



Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2015

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in
Travel and Tourism

Unit 1: UK Travel and Tourism Sector
(21474E)

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Introduction

This report has been written by the lead examiner for the BTEC unit The UK Travel and Tourism Sector. 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 second series of Unit 1 - The UK Travel and Tourism Sector. It was pleasing to see that most candidates attempted the majority of questions. Responses showed varying levels of application to the travel and tourism sector.

Whilst some learners had a sound grasp of the sector and the unit content many more demonstrated limited understanding, in particular with regards to the terminology used within the examination. For instance, many learners were unable to provide an appropriate example of 'vertical integration'; many did not understand the term 'hospitality'. Close reference to the unit specification and the teaching and learning of all the content terms within it should overcome this issue in future.

It was also apparent that a significant number of learners were not fully prepared for the exam in terms of exam technique and misreading questions. Appropriate practice and preparation for external examinations should be a priority for centres. This would be particularly helpful in developing techniques needed to address questions that require learners to 'explain two advantages' or 'explain two reasons'.

Feedback on specific questions

Q1(a)(i)

This was a multiple choice question and a majority of learners did not gain the mark available. Many incorrectly chose 'multiple'. Understanding of the types of tour operators seemed to be missing.

Q1(a)(ii)

This question was not well answered by the majority of learners. Learners were required to state one role of a tour operator. A range of responses was provided from reference to 'tour guides' to 'selling holidays'. Others wrote about domestic tourism. Overall understanding was demonstrated by a minority who correctly referred to 'putting accommodation, transfers and flights together' or 'creating package holidays'.

Q(1)(b)

This was a multiple choice question and the majority of learners did not gain the mark available. The most common incorrect answer was 'book holidays'. It seems evident that learners were not familiar with the organisation despite its inclusion in the specification as a key organisation within the sector.

Q1(c)

There were a number of blank responses for this question. Where the question had been attempted learners frequently did not gain any marks and a wide range of responses was seen. Learners did not seem to have understood the question or did not know what was required by the term 'characteristic'. This term is in the unit specification and should be familiar to learners. Other learners gave vague responses such as 'provide a service', and only a minority gained the mark for responses relating to 'government funding' or being 'run by the government'.

Q1(d)

This question was answered well and the majority of learners were able to gain at least one of the two available marks for 'camping' or 'caravan'. A minority had either misread or misunderstood the question and made reference to facilities and entertainment available at holiday parks and did not gain any marks.

Q2(a)

A minority of learners gained one of the two marks available here. A significant number gave responses relating to advantages of self-service check-in for customers rather than advantages for an airport. They may have misread the question or perhaps found it an easier perspective. Others gave one word, such as 'faster', whereas the command word was 'outline', which required some expansion and context.

Some learners demonstrated a clear understanding of the question requirements and gained both marks available. One example of a two mark response is as follows:

- 1. The airport won't need as many check-in staff (1)***
- 2. The queues will be shorter and passengers can go through faster (1)***

Q2(b)(i)

Responses were varied and often too vague. Whilst some learners understood the term 'consumer technology' a significant number focussed simply on 'technology' in general and gave 'telephone' or 'use hotel's printer'. Understanding of the term, which is from the unit specification, and its application to the sector was not always apparent. Others wrote about what the hotel could put on its website or gave other suggestions of what could be booked online.

The command was 'give' and so a few words were appropriate. Often learners wrote more than was necessary and, as in Q2(a), wrote from the customer's perspective and not the organisation/hotel, for example:

- 1. Find out about offers on different rooms (0)***
- 2. Look at reviews of the rooms to see what other people thought of (0)***

This response relates to how customers may use the hotel's website but the focus should have been on the ways hotels use consumer technology.

A minority of learners gained both marks, showing understanding of the role of 'consumer technology' at a hotel, and were able to offer concise responses appropriate for the command 'give'.

