

Examiners' Report

Summer 2010

GCSE

GCSE Travel & Tourism (6996) Promotions and Sales in Travel and Tourism

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General Comments

The paper followed the format of a question and answer booklet. Candidates 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. Candidates therefore needed to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and skills in vocationally related contexts. Candidates need to apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and of related skills in vocationally-related contexts. Candidates need to use appropriate research techniques to obtain information to assess 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.

Question 1.

Q1(a)

There were six marks available for this question and on average candidates scored four out of the six marks. It is an AO1 question and candidates who had studied the stages involved in the sales process as outlined in the specifications scored well on this question. A response that scored full marks can be seen below;

Establishing rapport

This is when the customer is greeted perhaps with a smile and offering them a seat so they feel relaxed before the selling process begins.

Determining customer needs and expectations

This is the second stage and it involves asking the correct open questions such as 'what, where, when?' to find out what the customer wants.

Outlining features and benefits

This is where the sales assistant finds a product and then works with the customer explaining the different parts of the holiday for example. They also tell the customer why they think the particular product will suit them well by explaining the benefits.

Q1(b) This is an AO2 question so application as well as knowledge is what is being tested. All too often candidates could come up with a relevant skill but then gave a generic explanation rather than referring specifically and consistently to the customer type provided. Or in other instances they come up with 'be friendly' which in this circumstance is a weak skill to then explain.

One response that did score 6 marks:

The Spanish family

Good communication skills

It is important for Penny to communicate with the Spanish family. She could perhaps try to communicate with them using pictures in a brochure to suggest what they could do as the pictures would show what was there, also pictures of maps for directions.

The business seminar organiser

Organisational skills

So Penny can quickly get hold of the people who need to be told of the heating and coffee and explain the problems the organiser is having so they grasp the urgency and they are fixed.

Q1c

The vast majority of candidates scored the five or six marks here. They were able to identify a feature and explain why it met the needs. However where candidates tended to lose marks was when they just rewrote the description in the extract without reference to the customer wants.

A typical answer that scored maximum marks can be seen below:

Feature 1. Up to two children under the age of 10 completely free when sharing with two adults

Explanation

This feature will meet the customer needs of value for money as none of the children need to be paid for as there are four adults travelling.

Feature 2. Christmas Eve Champagne reception and Xmas disco

Explanation

The reception gives the grandparents the chance to meet new friends and the disco gives them that opportunity therefore meets the man's needs of entertainment for the grandparents which also gives them the chance to meet new people.

Question 2.

Q2(a) This question was asked in a slightly different format than previous papers. It did divide candidates into those that understood what primary market research was and those that were unsure. Overall candidates generally scored 2-3 marks here. One answer that scored maximum marks:

Advantage

The research would be up to date and specific to the purpose of the company.

Disadvantage

It can be time consuming for example with questionnaires, it takes time to distribute them and then to receive them back.

Q2(b) This question tended to divide candidates. Often candidates slipped into description of the agency against the four Ps listed. If they did not explain and merely described, this limited the number of marks that could be awarded. Other candidates talked about what the agency could do rather than what it does do or have and again this restricted the number of marks that could be awarded.

Candidates could present the case either for or against as there is no right or wrong decision. However the amount of explanation and reference to the information given and the objectives was key.

For maximum marks candidates needed to refer to the agency objectives outlined. This is a question that centres' could practice with candidates, emphasizing the importance of reading the question carefully and fully appreciating what is being asked of them before answering. Most candidates scored 2 marks for each of the Ps if they referred to the objectives.

Below is an answer where the candidate scored full marks.

Place

The place works for Tripsaway Travel Agency in achieving their objectives. It is located in the high street and therefore a wide range of customers can always come and visit. It is very easy to access as it is on the high street and can be time effective for potential customers. It is next to M&S suggesting that their target market will be around. It is located close to the shopping centre and therefore can easily be seen. Price. The price of the average holiday may work for the objectives as one of their objectives is to improve the cash flow of the business and by having high value bookings this will help. The high price will work against attracting more families as they are often on a budget.

Product

The product will work against the objectives set as it does not specify whether they are family friendly or open to children. Long haul holidays are not as suitable for younger children who get bored on flights, therefore the agency may not meet the objective of increasing the number of families.

Promotion. Families will see adverts from the agency in the local bookshop and café, creating interest from families and increasing the number of bookings from families.

Q2c)

This was a question that was specifically structured to get candidates to give their suggestions and then a full justification. Those candidates who stuck with this format scored well. However a large number of candidates often used the justification section to describe their suggestion further rather than to provide justification which resulted in them losing valuable marks. They also needed to refer to how their suggestion would help encourage winter bookings.

An answer that scored maximum marks despite further description in the justification section can be seen below:

Suggestion 1. Lower prices (sales promotion)

Justification. If the company lowered prices of winter holidays then more customers would be attracted to these deals which would achieve the objective of encouraging more winter holidays.

Suggestion 2. A local radio advertisement

Justification. Around winter time this would get rid of peoples winter blues and encourage them to book a winter holiday in the sun.

Question 3.

Q3(a) This is a question that has appeared on several past papers but it was disappointing to see how few candidates took the opportunity to gain an easy 5 or 6 marks here.

One answer that did score maximum marks can be seen below:

Advertising

Paid for time or space in a medium e.g. an advert on TV.

Sales Promotion

Short term promotion which uses special deals and discounts to attract customers, it is usually used to sell last minute items or as a competitor response eg 'book now and receive 50% off.'

