaluated the methodology rather than the whole project. Where the evidence of the evaluation was brief rather than detailed it was because there was limited coverage of the whole project or because each aspect evaluated had limited detail.

In many the acknowledgements of the limitations were brief Recommendations tended to lack detail and for many were a weakness. More gave justified recommendations. To access the higher marks then learners should give depth in the evaluation and use the evidence to support objective conclusions. In summary recommendations for improvement did vary. Some were basic recommendations whilst a few really considered the suitability of the project and used the evidence to justify recommendations for future projects.

Learners should consider the questions, such as those listed below, when evaluating the project.

- Was the issue title appropriate?

- Where the parameters too wide or too narrow?
- Did I meet all aims and objectives?
- Were the aims and objectives achievable?
- Did I select the best methodology?
- Did I select the correct sample?
- Did I conduct adequate research?
- How valid and reliable was my research?
- How current was my research?
- Were my timescales realistic?
- Did my plan work?
- Did I work independently?
- What would I do differently if I did this research project again? E.g. use different newspapers? Change my methodology? Choose different issue? etc
- What would I do the same if I did this research project again?
- What have I learnt from this research project?

## Marking

Generally, marking was much more in line with the qualification standards. Where marking was generous it tended to be the higher marks awarded within the sample.

Learner 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, where task d) requires an evaluation then if work is descriptive then mark band one applies, mark band two could only be considered appropriate if learners show some evaluation with some reasoned conclusions. 'Best fit' would need to be considered where there are descriptions and some evaluation to determine if mark band one or two is best fit. Strengths and weaknesses in evidence can then be taken into account when awarding marks from within the mark band. Taking the example above, there are clearly weaknesses if mark band two is considered best fit and low marks from the mark band should be applied. If mark band one was considered best fit then higher marks can be awarded to credit the conclusions that are made.

## Task a)

Marking of this task was marginally generous rather than significantly generous. High marks at mark band one were often awarded with limited strength to move much beyond the mid point i.e. there was no attempt to describe how the aims would be met or the methodology to be used; the issue described was not clear and had no detail; the plan lacked detail. Some samples awarded top marks at mark band two had either limited detail of the issue or limited detail as to how the aims would be met and the methodology to be used. Where marking was generous at mark band three it was often due to a lack of explanation as to how the aims will be met and an explanation of the methodology to be used. In some cases the description of the issue to be the focus of the project was not clear and or comprehensive.

### **Task b)**

Marking of this task was generous in some samples mainly when higher mark bands were awarded i.e. mark band two top end and mark band three. Where it was felt to be generous it was due to evidence of updating was what learners had completed rather than an updated working document or, plans that were updated in parts with simply learner comments as to what was achieved or not achieved rather than the updating and rescheduling of the plan with new deadlines. There was generally just one final plan so it was difficult to ascertain specifically what was had changed and what was updated as well as how regularly the plan was updated. In some centres however, assessors had regularly documented the learners updating on the plan. This aided the capture of plan updating and usually enabled marks to be agreed.

### **Task c)**

Marking of this task was usually within the appropriate mark band. When awarding mark band three there should be clear and comprehensive analysis of the issue and its effects on the travel and tourism industry. In some evidence the analysis lacked detail in relation to the effect on the travel and tourism industry. Few learners gave an explanation of the need to access additional sources. In some samples awarded marks at mark band two the analysis was limited had basic links to the effect on the travel and tourism industry. In some samples the top of the mark band was awarded yet there were limited traits of the higher mark band i.e. the top of mark band one was awarded yet there was very limited attempt to reference sources; evidence focused mainly on websites and analysis was overall basic rather than parts starting to be clear.

### **Task d)**

Marking of this task varied and in a couple of centres marking was marginally harsh at mark band one. In some cases, the top of mark band two was awarded however the evidence lacked detail in the evaluation and only basic recommendations were evident. There was a tendency to give marks at the top of the mark range yet there were no traits of the higher mark band evident.

## **Administration**

OPTEMS forms were completed correctly.

Samples submitted were correct. Centres submitted asterisked samples. Where learners were withdrawn alternatives were sent. Where highest and lowest marks were not asterisked these were also sent.

All centres did submit Learner Authentication Records. This is a JCGQ requirement. Exam Officers have copies of generic forms that can be used but these are also available on the Edexcel website

Most centres submitted task feedback sheets as provided on the Edexcel website.

Annotation on coursework was in some centres limited. Please note that this is now a JCGQ requirement. Annotation should highlight where key evidence could be



found e.g. specifically where descriptions, analysis, evaluation etc could be found, this is helpful to the moderation process.

In task a) annotation could be used to highlight clearly where learners show detail of the proposal and plan indicating the appropriateness of the timescales set. Annotation could highlight where the learner has given an explanation as to how the aims will be met.

In task b) an individual statement could relate to how well the learner met the deadlines and used the plan. The assessor could sign the plan at regular intervals. An indication of changes or contingency plans could be highlighted. Where aims have been met could be annotated and any relevant content in the evaluation relating to meeting deadlines, aims etc.

In task c) annotation could highlight where the learner had referenced sources and specifically where learners had researched independently. Annotation could indicate where learners have analysed and the level of analysis.

For task d) the assessor could highlight where the learner had evaluated and given recommendations. When higher mark bands are awarded assessors could highlight where there is justification of the recommendations, reasoning and where there is objectivity in the evaluation.

## General Comments

Edexcel does not require learners to submit their portfolios in a file. It is sufficient for learners to provide all work tied with a treasury tag, providing it can be easily identified. In addition to the Learner Authentication, there should ideally be a front cover stating name of learner, centre and learner number. Evidence for each task would be clearly separated, ideally by a task feedback sheet.

Only evidence used to determine the mark awarded need be submitted in a portfolio. That evidence should be for tasks a), b), c) and d). Class notes and activities should not be sent in their portfolios. Photocopies of research extracts are not necessary if a bibliography or terms of reference is submitted.

This unit allows the opportunity for oral communication in presenting work. If this format is used, learners portfolios should include a witness testimony, assessment checklist or observation statement. This should describe learner's performance, and highlight how this leads to the mark awarded. It should be signed and dated by an assessor. Any supporting evidence such as visual aids, notes, documentation etc should also be included. Video evidence, audiotapes and computer discs and CDs are not required as forms of evidence. Where centres and/or learners have used these forms of technology, a witness testimony, assessment checklist and/or observation record is required (see above) and it is this that should be sent to the moderator. Printed versions of documents can be sent in support.

**GCE Travel & Tourism Grade Boundaries  
Series - January 2010**

**Unit 1: The Travel and Tourism Industry (6987)**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	62	55	48	41	35
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

**Unit 2: The Travel and Tourism Customer (6988)**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

**Unit 3: Destination Europe (6989)**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

**Unit 4: Destination Britain (6990)**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	45	39	33	28	23
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

**Unit 5: Travelling Safely (6991)**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	62	54	47	40	33
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

**Unit 6: Resort Operation (6992)**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	35	30	25
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

**Unit 7: Responsible Tourism (6993)**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	63	56	49	42	35
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 8: Current Issues in Travel and Tourism (6994)

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

Unit 9: Working in Travel and Tourism (6995)

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

Unit 10: Promotion and Sales in Travel and Tourism (6996)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	63	55	47	40	33
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 11: Special Interest Holidays (6997)

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

Unit 12: Travel Organisations (6998 01)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	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.

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