One response that gained both marks available:

- 1. Free Wi-Fi in hotel rooms (1)***
- 2. Send customers emails with special offers (1)***

Q2(b)(ii)

Overall this question was well answered. Popular responses related to 'easier to book', 'can book 24/7' and 'many people now prefer to book online'. Often, however, some learners just gave a one word response without context or detail and as the command was 'outline' these responses did not gain any marks. In other instances where learners did not gain marks responses related to the hotel website in general, related to the customer or lacked focus and application as to why online booking would increase customer numbers for the hotel, for example:

- 1. Images are put on the website so you can see the hotel properly (0)**
- 2. Quicker to book (0)**

In preparing learners for the examination exam technique should be developed that includes consideration of what is required by the different command words they may encounter.

Where scores were low on this question it seemed that learners did not have the underpinning knowledge of the advantages of online booking in terms of wider customer base, meeting consumer needs, convenience and accessibility.

This response demonstrates understanding and gained the two marks available:

- 1. It is quick and easy so people do not have to go to the travel agents to book (1)**
- 2. Online discounts may be available so more people will want to go (1)**

Q3(a)

This was a multiple choice question. Half the learners were able to gain the mark available here by choosing 'encourage visitors'.

Q3(b)

A significant number of learners gave the role of visitor information centres and did not gain the mark. This may be due to underdeveloped exam technique in that learners had not read the question carefully enough and missed the word 'literature'. Other responses suggested that some learners did not understand what 'literature' actually was. The term is in the unit specification and learners should have been familiar with it. Successful responses gave 'leaflets', brochures' and 'maps'.

Q3(c)

This was a more challenging question but the majority of candidates did gain one or two marks from the four available. The question required learners to **explain two** benefits for a customer of using Jubilee Travel to book a cruise holiday. Many learners repeated the information provided and said the benefits were 'several branches' and 'specialist', but could not really say what the actual benefit of these factors was. Some learners incorrectly linked the information of several branches to meaning it was good access 'as there will be one close to you', rather than it being an indication of good reputation/established/trustworthy. Only a minority considered the benefit of security offered by a high street agency as opposed to booking online. Overall, the majority were able to identify at least one benefit but often found it difficult to expand their answer for the second mark.

This response demonstrates some knowledge of the benefits of a multiple high street travel agency:

- 1. One benefit is they have many branches in several towns this means they will be well known (1)**
- 2. Another benefit is they specialise in cruise holidays which shows they know the best cruise for every customer (1)**

Here the learner has approached the question appropriately by stating the benefit and offering an explanation using the link 'because'. However, each benefit is a repeat of the information given; the expansion is the actual benefit which should have been developed and explained, for example:

One benefit is they will be well known (1) and this means customers are assured that their holiday will be safe and any problems will be sorted (1)

This is an example of a response that did gain the full four marks available:

- 1. One benefit is customers are able to talk face to face with Jubilee's staff which means they can get their recommendations and personal experiences to find the best cruise.***
- 2. One benefit is that Jubilee Travel will be able to make deals with cruise companies so that customers booking with them will get a much cheaper cruise than if they went to any other travel agency.***

Here the learner has demonstrated a depth of understanding and has utilised the information on Jubilee Travel to provide a well-considered, robust response.

Q3(d)(i)

This question was not well answered by the majority of learners. Often learners incorrectly wrote about insurance and did not answer the question. This may be due to exam technique and/or a lack of knowledge about the role of ancillary organisations.

One response that did gain the mark available:

To provide extra services such as car hire (1)

Here the learner has given an example to support the statement; whilst this is not required it is good practice as it can help to reinforce knowledge.

Q3(d)(ii)

This was a challenging question and most learners seemed to struggle with the concept of common ownership. Learners often misread or else misunderstood the question and wrote about the benefits of holiday insurance to customers rather than the benefits to the organisation, Brown's Insurance, of common ownership. Some gave benefits to Jubilee Travel. Many responses were vague, for example 'they will get more customers/more money', and lacked any reasoning as to why this would happen. Often responses were generic and lacked application to the scenario, and many were repetitive. For example:

- 1. They can earn more profit (0)***
- 2. People are more likely to book with Jubilee Travel if insurance is Provided (0)***

Learners needed to demonstrate their understanding of the advantages of common ownership. Where learners gained marks, responses related to 'gaining' or 'sharing' customers, 'gaining a wider customer base' and 'cost savings through shared advertising'. Whilst some gained one or two marks for identifying the benefit/s explanations tended to be vague or repetitive and reasoning was unclear.

