

Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2017

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in
Public Services

Unit 1: The Role and Work of the
Public Services (21484F)

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Introduction

This report has been written by the lead examiner for the BTEC unit entitled The Role and Work of the Public Services. It is designed to help you understand how learners performed overall in the exam. For each question there is a brief analysis of learner responses. You will also find example learner responses from Level 2 Pass, Merit and Distinction learners. We hope this will help you to prepare your learners for future examination series.

General Comments

This was the fourth examination series for Unit 1 entitled The Role and Work of the Public Services. It was pleasing to see many candidates attempted the majority of questions. In general examiners were encouraged by the range and application of responses to some of the more challenging questions. These items tested both the higher order command words and Merit and Distinction grade descriptors.

Learners were able to show an understanding of the role and work of the public services. However, it should be noted that their examination technique is still not as effective as it could be. Appropriate practice and preparation for external examinations should be a priority for tutors and centres using all of the information available.

The paper was wide ranging in terms of grades to be awarded. Often questions asked learners to explain **two** ways, or state **two** examples, but many learners limited the number of marks they could be awarded by only providing one example or limited explanations.

Learners found some difficulty with the terminology used within the examination although the same terminology is used within the specification.

Centres are encouraged to give learners copies of the specifications to support them in becoming familiar with the terminology that will be used during teaching, learning and assessment.

Feedback on specific questions

Q1

This was an identification question. Most learners were able to name two public services that use the vehicles shown in the picture.

Q2

Many learners were able to name organisations regulated by central government. Some learners were not awarded marks for making references to things like 'public services' as this was too generic.

Q3

Many learners were able to give two examples of armed services roles. Popular answers for this included 'defend the nation' and 'peacekeeping'.

Q4a

Two examples of voluntary organisations were required here. Responses to this were wide ranging and many learners were able to gain two marks for this question. Popular responses included 'RNLI' and 'St John Ambulance'.

Q4b

A significant majority of learners were unable to gain the full marks available here. Learners could not explain one way the voluntary sector supported the work of public sector organisations. Single marks were awarded for responses such as 'helping at major events', 'supporting them in natural disasters' and 'provide support at a serious incident'. Learners tended to focus on giving very generic responses such as:

They help them in case the services are running late (0 mark) They help a lot because they are voluntary (0 mark)
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Q5a

Many learners were able to state one function of social services with responses such as:

Protect vulnerable children (1 mark) Protect children from abuse (1 mark)
--

Q5b

Many learners where able to state one function of the National Health Service with responses such as:

Provide healthcare to the general public (1 mark)
Ensure our health needs are met (1 mark)

Q6a

Few learners where able to explain the term 'crime prevention' with responses such as:

To try to stop crime and to keep areas crime free (0 marks)
Stopping /reducing crime (0 marks)

It should be noted that learners where asked to explain the 'term' not just give ways (examples)of crime prevention or simply state 'reducing crime'. These types of responses were not awarded a mark.

Q6b

Most learners where able to identify one way that crime prevention is carried out with responses such as:

Policed patrolling the streets (1 mark)
Crime prevention surveys (1 mark)

Q6c

Very few learners (average score for this question was 0.11) where able to name one voluntary organisation involved in crime prevention with responses such as:

PCSOs (0 marks)
Neighbourhood Watch (0 marks)

It should be noted that learners where able to name voluntary organisations but many examples named are not involved with 'crime prevention' and responses such as 'RNLI' and 'Mountain Rescue' were not awarded a mark.

Q7

Many learners gained one of the all two marks available for this question. Most identified an advantage of paying fees for car parking but did not sufficiently explain their responses in order to gain the second mark with responses such as:

The money goes to the council to fun other projects (1 mark)
They council can use the money for other facilities (1 mark)

It should be noted that the examining team awarded marks for responses that explained advantages of direct charges in the wider context.

