



Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2015

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

Unit 7: Travel and Tourism Business
Environments (21627E)

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Introduction

This report has been written by the lead examiner for the BTEC unit Travel and Tourism Business Environments. 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 examination series for Unit 7 Travel and Tourism Business Environments. It was pleasing to see how many candidates attempted the majority of questions. In particular, examiners were pleased with the range and application of responses in the more challenging questions, particularly questions 7 and 8. These items tested both the higher order command words and Merit and Distinction grade descriptors.

Generally, learners were able to show an understanding of types of business ownership and structure and the introduction and application of new technology. However, it should be noted that examination technique was not as effective as it could have been. Appropriate practice and preparation for external examinations should be a priority for 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 provide **two** reasons, but many learners limited the number of marks they could be awarded by only providing one explanation or reason. Learners found some difficulty with the terminology used within the examination although the same terminology is used within the specification, for example 'trends', 'seasonal variations' and 'impartiality'.

Feedback on specific questions

Q1(a)(i)

This was a multiple choice question relating to how travel and tourism businesses develop new products and services in response to changing trends in the sector. A significant majority of learners were able to identify that a rise in social media usage is an example of a technology trend.

Q1(a)(ii)

A multiple choice question where the majority of learners could identify that the correct trend relating to the increasingly ageing population was 'demographic'.

Q1(b)

The majority of learners were able to outline what is meant by the term package holiday. Learners who did not gain the available mark often confused a package holiday with an all-inclusive holiday and their responses included 'everything is included' or 'food and drink, flights and hotel'.

Q1(c)

This was a multiple choice question. Learners were told that travel and tourism businesses respond to both foreseen and unforeseen events. The majority of learners responded with the correct response of a carnival.

Q2(a)

A significant minority of learners were not able to gain the marks available here, either because they did not have knowledge of the terminology 'economies of scale' or because they did not know how it can allow a business to cut costs. Many learners repeated the information already supplied, such as 'they now have 10 branches'. Learners needed to demonstrate their knowledge of how businesses can respond to new opportunities to cut costs and therefore provide specific answers about how this can be achieved by a business. Learners who did provide accurate responses, demonstrating their knowledge of this topic:

- 1. 10 branches so can share managers across the branches***
- 2. Could bulk buy their products and services to cut costs***

Q2(b)

The significant majority of learners were able to gain both of the marks available for this question. Learners were asked to outline two ways that a customer could adapt their booking to spend less. Learners demonstrated a breadth of knowledge of the different types of holidays and choices available to holiday makers. Examples of creditable answers included 'take a staycation', 'book a cheaper hotel', 'fly with a budget airline', and 'go somewhere with free entertainment'.

Q2(c)

Many learners were able to gain one out of the two marks available. Learners were asked to state two government interventions. The most common response seen was 'tax', with learners also able to identify that 'immigration policy' is an example of a government intervention.

Q3(a)

This was a more challenging question, where often learners only scored one out of the two marks available. Learners tended to give features or characteristics of a private limited company and not advantages to the business. A response which gained two marks:

- *If company goes bankrupt only lose what you put in*
- *Decide who to sell shares to, not just anyone*

Q3(b)

This question was well answered with the majority of learners gaining the maximum two marks available. Learners demonstrated their knowledge of types of business structures well, with many applying their knowledge further and giving brief descriptions of types of business structures. Although this demonstrated learners' knowledge of business structures, they should be providing the correct type of response for the command verb. This should be highlighted when teaching learners about exam technique.

Q3(c)

This was a multiple choice question, with the majority of learners gaining one mark from the correct response 'product development'.

Q3(d)

This question was well answered with the majority of learners gaining the maximum two marks available. Learners clearly understood business functions and the services provided by an online external service. Learners gave examples such as 'online booking forms', 'social media pages', and 'website development', all of which were credited.

Q3(e)

This question was not well answered and, where they did score marks, learners only gained one out of the two marks available. It appears that the word 'impartiality' was not understood by many learners and those who did gain one mark did so for stating that an impartial external business would mean an expert or specialist would be helping the business. Learner responses focussed on advantages of using an external business, not an **impartial** external business as the question states.

Limited responses may be due to an underdeveloped exam technique that should be addressed by centres when preparing learners for exams. When explaining an advantage it is expected that the learner would identify the advantage and then will use explanatory words such as 'because' or 'due to' to illustrate the reason how or why the identified advantage relates to the travel and tourism organisation.

One response that demonstrated this technique and gained the full two marks available:

An advantage is that an impartial expert is someone who is honest about what they think because they are not tied to anyone else and so they can help the business make decisions for their own business.

Q4(a)

The majority of learners were able to use the information in the table to correctly identify that one reason for the decline in visitors is that the Eden Project charges visitors for entry. Other responses included 'you have to pay to get in' and 'not a free attraction like others', which were credited with one mark.

Q4(b)

A minority of learners gained one out of the two marks available. Learners did not appear to understand the term 'market research', often confusing this with marketing or advertising. Many learners did not focus on the command verb 'explain' and answers were non-specific or vague.