Limited responses may also be a result of underdeveloped exam technique that should be addressed by centres when preparing learners. When explaining a benefit it would be expected that the learner would firstly identify the benefit and then use linking statements such as 'because', 'this means that' or 'due to' to provide the reason the identified benefit is a benefit in the given scenario.

This is an example of a response that gained the full four marks. The learner has assessed all the information provided and given a confident and fully exemplified response:

- 1. Jubilee Travel is a large company with high street branches and this benefits Brown's Insurance because they were online only. So the ownership will get their name out there and this will attract more customers so they can earn more money (2)**
- 2. Jubilee Travel can recommend Brown's Insurance to their customers who will need to buy travel insurance for their cruises and this is a benefit as it means that Brown's reputation and customers will increase (2)**

Q4(a)

This was a multiple choice question and the vast majority of learners gained the mark available.

Q4(b)

This question was well answered and it was pleasing to see learners perform well here with the majority gaining the mark.

Q4(c)

This was another question that was answered well with the majority of learners gaining the mark.

Q4(d)

This question was not well answered by a significant minority of learners; the most common answers were 'energy efficient light bulbs' and 'insulation'. Some creative yet unrealistic suggestions were seen and these demonstrated a lack of understanding of how sustainable tourism can be achieved in the accommodation sector. A significant number misinterpreted the question and suggested greener ways of generating power, for example solar panel and wind turbines, rather than ways to reduce energy consumption.

Q4(e)

Whilst the majority of learners could demonstrate knowledge of generic ways to reduce waste few applied this to the cafe scenario. For instance often they gave one word answers such as 'recycle' or 'reuse', but did not qualify what they would recycle. A number of learners suggested 'more bins' and did not seem to understand this would not reduce waste. Learners need to read the question and particularly the command word carefully to ensure they know exactly what the question requires. Learners should know that a one word response for a question with 'outline' as the command is unlikely to provide enough detail to gain the available marks.

This is an example of a response that did gain both marks available. The learner demonstrates sound understanding:

- 1. Only make the food when it is ordered so there are no leftovers (1)**
- 2. Recycle food packaging and empty bottles (1)**

Q4(f) (i)

This was not answered well by the majority of learners. Understanding of the chain of distribution and vertical integration seemed to be missing as a high number of blank and incorrect responses were seen. A number gave another example of horizontal integration or else described the process without giving an example. Some examples given were not from the travel and tourism sector. A minority gave examples of vertically integrated companies and misread what was required.

One response that did not gain any marks:

An example of vertical integration is purchasing a higher or lower business (0)

Some understanding is evident but the response lacks clarity and is unconvincing. Had the learner extended the response to clarify what is 'higher/lower' the mark would have been gained.

A response that did gain the mark available:

A tour operator buys an airline (1)

Learners should know the chain of distribution and the levels in terms of organisations and sectors and also know the difference between horizontal and vertical integration and be able to give examples.

Q4(f)(ii)

This was a challenging question that was not answered well by the majority of learners. Knowledge and understanding of integration was not in evidence as learners assumed the parks would merge and be on the same site and gave responses such as 'the noise/activities at XtremeActive would upset people on a luxury break with Dream Retreats'. Often they suggested the parks would compete with each other. This misunderstanding led to many confused responses, for example:

- 1. Customers who may want a luxury break will have to deal with younger people running around and doing activities which is not what they want on a relaxing holiday (0)***
- 2. One other way this could be a disadvantage is that people may choose to go and stay with Dream Retreats instead of XtremeActive meaning XtremeActive will lose money (0)***

However learners who understood the concept of integration recognised there would be problems caused by mixed branding/target market and loss of jobs. These gained one or two marks for identifying the disadvantage/s, however were unable to develop their responses with a satisfactory explanation to be credited with the second mark.

