

Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2016

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

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

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January 2016

Publications Code BF043090

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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. We hope this will help you to prepare your learners for future examination series.

General Comments

This was the fourth examination series for Unit 7 Travel and Tourism Business Environments. It was pleasing to see how many learners attempted the majority of questions. In particular, examiners were pleased with the range and application of responses in the more challenging questions – Q9a and Q11.

Generally, learners were able to show an understanding of types of business ownership, foreseen events, cultural trends and interpretation of data and performed well on the multiple choice questions. Learners appear confident with learning aim A in the specification.

However, it should be noted that examination technique was not as effective as it could have been in this exam series. Appropriate practice and preparation for external examinations should be a priority for tutors and centres using all of the information available.

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 identifying one way or one reason and not providing a linked explanation or expansion to achieve the additional two marks.

Learners found some difficulty with the terminology used within the paper although the same terminology is used within the specification. For example, 'trends', 'functions' and 'expertise'.

Feedback on specific questions

Q1(a)

This question was well answered with the majority of learners gaining the mark available. Learners were given one example of current transport trend and were asked to provide another valid example. Learners gave examples such as 'cruising', low cost coach operators' and 'eco friendly transport', all of which were credited.

Q1(b)

A multiple choice question where the majority of learners identified that people who choose to spend their holidays at home would be taking a 'staycation'.

Q1(c)

This question was well answered with the majority of learners gaining the mark available. Learners understood the term 'cultural trend'. Learners gave examples such as 'health tourism', 'dark tourism' and 'sport tourism', all of which were credited.

Q2(a)

This question was not well answered. This question was a direct recall from the specification. Learners did not appear to understand the term economic trend. Many learners repeated the example provided in the scenario 'employment rates'. The correct response being 'economic'.

Q2(b)

This question was well answered by the majority of learners. Learners accurately identified that the correct response to the question was 'accommodation' using information provided in the table.

Q2(c)

This question was well answered by the majority of learners. Learners accurately identified that the correct response to the question was '2013' using information provided in the table.

Q3(a)

This question was well answered with the significant majority of learners gaining the mark available. Learners clearly understand the many different types of business ownership used within the specification. A variety of examples were given by learners, including 'co-operative', 'franchise' and 'private limited company', all of which were credited.

Q3(b)

This question required learners to give two advantages of Tourism Action being a charitable organisation. Many learners didn't understand the question and gave a description of a charitable organisation with responses such as, 'don't have to pay their staff' and 'they have no overheads'. Some learners were able to gain one out of the two marks available. Common responses included 'don't have to pay tax' and 'receive donations', which were both credited.

Q3(c) (i)

A multiple choice question where the majority of learners identified that one other type of staffing structure is a 'hierarchical' staffing structure.

Q3(c) (ii)

This question required learners to give two advantages for Tourism Action of having a flat staffing structure. Many learners misunderstood the question and gave answers such as, 'fewer staff wages', 'more say in the business' and 'communication is easier'. Some learners were able to gain one out of the two marks available. Common responses included 'communication can be faster', 'quicker to make decisions' and 'boss is more closer to what is going on', all of which were credited.

Q4(a)

The majority of learners were able to outline what is meant by the term self catering. Learner who did not gain the mark available often confused self catering with self service in a hotel. Correct responses included 'you have a kitchen to cook your own food' and 'you supply your own food and drink, its not included'.

Q4(b)

Many learners were able to gain the mark available. Learners were provided with an example of an intangible service and asked to give one other example in the travel and tourism industry. Correct responses included 'WiFi', 'first class seats' and 'room service'. A minority of learners repeated the example given in the question, which led to no marks being awarded.

Q5(a)

Many learners were unable to gain any of the two marks available. Learners were asked to give two functions of an advertising and promotion organisation. The most common response from learners was 'create promotional material'. Other correct responses seen included 'help with last minute discounting', 'manage promotional campaigns' and 'set up social media pages'. The majority of responses focussed on the purpose of an advertising and promotion organisation rather than the functions. Centres may wish to consider this issue when teaching learners exam technique.

Q5(b)

This question was not well answered by the majority of learners. A small proportion of learners gained one out of the two marks available. Learners were asked to give one other advantage of using an external business to carry out advertising and promotion, other than expertise which was used within the question. Learner responses focussed on them being 'specialists', 'experts' and 'know what they are doing', which were not credited. The focus of the question was testing 'expertise' and how this can be an advantage to a business.

A response which did gain two marks:

One reason Sunrise Manor has hired an external organisation to carry out its advertising and promotion is because of their expertise.

