

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

GCE Travel and Tourism (6991)
Unit 1 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 the 2 marks available for explaining an advantage of belonging to ABTA for Crystal Holidays. However more students struggled to explain a disadvantage. Another weakness was students misreading the question and explaining advantages/disadvantages for customers rather than Crystal Holidays.

One typical response:

Advantage

It will give their customers financial protection through the ABTA bonding scheme which will bring the company more customers as Crystal Holidays pay into the scheme and customers know that if they go out of business they will not be stranded abroad (2 marks)

Disadvantage

Crystal Holidays will have to pay to be a member of ABTA (1 mark)

Q1 (b) All students scored the mark available for Association of British Travel Agents.

Q1 (c) This question differentiated well between students. Many provided generic type answers which did not demonstrate that they clearly understood the role of IATA, as opposed to the CAA, which restricted marks. Some students wrote of IATA controlling fares which have been out of date for many years. However students who had researched IATA did well in this question. One response that scored 5 marks:

IATA members are part of the international clearing house which makes transferring money between airlines easier. It also means airlines are likely to earn more money as tourists will book flights using the ICH system as it is easier than contacting many different airlines. IATA protects its members by providing support to them so they are given advice and help if they need it. IATA has to develop industry standards so the airline will have a better industry to operate in.

Question 2

Q2 (a) (i) (ii) This was a new question and one that students generally score well on. However a few students struggled with naming affected South American countries.

Q2 (a) (iii) Most students again scored well on this gaining 2 or 3 marks. However a few students did think contaminated food and water caused the disease.

One excellent answer:

Bite by infected mosquito. Virus is transferred into the bloodstream of the victim via saliva of the infected mosquito. The virus then infects the victim with yellow fever. Having bodily fluid contact with an infected person can also cause yellow fever to be transmitted.

Q2 (b) The vast majority of students scored the maximum marks available for this question and were able to extract the relevant information.

Q2 (c) (i) This question was a good differentiator between students. Those who scored higher marks were able to use failing to implement the EU Directive and code of conduct necessary for membership of ABTA with good analysis. Lower scoring students tended to provide common phrases such as 'not allowed into country' without looking at legislation, codes of conduct and providing analysis. One response that scored maximum marks:

Implications for the travel agency are that if they provide wrong information then they are breaching the EU Package Directive legislation and Isabelle and Anton would be able to sue them as ABTA ensure that their members provide the correct information to their customers and if it is changed they should find out and inform customers. Also it would affect their customers whilst abroad so the travel agency would have to work to support them and arrange for them to come back safely.

Q2 (c) (ii) This question again differentiated between students as many again provided generic type answers similar to the one they provided previously. These students did not look at the issue purely from the airlines point of view, for example, if airlines do not check documentation they are responsible for bringing customers back home.

Question 3

Q3 (a) (i) Almost all students scored the mark available for Fair Trading Act or Enterprise Act.

Q3 (a) (ii) Many students answered this badly with some not understanding the question and gaining no marks.

Others had some ideas but did not come across as fully understanding, or just covering it from one aspect not both from organisations and customers viewpoints. For example one response that gained 3 marks:

Other organisations will not be able to compete with the prices meaning that they may go out of business because they will not be getting a profit. If the price is fixed it may stay cheaper in peak times of the year when other organisations have to raise their prices meaning that other organisations may get less profit and it is unfair for competition.

One response that scored 5 out of the 6 marks available:

Organisations involved in price fixing will have to pay large sums of money if the law is broken. Restricting competition means that other organisations don't have a fair market to compete in. For customers this means less choice as they will have to pay more for accommodation potentially limiting where they can stay.

Q3 (b) The majority of students did score well on this question. However those who did not read the question properly sometimes provided two suggestions and no justification of either which restricted the marks that could be awarded.

One typical answer that scored 1 mark for the suggestion and 3 marks for the justification:

Provide regular checks on excursions. This would make sure that the excursions were to the standard that the tour operator would expect. If the excursion turned out to be bad the tour operator could cancel its contract with the theme park so tourists don't have to visit a poor attraction and therefore not complain.

Q3(c) Few students scored top marks for this question. Lower scoring students tended to restate the stem or concentrate on one aspect.

A typical response scoring a higher 4 marks:

The new administration fee will increase EasyJet's prices. This means that they may lose customers because they were known to have very cheap prices because they only provide the basis services. More customers may decide that they would prefer to pay a tiny bit more than EasyJet's prices for a luxury service, resulting in a loss of profit for EasyJet. This price was hidden before and customers only got told about it quite far into the booking process meaning that they would pay it because they were already in the process of booking. Also if EasyJet cannot charge excessive charges for credit/debit cards they will lose some of their profit.