One response that gained two marks for identifying two appropriate disadvantages:

- 1. Dream Retreats is for relaxing holidays whereas XtremeActive is the complete opposite. This could slow down the income for XtremeActive's non-luxury holidays (1)***
- 2. When companies merge there tends to be a loss of jobs. This means that the staff from Dream Retreats will probably takeover jobs from Xtreme Active (1)***

In the first response the learner has recognised there could be a disadvantage caused by the two holiday parks having different target markets and has given an explanation. However the second mark could not be credited as the explanation is too vague and doesn't say why income may be affected. In the second response the learner has answered the question identifying the disadvantage of job losses for one mark. However the learner has not expanded on this to give the consequence of the disadvantage such as poor motivation; the explanation is a repeat of the disadvantage.

One response that did gain the four marks available:

- 1. They are completely different types of tourism one is for luxury and the other is adventure. One way this could be a disadvantage is that Dream Retreats may change XtremeActive parks to become more luxurious and this may not appeal to customers so they might lose money (2)**
- 2. If Dream Retreats has a bad image this could affect XtremeActive because people will think they are same because they are part of the same company and this means people might be put off booking holidays with XtremeActive (2)**

In the first response one mark was gained for identifying the disadvantage of confused target market and the second for the explanation that considers the new relationship may change the product at XtremeActive and this could lead to a loss in its appeal. In the second response one mark was gained for the disadvantage of shared image and the second mark for the explanation linked to poor reputation and organisations in a corporate group all being branded the same.

Q5(a)

This question was not well answered by many and a wide variety of responses were seen. The majority of learners did not appear to be familiar with the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) and its roles. Knowledge of this part of the specification appeared to be lacking. Some learners focused on passengers and suggested 'seat belts' or 'safer crossings', whilst others repeated the question 'make sure passengers are safe'. Where learners did gain the mark available it was mainly for checks/inspections and very few were able to give any other role of the ORR.

One response that did gain the marks available:

One way that the ORR helps to ensure rail passenger safety is to make sure that all the trains are inspected (1)

Learners should understand the types, roles and products and/or services of key organisations within the sector as given in the unit specification.

Q5(b)

A significant minority of learners did not seem to know what 'local cultural heritage' actually meant and the questions was not well answered by many as a result. Whilst learners understood what the volunteers did and the benefits of 'free labour', many did not realise the question was about sustainability and did not make the link to the future. Learners often wrote about environmental impacts or safety and many learners simply repeated the question. Many did not expand their response to offer an explanation.

One response that did not gain any marks:

- 1. They are protecting the steam engines (0)**
- 2. Volunteers can help out when they want and keep it safe for the passengers (0)**

Where learners did gain marks it was most frequently for responses related to 'keeping the railway going'. Few learners considered education and the concept of passing on skills to a younger generation was largely overlooked.

This is an example of a response that gained two marks:

They keep the railway running and keep it looking the way is always has. This means that the steam engines are being protected for future generations and the local community to enjoy (2)

It appeared that learners did not always understand the concept of sustainable tourism and were unsure of the terminology with regards local cultural heritage. Effective exam preparation that includes coverage and understanding of the terms used in the specification may help overcome this.

Q5(c)

This question was not answered well and generated a wide range of responses. A significant number of learners misunderstood the term 'hospitality', and responses related to illness and hospitals did not gain any marks. The term is in the specification and should be familiar to learners. The most popular response related to damage caused although few learners gained both marks available as responses were generic and not related to Rustic Rail. Some learners' skills are underdeveloped in terms of being able to utilise the information given and apply their responses. Often learners were unable to offer an explanation of the disadvantage and again reasoning skills could be developed within centres to improve exam technique.

Some learners did gain one out of the two marks available, for example:

If something got broken this means they will have to pay to repair it (1)

The response above gained the mark for identifying a basic disadvantage and some explanation, however it is vague and not applied to Rustic Rail. Compare to this response that did gain both marks:

Rustic Rail's volunteers will want to work on the railway not at hospitality events (1) and so they may be put off joining and this means Rustic Rail may not have enough volunteers for the railway (1)

In this response one mark was gained for the disadvantage relating to needing people at the events and the second mark for the explanation that volunteers may not join Rustic rail if they know they have to help at hospitality events which may not interest them.

Q6

This last question was a different format from others on the paper. This question provided an opportunity for the learner to really demonstrate their ability to look at a travel and tourism scenario or issue, identify key areas to consider and to provide a rounded response.