(b) Other than expertise, explain **one** other advantage for Sunrise Manor of using an external company for advertising and promotion.

(2)

Q05b

It ~~creates~~ gives the company more time to do the everyday necessities within their job as they are no longer having to take time out of their days to promote and advertise.

(Total for Question 5 = 4 marks)

Total

Limited responses may be due to an underdeveloped exam technique that should be addressed by centres when preparing learners for exams.

Q6(a)

A multiple choice question where the majority of learners could accurately identify the correct response '2010' from the information provided in the graph.

Q6(b)

A multiple choice question where the majority of learners could accurately identify the correct response 'USA' from the information provided in the graph.

Q6(c)

A multiple choice question where the majority of learners could accurately identify the correct response '2,000,000' from the information provided in the graph.

Q6(d)

This question was not well answered by the majority of learners. A small proportion of learners gained one out of the two marks available. Learners were asked to explain one way, other than cost, that the increased use of low cost airlines has helped to promote the popularity of European destinations. The most common correct responses which were credited with one mark out of the two available was 'more choice of airports to fly out from' or 'they fly to different destinations in Europe'. Marks were not gained for linked explanations.

A response which did gain two marks:

(d) Other than cost, explain **one** other way that the increased use of low-cost airlines has helped to promote the popularity of European destinations.

(2) Q06d

They can now fly to other destinations because low cost airlines usually fly to the smaller regional airports so you would be able to go to other places in the European countries.

(Total for Question 6 = 5 marks) Total

Q7

Many learners were able to gain one out of the two marks available. Learners were asked to explain what is meant by the decline stage of the product life cycle. Many learners understood the product life cycle and could provide a brief explanation. Correct responses awarded one mark included 'when you have less customers' and 'when a product isn't selling as much as before'. The question required an extended explanation of how the decline stage would affect a business, such as 'meaning that the business is failing' or 'the business is now losing profit'.

One response that gained two marks:

7 The product life cycle consists of a number of different stages. One of these stages is decline.

Q07

Explain what is meant by the decline stage of the product life cycle.

Decline of a Product lifecycle is when No body wants the Product anymore & the Competition is to high and you start to lose money from it.

(Total for Question 7 = 2 marks) Total

Q8(a)

Many learners were able to gain the mark available. Learners were given an example of a foreseen sporting event, the Commonwealth Games held in Glasgow in 2014 and asked to give another named example. Correct responses included 'The Olympics', 'The World Cup', 'Notting Hill Carnival' and 'Chinese New Year', all credited with one mark.

Q8(b)

Learners were able to engage with the scenario, however, it would appear that learners did not read the question or fully understand what was required to gain the maximum two marks. A minority of learners gained one out of the two marks available. Learners gave answers such as 'the pound might be weak' or 'if the exchange rate of the pound is strong it is good' but didn't expand their response to state what impact this could have on the number of inbound visitors and gain the full two marks available.

One response that gained two marks:

The 2014 Commonwealth Games was the largest multi-sport event ever held in Scotland, with 54 Commonwealth states taking part.

(b) Explain **one** way exchange rate fluctuations may affect the number of inbound visitors to the Commonwealth Games.

(2) Q08b

If the ~~out~~ pound is strong, then there will be less inbound tourists as the currency exchange is quite high. However, if the pound is weak, then there will be more inbound tourists as the currency exchange rate is lower / cheaper.

The learner has correctly identified that if the pound is weak then there may be more visitors, however, if the pound is strong then there may be less visitors.

Q8(c)

Learners did not appear to read the question or fully understand what was required to gain the maximum four marks for explaining two ways that increased popularity of the Commonwealth Games has been a threat to Glasgow's travel and tourism businesses. Correct responses for one mark included 'Glasgow will be overcrowded because there are more people' and 'there will be more competition from new businesses'. Linked explanations were often not provided or were limited and did not relate to how the threat may impact on travel and tourism businesses in Glasgow.

One response that gained two marks:

more than 850,000 visitors. More than 3 million people passed through Glasgow Central Station during the Games. As a result, Glasgow has rapidly become a much more popular tourist destination.

(c) Explain **two** ways that increasing popularity can be seen as a threat to Glasgow's travel and tourism businesses.

(4)

1. Trains become more popular with sports fans making them more crowded and slower making regular customers use the trains less because they are uncomfortable.