Direct Marketing

Marketing directed specifically to the customer, often this is done via direct mail.

Direct Marketing caused the most problems with many candidates referring incorrectly to door to door selling, market research and target marketing.

Q3(b) This question required candidates to choose the main target market that Megabus would be attracting with their low fares and no frills service between cities in the UK. The vast majority of candidates chose students or young people. Some chose lower income people and again scored a mark. However a few candidates stated business people as the main target market of this service.

The explanations of why candidates chose their specific main target markets were also generally good with most candidates scoring at least 2 marks here. If candidates referred both to the price and the fact that their target market would not mind the time taken or the cramped conditions this allowed them to gain maximum marks.

Q3ci)

All candidates scored the mark available here. Most chose leaflets as their promotional material.

Q3cii)

If candidates explained here then they did gain maximum marks. However if they merely described - 'I would put bright colours, have a logo' then this restricted their marks. An example of explanation can be seen below.

'Leaflets can be placed everywhere around the university campus for students to pick up and read. They would be more likely to pick it up as it would be where they are and then see how cheap the price was which would attract them.'

Q3ciii)

This question was better answered in most cases than in previous series. Candidates were told on the question paper how their answer would be scored so it was still disappointing to see so many marks lost, particularly for the lack of target marketing. Most candidates did score 6+ marks here.

Question 4

Q4(a)

This was a suggestion and justification question. Quite often candidates gave long descriptions with no justification. Often there was a lot of repetition between suggestion 1 and suggestion 2 so it was impossible to credit both. Other candidates gave descriptions without reference to the competitor opening and in these cases application to the scenario set was weak and again marks were lost. However many candidates scored well here using the information provided to fully justify their detailed suggestions. See answer below that scored maximum marks. The justification of the direct marketing suggestion was a little weak.

1. Reduce prices

Justification: Reducing prices would help remove the threat. Customers want the lowest possible price and lowering itself lower than the Hotel du Vin can help gain a competitive advantage over this hotel.

2. Direct Mail

Justification: If they used their database of past customers to write to them perhaps telling them of a new service such as the chef in the restaurant winning an award, this might remind them of the good time they had the last time and they would come back rather than risk not enjoying themselves at the new hotel.

Q4(b)

A similar question to this has appeared in a previous series and this time around candidates provided much better answers with explanation.

Better explanations mentioned the internet, social networking, emails and e-brochures: the growth and appeal of the internet and social networking sites; the appeal in terms of speed and accessibility, attractiveness of graphics and virtual tours.

Some weaker responses described or explained how the internet was good for customers booking online and this causing the decline of high street travel agencies rather than explaining how promotional activities have been affected.

One response that scored maximum marks:

'One of the main ways in which technology has affected the promotional activities of travel organizations is via the internet and creative design software packages. The internet has affected promotional activities as companies have been able to promote via websites which have been a cheaper form of promotion for them and also broadened their potential customers as the websites and promotion is accessible to a lot more people than ever possible before.'

Technology has also affected promotional activities by the introduction of design software packages as travel companies are able to purchase these and create all promotional materials themselves which has made the costs smaller and budgets more viable. These two forms have definitely affected the promotional activities of small travel organizations as they are now able to afford professional advertising within their budgets.'

Question 5

Q5a)

This is a question that appears regularly. However this time to help candidates the question was structured. First of all the candidates were asked to name the promotional campaign. No marks were awarded for this but it allowed candidates to outline fully their campaign. If candidates refer to just one piece of promotional material or to all of the marketing undertaken by an organization, then this restricts the number of marks that can be awarded to two.

The question then asked the candidate to name two of the promotional techniques that the organization used. The candidates who did this scored two marks. However a sizeable number did not name any promotional techniques whatsoever and therefore lost marks.

Candidates were then asked to name two promotional materials used in the campaign. This really divided candidates. Those who had researched their campaigns were able to do this well. However many candidates just named two materials not connected to the promotional techniques they had given earlier. For example a candidate said sponsorship and direct marketing, then under materials said TV advert and newspaper advert.

Describing when and where the promotional materials were used was usually better answered and candidates usually gained the available marks here.

Q5b)

This part of the question asks candidates to assess the success of the campaign described in Q5a). Assessment was weak.

This question should give candidates time to study and research on their own with just some guidance from you. It would be best to pick a short lived campaign that uses a variety of promotional techniques and or materials so candidates can look at how each of these fitted in with the campaign to produce maximum awareness to the maximum number of the target market.

For the description of the campaign candidates get two marks for referring to the techniques used, two marks for materials and two marks for where or when the materials were used.

For the assessment candidates should think how they are going to assess. What are they going to judge? Is it how many people came? How much money was made? How the relevant target markets were or were not reached?

Travel and Tourism

Unit 1 The Travel and Tourism Industry

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	62	55	48	41	35
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 2 The Travel and Tourism Customer

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 3 Destination Europe

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 4 Destination Britain

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	45	39	33	28	23
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 5 Travelling Safely

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	64	56	48	41	34
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 6 Resort Operations

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	46	40	35	30	25
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 7 Responsible Tourism

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 8 Current Issues in Travel and Tourism

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 9 Working in Travel and Tourism

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

Unit 10 Promotion and Sales in Travel and Tourism

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	63	55	48	41	34
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 11 Special Interest Holidays

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 12 Travel Organisations

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	46	40	34	29	24
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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