In this series the majority of responses gained one to three marks and were at 'Level 1'. There were a number of reasons for this:

- Some learners gave superficial responses that were generalised rather than focused on the scenario and the local area.
- Other learners gave unbalanced responses and only considered positive aspects and did not consider any negatives.
- Some learners described the figures from the table rather than interpreting and assessing them.
- Some learners misunderstood the question and incorrectly assessed the costs of the tickets or considered environmental rather than economic aspects.
- Some learners did not provide a conclusion.

The following response is an example of a Level 2 response that gained four marks:

***When BigSoundUK comes to the area it will be a big thing because there will be more money spent on hotels, food etc. The local area will benefit massively because of the £200,000 income on the local accommodation. The area around BigSoundUK will gain a lot of money because of millions of travellers coming to this festival. It will also be a good place for tourists to visit and it will put a good word for them
There may be a £180,000 clean-up cost but compared to the amount of money the local area has taken this is nothing.
All together it will bring more people to the area each year and the local area will be improving massively.***

There is an attempt to provide a balanced response considering positive and negative aspects, there is also some application to the local area and a conclusion. However it is quite descriptive as opposed to evaluative and the use of data is quite basic.

The following response gained six marks and was at the top of Level 2.

***BigSoundUK has a massive impact on the local economy as it attracts huge amounts of tourists. This boosts the economy in many ways because it will increase the level of local people employed in setting up the festival such as builders and designers.
Profits will increase in businesses in the local area because the average spend off site is £150 per person this means people are staying locally and spending money in shops, restaurants and hotels The local people will have more money to spend in the local area, for example if a local shop, newsagent or supermarket has a massive increase in sales the shop will need to employ more people. This is called the multiplier effect which is when something happens in a community so more visitor accommodation may be needed for future festivals and more jobs will be created and this improves the local economy.
Overall the festival boosts the local economy and creates jobs there is a clean-up cost but locals are probably employed to help with this.***

The response is focussed throughout on the local area and links are made to the economic multiplier effect showing good understanding of the term. Mostly positive aspects are considered and there is some development and assessment evident. The conclusion is brief and introduces a negative aspect although this is only briefly considered.

To gain Level 3 marks the learner needed to have planned the response more carefully and given an introduction, then considered positives and negatives and drawn a conclusion. A more balanced assessment was also required with consideration of a range of possible negative aspects. More use could have been made of the statistics to back up statements made and consideration given to the longer term economic advantages and disadvantages of the three day festival.

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. Also read the response and check all aspects of the question have been addressed.
- Study the specification to ensure key aspects that could be tested are known, such as key organisations within the sector and their roles, differences between travel agents and tour operators, the meaning, use and advantages of consumer technology, interrelationships between organisations including the chain of distribution, the concept and achievement of sustainable tourism within the sector.
- Follow the command word in the question, for instance 'give', 'state', 'name', 'outline', 'explain', 'assess'. These words provide information on the type of response required and how it should be phrased. For example 'outline' is often a short response, whereas 'assess' requires a much longer response with consideration of two sides – positives/negatives or advantages/disadvantages, balance, application to the scenario and a conclusion.
- Be prepared for subject specific terms in the examination and study the specification carefully to ensure familiarisation and understanding of all content terms.
- If a scenario is given use the information to answer the question to show application of understanding and knowledge.
- Look at how many marks are available in each question and match these to the answer. For example, for one mark, one point should be made such as 'stating one role'; for two marks such as 'explain one way/advantage' the answer needs to contain two separate points – one point should identify or state the 'way' or 'advantage' and the second point should be a development and contain a connecting statement to link the 'way' or 'advantage' with an outcome.
- If two explanations are required and four marks available then 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 two of the marks allocated for the question will be lost.
- Be prepared for and 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.
- Practise responses to questions. Exam technique is 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 |
|---|----------|----|----|----|----|---|
| 21474E – Unit 1: the UK Travel and Tourism Sector | 50 | 41 | 31 | 22 | 13 | 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://pastpapers.edexcel.com/content/edexcel/grade-boundaries.html>

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