2. As trains get more popular other travel services get used less making them lose out on money and custom.

(Total for Question 8 = 7 marks)

The first response gained one mark for 'trains become more popular making them crowded' and a second mark for the linked expansion 'this will make regular users unhappy and use them less'. No marks were awarded for the second response.

Q9(a)

Learners were able to engage with the scenario and gained one or two marks. Learners had a lot of ideas as to how the aquarium could improve its services through the development of an app. Often learners provided two ways rather than providing an extended description in their response. Correct responses included 'fast track entry' and 'educational games', both credited with one mark.

A typical two mark response:

9 Under the Sea is an aquarium that has developed a new mobile application (app) for its visitors. One way the app will help Under the Sea is by giving visitors information on the aquarium and sea life.

(a) Describe **one** other way that Under the Sea can improve its services through the development of an app.

(2) Q09a

It ~~could~~ could introduce interactive tours or audio books for children which would not only help improve childrens knowledge easily but also keep them entertained.

Q9(b)

This question was not answered well by the majority of learners. A minority of learners achieved one out of the four marks available for this question. The scenario was based around Under the Sea aquarium which has been developed alongside a new coach park, housing, business park and new office space. The question focussed around the aquarium attracting new customers by developing its products and services. Many learners misunderstood the question and gave responses which related to benefits for the town rather than Under the Sea. Correct responses included 'a

café/shop being suitable for the elderly' and 'coach trips and school groups might come', both credited with one mark. Learners gave unrealistic answers such as 'demolish the aquarium and build a theme park' or they repeated facilities for families and young children which was mentioned in the stem. Very few learners considered business people as new customers.

One response that gained two marks:

Under the Sea is located in a large town that is being developed. Developments include:

- a large coach and car park
- additional housing
- a business park and new office space.

Under the Sea mainly attracts families with young children. The aquarium's owners would like to redevelop the attraction to attract new customer types.

(b) Explain two ways in which Under the Sea could use the development of the town as an opportunity to develop its products and services to attract new customers. (4) (50%)

1 Under the Sea could use its business facilities to attract business customers. They could use the area for meetings and conferences.

2 The additional houses can be used as accommodation for older people as well. The houses could be self-catering so the grey market could rent it in case they pay a visit near the visitor attraction site.

(Total for Question 9 = 6 marks) (Total)

The first response was awarded one mark for identifying that Under the Sea could use the aquarium to attract business customers a further one mark was awarded for a linked explanation of using the business facilities at the aquarium to hold meetings and conferences. No marks were awarded for the second response.

Q10

A small number of learners achieved one or two marks out of the four marks available for this question. It would appear that learners did not read the question or fully understand what was required to gain the maximum four marks. A significant percentage of the answers focussed on maintaining profitability by raising prices, however these answers were not credited. Many learners did not seem to realise that the tour operator would not benefit from any additional money a hotel raised. Learners gave incorrect responses such as 'charge extra for food and drink' and 'make things cheaper'. Some of the suggestions were not practical. Correct responses included 'introduce a range of excursions for customers to book as extras' and 'look for cheaper airlines to use as part of the package'.

One response that gained one mark:

10 Complete Croatia is a small tour operator offering package holidays to luxury beachfront hotels in Croatia.

Over the last year, the cost of hotel rooms has increased but Complete Croatia does not wish to increase the price of its package holidays. This has reduced its profitability.

Explain **two** ways that Complete Croatia can maintain profitability without increasing its holiday prices.

Q11

1 They could ~~of~~ do add ons such as daytrips at low prices if booking certain holidays.

2 They could also promote different products & services with each holiday.

The response above gained one mark for stating that the Complete Croatia could offer daytrips at low prices. If the learner had then gone on to say that this would gain extra income and assist with maintaining profitability, then a second mark would have been awarded.

Learners who scored two marks could provide two ways connected to the scenario, however, the response did not provide a linked explanation to maintaining profitability for the tour operator. For example:

10 Complete Croatia is a small tour operator offering package holidays to luxury beachfront hotels in Croatia.

Over the last year, the cost of hotel rooms has increased but Complete Croatia does not wish to increase the price of its package holidays. This has reduced its profitability.

Explain **two** ways that Complete Croatia can maintain profitability without increasing its holiday prices.

1 They could introduce new locations for holidays

2 They could ~~start~~ start to include extras along with the package holidays, e.g. sightseeing tours around the local area.

One mark is given for 'introduce new locations for holidays' and one mark given for 'start to include extras alongside the package e.g. sightseeing'.

Q11

This last question was a different format from others in the paper. This question provided learners with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to discuss how a car ferry operator could respond to a planned tunnel development.