Learners who identified a way to carry out market research, such as 'carry out a customer survey' or 'send a mystery shopper to KAG', gained one mark. Responses that gained the maximum of two marks followed this up with an explanation of how

the market research agency could help KAG increase customer numbers. Many learners considered the use of social media and how it could be used to identify target groups by seeking out comments or likes and encouraging customers to post reviews to encourage others to visit.

A response which did gain two marks:

They could do surveys to see what customers like and do not like, to see if they can make any improvements to the Art Gallery which will increase visitor numbers.

Q5(a)

A significant majority of learners were unable to gain a mark here because they could not state the term used to describe differences in visitor numbers throughout the year. This was a straightforward recall question. Incorrect answers ranged from 'change of visitors' to 'visitor fluctuations' which was a common incorrect response. Creditable responses were 'peak/off peak' or 'seasonal trends'.

Q5(b)

This question was a good discriminator. The majority of learners engaged with the scenario and, although this was quite a challenging question, gained one or two marks. Many learner responses were limited to 'increase profits' or 'increase visitors all year round', focussing on making more profit and not on the benefits of reducing variations in visitor numbers throughout the year. Learners could identify a reason why D4DM wanted to reduce variations in visitor numbers but could not clearly explain why this would lead to the museum wanting to reduce variations in visitor numbers throughout the year. For example:

May want visitor numbers to be consistent so doesn't lose profit in winter

The response above gained one mark for identifying that D4DM do not want to lose profit and this is why they wanted to reduce variations. Had the learner gone on to say that D4DM need to maintain profit levels throughout the year in order to pay their running costs, staffing and maintenance bills this would have gained the additional mark and credited the learner with two marks.

This was a demanding question and it appears that learners may not understand 'seasonal variations' which limited their responses. Some candidates misread the question; instead of answering the question 'reduce **variations** in visitor numbers' they responded to 'reduce visitor numbers'. Very few learners gained the maximum of 4 marks. In order to gain maximum marks learners needed to explain why businesses respond to new opportunities.

One response that gained three marks:

- 1. *Want to reduce variations in visitor numbers because some months they would lose more money than others so there is no stability in the business to help it grow.***
- 2. *Some days they don't know how many staff they need and if it isn't busy they will be paying staff when you might not need them***

In the first response above both a valid reason and a linked explanation point were provided by the learner. The second response was been awarded one mark as there is too much repetition regarding the number of staff needed, with no explanation of how this relates to D4DM wanting to reduce variations in customer numbers.

Q6(a)

Many learners identified facts from the table rather than trends. It appeared that learners did not always understand the concept of interpretation of data. This skill is set out clearly in the specification requirements so needs further development by centres. Many responses made no reference to the supplied data sheet and some candidates seemed to think that visitors were going to Asia, Europe and North America, not realising these were inbound tourist visitor numbers.

Often learners focussed on general trends, such as economic or cultural, and gave these as their response. Learners struggled with interpreting the data year-on-year and general statements were made about visitors increasing from 2009-2012, when the data actually showed a reduction within that time period.

One response that gained two marks:

According to the data Asia the amount of visitors are increasing each year as well as the money they spent between 2009-2012 is increasing in the UK

The response above shows how a learner can gain two marks from one response. The answer was related to the statistics in the table and identified that visits from Asia increased between 2009-2012, and that the amount of money spent by visitors from Asia increased between 2009-2012.

Q6(b)

A significant number of candidates did not attempt this question. Many learners did not fully answer the question, and did not explain a reason for the trends. Only a small minority of learners linked the question to the Royal Wedding, Olympics or Jubilee. Some learners produced answers such as 'goes up because of the exchange rate' but did not link their response to a currency or country meaning the response could not be credited.

One response that gained two marks:

Because when people come into the UK for events like the Olympics its likely people are going to spend money on hotels, transport, food and drink, merchandise.

This response accurately identified that the Olympics occurred in 2012, which is in the data period of 2009-2012, and may be a reason for more visitors to the UK. The learner then went on to explain that this would have led to tourists spending more money in the UK on accommodation, food and drink, hotels and transport, relating to the amount of money spent in the UK. This response linked directly to the question.

Q7(a)

A minority of the learners were able to identify the stage in the product life cycle that Fun and Thrills has reached as 'decline'. This question was direct recall from the specification. Centres are encouraged to ensure that all aspects of the content are covered for exam purposes.

Q7(b)

There were some encouraging responses to this question. Many learners identified the disadvantages of only appealing to families with young children but fewer went on to explain why it is a business risk. A minority of learners were able to gain one out of the two marks available for this question.

Typical one mark answers:

They don't have much disposable income

Children are at school a lot of the time

These responses were credited with one mark. In order to gain the second mark further development was needed; for example, they may go on to explain that

families may not go to theme parks as they can be expensive and go to free attractions to save money instead.