Q8

The majority of learners did not engaged with the scenario (average score for this question was 0.87) and, although this was quite a challenging question, few learners achieved beyond 2 marks for this question. Learners demonstrated that they have some knowledge of tendering but were note able to sufficiently explain two advantages of tendering for the public services. This question was taken directly from the specification B1 (bullet point 2).

Examiners were unsure if this was because learners did not understand the language used or learners did not read the stem and question fully. This should be highlighted when teaching learners as well as when supporting learners with exam techniques.

Examples of responses that demonstrated learners have knowledge of tendering but did not read the question and the stem and gained zero marks are:

One advantages is that everyone gets a say in tendering (0 marks)
Tendering does not take long to complete (0 marks)

Some learners gained two mark and responses included;

The council can provide services that they did not previously have the correct staff/resources for using tendering (2 marks)
This can save them money and reduces cost as they typically pick the cheapest tender to deliver the services (2 marks)

Q9

Again, this question was taken directly from the specification B2. Learner performed quite well at this question typically achieving 2 marks for being able to identify two ways that public service organisations are funded. Many earners did not expand their responses to 'explain' allowing only a handful of learners to gain full marks for this question.

Q10a

An explanation of the advantages of providing sports facilities for the public was required here. Overall most learners were able to gain one mark for identifying an example but few expanded on this to access the 2nd mark my giving an 'explanation'.

Q10b

An explanation of the advantages of the provision of libraries for the public was required here. Overall most learners were able to gain one mark for identifying an example but few expanded on this to access the 2nd mark by giving an 'explanation'.

Centres are reminded to encourage learners to fully consider the verb within questions and the number of marks available in order to ensure they can access all available marks.

Q11a

This was an identification question. Most learners were able to identify an emergency incident.

Q11b

Many learners were able to identify the impact of an emergency incident on the wider community with responses such as:

Roads could be closed so you cannot get to work (1 mark) Houses could be destroyed making people homeless (1 mark)

Q11c

Again, this question was taken directly from the specification A3 (last part of bullet point 3). Learners did not perform well at this question (average score for this question was 0.65). Some learners were able to give an identification and gain one mark with responses including:

Close off the streets (1 mark) Assess the situation (1 mark)

Q12a

Few learners were able to define the term 'fundraising' (average score for this question was 0.16). Despite this question being taken directly from the specification B2 (bullet point 8). Responses such as:

Getting donations (0 marks) Raising money for charity (0 marks)
--

It should be noted that learners were asked to define the 'term' not just give ways (examples) of fundraising. These types of responses were not awarded a mark.

Q12b

Most learners were able to give one way organisations raise funds. Popular responses included 'bake sales' fun runs' and 'sponsored marathon'.

Q13

The majority of learners did not engaged with the scenario and, although this was quite a challenging question, gained 0-1 marks. Learners demonstrated that they have some knowledge of working in partnership but they did not fully read the question and the stem and did not give responses that explained two ways advantages for public service organisations working this way. As with previous questions learners did not consider the verb and were only able to access two of the four available marks.

This should be highlighted when teaching learners as well as when supporting learners with exam techniques.

Examples of responses that demonstrated learners have knowledge of partnership working but did not consider the verb and therefore limited their marks are:

One advantage is they can work together to get the job done more efficiently (1 mark) / more experienced workers to get the job done (1 mark)

If a response did consider the verb examiners were able to award the full marks with responses such as:

They all share different talents/skills which means they can deliver their services more efficiently and quickly (2 marks)

They all have different opinions so that they can discuss the best way to handle a situation ensuing nothing goes wring (2 marks)

Q14

Few learners where able to explain one way that working in partnership facilitates the 'management of incidents' (average score for this question was 0.43). Despite this question being taken directly from the specification A3 (bullet point 3) with responses such as:

There are more people in case someone has to fill in (0 marks)
Because they need all three blue light services (0 marks)

It should be noted that marks where not awarded for responses that referred to 'operational responses' to incidents as the question was directed at the 'management of incidents'.