Learners provided many ideas of how the car ferry operator could respond to the planned tunnel development. It was pleasing to see that the significant majority of learners attempted and gained marks on this question.

- Many learners suggested that the car ferry operator should introduce on board facilities including catering outlets, entertainment and childrens play areas, unfortunately this was simply repeated several times rather than expanding on other opportunities available.
- Learners who performed well on this question addressed the 4P's, either directly or indirectly.
- Some learners misunderstood the scenario and listed advantages and disadvantages of the tunnel against the ferry. This meant that no marks were awarded.
- Learners often didn't expand on their points and provided a list of ideas rather than expanding on how they would assist the car ferry operator.

The response below gained three marks. The learner answered the question with two relevant points made, however, both are linked to providing facilities, the points made are applied to the situation in the question.

11 Eastport County Council is considering building a road tunnel to the nearby Willow Island. The route is currently served by a car ferry service that takes around three hours. The road tunnel would reduce travel time to just one hour.

The car ferry has no facilities for customers on board. Passengers are expected to stay in their cars throughout the journey.

The car ferry operator is concerned about the planned development of the new road tunnel and the impact it will have on its business.



Discuss how the car ferry operator can respond to the planned tunnel development.

.....

It could respond by adding facilities to its ferries so that customers can walk about and look at the view as they get to their destination. This will increase the amount of customers as they get a nice scene, where as if you are going through a tunnel for an hour in a car people are more likely to pick the best option.

12



P 4 7 0 8 9 A 0 1 2 1 6

They could also add facilities for kids so for 3 hours the parents have peace and spend the rest of the holiday on White Island. Which is better than being stuck in the car for an hour with your kids.

Doing this would also mean that the ferry would have to employ more people which would lower the management rate.

The response below was awarded 7 marks out of a possible 8. The learner has structured their answer and discussed a range of relevant points. The answer considers how the car ferry operator can respond to the competition from the planned tunnel development. The points raised are relevant to the scenario and support the learners reasoning.

The car ferry operator can look into its transport links and see if there is any easier and quicker route, this will then compete against the tunnels time limit. They can also change the car ferry facilities and develop into a more enjoyable experience, the customers should have the chance to walk around on the ferry and to stretch their legs. The car ferry operator could introduce bigger space and the opportunity for people to go onto the board and have fresh air, therefore a space should be opened on the top of deck and the customers could watch and

enjoy the sea. Also food should be offered, even with the idea of vending machines and a drink machine. By introducing these facilities it meets the needs of the target more directly.

Open space will add the sense of freedom and food will make the journey more appealing.

Also if ~~the~~ different products and services were implied such as entertainment with a tv showing popular films, it will distract and keep customers occupied during the journey. By adding the style of cruise ships setting it helps develop the overall effect and pushes the ferry operator to stay ahead of competitor behaviour.

Also another way it can respond is by the use of advertising and promotion, they could introduce deals and make their prices cheaper to travel. By gaining more recognition and awareness, more people will be persuaded to travel and more customers will be loyal.

Also they could concentrate on increasing their market share and maximising their ~~share~~ shareholders benefits, so they will have more to compete with against the idea of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~plant~~ tunnel.

Summary

Based on their performance of this paper, 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.
- Be aware that all parts of the specification will be tested during the life of the qualification.
- Know the terminology and key terms within all learning aims within the unit specification and be prepared to be tested on them in the examination.
- Study the specification to ensure all aspects that could be tested are known, such as the functions of external departments within travel and tourism businesses, advantages of using an external organisation to carry out functions on behalf of a business; understand current trends in the travel and tourism sector and provide examples; knowledge of how external costs can affect profitability.
- Practise answering questions using past papers and mark schemes to gain familiarity with the style and structure of questions used and know what is required by the command words e.g. outline, explain, discuss.
- In the examination, read each question carefully, preferably twice.
- Observe the marks available and answer accordingly especially in multiple response questions. For two marks such as 'explain one reason/way/advantage' the answer needs to contain two separate points – one point should identify or state the 'way', 'reason' or 'advantage' and the second point should contain a connecting statement that is a development of the first point and links the 'way' etc. to the scenario given.
- If two explanations are required and four marks are available, two marks will be awarded for the first response and the other two will be awarded for the second response. So if only one response is made then two of the marks allocated for the question will be lost.
- Re-read answers back and then check they answer what the question has actually asked.
- If a scenario is given use the information to answer the question to show application of understanding and knowledge.
- 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. 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.

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