One response that gained two marks:

They would only have visits in certain seasons e.g. summer holidays as children at school. This means they would not make profit throughout the year in off peak times and cause bankruptcy.

This response gained the full two marks as the learner identified a factor that may impact on the theme park, then provided an explanation point of why attracting customers who may only visit at certain times of the year is a business risk.

Q7(c)

This question was challenging and unfortunately it would appear that learners did not read the question or fully understand what was required to gain the maximum four marks. This resulted in limited ideas from learners.

Where learners did give a suitable way to develop the area of land, they did not go on to explain how this way would meet the demand for ethical and environmentally friendly products and services. This limited learners to one to two marks.

A response which gained two marks:

- 1. Use the land to grow their own crops and vegetables***
- 2. Build a new ride powered by solar energy***

The response above shows the learner was able to identify ways the theme park could develop the area of land but the explanation point is missing. The explanation in each case should be fully applied to the scenario provided.

Learners who scored three to four marks fully explained two ways the theme park could develop the land and connected this to the demand for ethical/environmentally friendly products/services. For example:

- 1. They could grow their own food and build a café which would serve home grown food onsite reducing pollution from vehicles bringing food from off site***
- 2. Use the land to build an eco-centre to teach children about helping the environment.***

Q7(d)

This question was a good discriminator. The majority of learners engaged with the scenario and although this was a challenging question, gained one or two marks. Learners were able to identify two disadvantages of using new technology but could not clearly explain why it was a disadvantage. Often learners provided explanations that were linked to the customer experience rather than why the wristbands may be a disadvantage to the theme park.

A typical two mark response:

May lose the wristband and can't get on the rides
Might not know how to use the wristband

The responses above show the learner was able to identify two disadvantages of using the wristband but the explanation of why each is a disadvantage to the park is missing. The explanation in each case should be fully applied to the scenario provided, focussing on the theme park not the customer.

Learners who scored three or four marks could more fully explain two different disadvantages connected to the scenario and why the wristband could be a disadvantage to the theme park. For example:

- 1. Might get broken and could be expensive for the park to keep fixing or buying new ones***
- 2. Some customers might not know how to use the wristbands so might be put off going to the theme park and go somewhere else instead***

This response gained four marks for identifying two clear disadvantages of the new technology, then providing valid and different explanation points of how those disadvantages would affect the theme park.

Q8

This last question was a different format from others in the paper. This question provided an opportunity for the learner to demonstrate their ability to assess two potential infrastructure projects and discuss, using the statistics, which project would be best for developing inbound tourism across the UK.

In this exam series the majority of responses gained 'Level 1' marks. There were a number of reasons for this:

- Some learners just listed advantages and disadvantages of each infrastructure project rather than considering which would be best for developing inbound tourism across the UK.
- Other learners chose one infrastructure project and focussed their response on this, but simply repeated a point several times rather than expand on their argument or consider the other infrastructure project.
- Some learners did not focus on which project would be best for inbound tourism across the UK and instead discussed domestic tourism and commuters for the high-speed rail route and outbound tourism for the third runway at London Heathrow Airport.

The response below gained four marks. The learner answered the question and looked at both infrastructure projects. Most points are relevant and there is some limited explanation and link to the statistics:

I think that the best idea is for the government to build a high speed route connecting London, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds and Manchester. I think this idea is good because there is up to 73% of all inbound visitors that arrive in London by air and the inbound visitors can use this railway to travel to other big major cities in the UK like Birmingham and also the railway is high speed rail route which allows visitors to travel to other destinations quickly. I think that the third runway is a bad idea because there is already 2 runways at the airport and building a third one is unnecessary. Also building the high speed rail route will be a good idea as the rail route reaches to the edge of the coast and visitors arriving by sea can use this railway to travel to other destinations.

The response below was one of the highest scoring responses for this question (Level 2 – six marks). The learner has planned their answer and identified a range of points. The answer has considered the third runway at London Heathrow Airport, but there is more emphasis on the high-speed rail route. The points raised are relevant to the situation and the statistics have been used in the response to support the learner's choice.

A high-speed rail route connecting all 5 cities is a better investment in infrastructure. This is because these 5 cities are very popular for inbound tourists. 12.8 million visits were made to England in 2012, that is a lot more than visits to Scotland, Wales or N.Ireland so more people would

use this high speed rail route. Also this rail route is across England and if people want to visit Scotland or Wales they can reach them much faster. As we know 73% of inbound tourists to the UK arrive by air, they usually use trains because the price is cheaper for trains than planes. Also if people choose to travel by train they might stop off and look around the cities, spend money there and local shops will earn more money and this could help the country's economy. So a high speed rail route is better than a third runway because if tourists want to look around cities, trains are cheaper and this route connects most popular cities across the UK.

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 should 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, for example, how businesses cut costs, advantages and disadvantages of using external business functions and why businesses respond to new opportunities.
- 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 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
21627E – Unit 7: Travel and Tourism Business Environments	50	42	31	21	11	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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