Where responses looked at the 'management of incidents' marks where awarded with responses such as:

Public are kept away from the scene (1 mark)
Rescue could be coordinated using bronze command (1 mark)

Q15

This question provided an opportunity for the learner to demonstrate their ability to analyse the effects on the British Army to meet its purpose following the release of a report that raised concerns around troop fitness levels.

The examiners remind learners that marks will not be awarded where responses

- simply restate the findings of the report
- look at one aspect of the report but fail to consider other issues
- misread the report and concentrated their discussions on fitness tests to join the army which was not the focus of the report

Learners are reminded that the use of offensive and derogatory terms is unacceptable. Tutors must ensure that this does not happen in future series.

Learners did not respond well to this question with most learners who were awarded marks only providing a Level 1 response (average score for this question was 1.56).

The response below gained two marks. The response only briefly identified two ways the British Army could manage the issues raised. It does not really consider the impact on the ability of the British Army to meet its purpose:

The British Army need to have **stronger courses when training troops**, this is to ensure they are able to complete all the requirements. If many troops are overweight and have the risk of health problems the British Army needs to have **diet plans and fitness courses** to help troops keep fit. (2 marks)

A few learners engaged well with this question and the response below gained four marks. The response discusses several concerns this report has raised and has made some suggestions as to how the ways the British Army could prevent these concerns in the future / its impact on them meeting their purpose:

If 22,000 troops were overweight and was at **risk of health problems then they may have a lack of motivation** to do anything this will then have an **impact on the British Army as people will not feel safe** and also this could lower their quality of life. Their **teamwork will be very poor which could increase the risk of troops getting shot in combat as they are overweight and cannot get away fast enough or they did not attend the training because they were poorly and then do not know what to do in the incident.**

Also if they help them loose weight with **better food and exercise** they will then be able to do their **job properly again making the public feel safe.** (4 marks)

Summary of performance on the paper

Based on their performance on this paper, in future learners should:

- Be aware that there is an hour to complete this paper and plan time accordingly. The lengthier questions come towards the end of the paper so more time could be allocated for later questions.
- Spend time **reading each question thoroughly** to ensure the question asked is the question answered.
- Be aware that **all parts of the specification will be tested during the life of the qualification.**
- Study the specification to ensure key aspects that could be tested are known.
- Look at the command word in the question – outline, describe, explain, discuss. These words provide information on the type of response required and how the answer should be phrased. For example, 'outline' requires a basic response, whereas 'explain' will require an initial idea or way to be identified followed by expansion and/or examples to apply and illustrate why this idea or way is suitable. If two explanations are required half the marks will be awarded for the first response and the other half will be awarded for the second response. So if only one explanation is made then half the marks allocated for the question will be lost.
- Plan the response to the last question which will require a number of different aspects to be addressed, with reasoning, for higher marks to be awarded. Use all of the information supplied, such as statistics.
- Exam techniques are important and appropriate preparation will ensure that learners approach the exam more confidently and with knowledge of how to respond to different types of questions.

Grade Boundaries

Unit	Max Mark	D	M	P	L1	U
21484F – Unit 1: The Role and Work of the Public Services	50	38	30	23	16	0

External assessment

The suite of 'next generation' NQF BTECs include an element of external assessment. This external assessment may be through a timetabled paper-based examination, an onscreen, on demand test or a set-task conducted under controlled conditions.

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we 'set' the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade (Distinction, Merit, Pass and Level 1 fallback).

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries - this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark should be for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries ensures that a learner who receives a 'Distinction' grade next year, will have similar ability to a learner who has received an 'Distinction' grade this year. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to make sure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in externally assessed question papers

Each exam we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries year on year because then it wouldn't take into account that a paper may be slightly easier or more difficult than the year before.

Grade boundaries for all papers can be found here:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

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