Q3 (d) Surprisingly this was a very badly answered question. Mainly this was because many students did not read and respond to the command word 'Outline'. These students tried to explain perhaps one requirement of the Data Protection Act but this meant they did not outline a range of main requirements. Some students also provided very generic answers, not applying them to the hotel situation.

Question 4

Q4 (a) (i) This was not a well answered question as many students confused the role of the Foreign Office with that of insurance companies. Again the command word here was 'Outline' so short phrases pointing out their role were all that was required. One response that scored maximum marks:

Foreign Office could give them advice on the event and inform the customer's relations about the situation. Foreign Office could operate flights to bring back the holidaymakers to Britain. Foreign Office would advise future travellers to not visit that part of the Caribbean which is being affected.

Q4 (a) (ii) This was a differentiator. One key aspect of the question was the phrase 'in the resort'. Hence responses like give a full refund or money back were not acceptable. Again as before many students confused the role of the tour operator with the role of the insurance company.

Q4 (a) (iii) The command word here asked for explanation. Students who described only were therefore limited to a maximum of 2 marks. Overall though the marks scored were higher than for the other two sections. One response that gained 4 marks:

The insurance company will pay out or cover any medical fees required for Bob. Also they will support Agnes in staying in the resort to stay with Bob until he is ready to return to the UK and also arrange transport back to the UK for both of them. They will liaise with medical assistance company so that someone accompanies Bob home and cover the cost.

Q4 (b) The majority of students scored well on this question and were able to provide relevant examples. A few thought incorrectly that cancellation occurred when the holidaymaker cancelled the holiday and curtailment was when the tour operator cancelled.

Q4 (c) Most students scored 2-3 marks here. Often the marks were limited if the answer did not contain explanation. One response that gained maximum marks:
To ensure that the person is who they say they are. Acts as a security barrier as it stops people getting visa entry if they don't have a valid passport.

Question 5

Q5(a) Better scoring students answered this question by looking at planning, procedures, practicing, communication and using these sorts of headings to evaluate different areas of the emergency situation and how they could have been improved. Lower scoring students tended to repeat much of the stem with additional generic phrases such as 'this was bad'. Some students just described the event again in their own words. Students should look at the command word of the question and ensure their answer reflects this. One higher scoring student response that gained 5 marks:

Regarding the planning of this emergency situation the captain and crew did not deal with this effectively as they did not have a plan in place and the staff did not know what to do. Due to the lack of planning for this situation it means there were no procedures in place for the crew to give orders out to passengers and means some were just jumping into the sea and this was not effective due to the lack of overall control that the captain had on the ship. The communication also between coastguards and crew was also not effective with the abandon ship not being called until too late. Finally the liaising between the young officer and deputy mayor was very effective allowing them to effectively get passengers off the ship. Overall the situation was not dealt with effectively.

Q5(b)(i) Some students answered this well as they responded to the command word and made recommendations. This part of the question did not require explanation. One student made the unrealistic recommendation of captains to be in contact with the coastguard of each destination at all times, which could not be awarded. However in the majority of cases those students that lost marks did so because they provided explanation at this point and therefore did not respond to the question asked.

One response that gained maximum marks:

They could put leaflets/posters up around the ship to inform passengers on what they should do in the event of an emergency and how to try and stay safe. They should regularly train their crew. They could also provide information on health and safety through speakers several times throughout the cruise journey. They could also run an evacuation drill for passengers when they newly arrive on the ship.

Q5(b)(ii) This was generally a well answered question with the majority of students scoring maximum marks.

Q5(c) It was clear which students had researched events in readiness for the exam. These students were able to provide precise details of their chosen event including dates and detailed descriptions. However other students provided limited detail. One student that scored just 2 marks due to lack of detail and inaccurate information:

When the volcanic ash cloud explosion in Iceland took place it left many airlines unable to fly making many holidaymakers stuck in their resort and unable to get home. Some airlines were allowed to fly and many airlines weren't allowed to fly.

Please note that students are expected to research two or more emergency situations that have affected the travel and tourism industry. They should conduct research into at least two topics from the following list:

- Wars
- Terrorist attacks
- Strikes
- Major outbreaks of diseases
- Natural disasters

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

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

