

# Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

PL Hospitality (HO301)  
Paper 01

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## **Introduction**

This is the third summer series of the Principal Learning examination papers for the Level 3 Diploma in Hospitality. The external units (HO301 and HO307) performed well and discriminated effectively between the different levels of candidate ability. The examiners reported that candidates were well-prepared for the papers, and were obviously familiar with the structure and layout of the two papers. Again the examiners request that centres make their learners familiar with the key verbs used in questions. It is good practice to explain to learners how they should respond to the introductory verb used at the start of the questions. Learners aiming for high marks need to provide more detailed, "fuller" responses when responding to "discuss", "evaluate", "explain" and "analyse" questions.

Again centres are encouraged to note and action the recommendations suggested at the end of each unit.

## **Unit 1: Investigating the Hospitality Industry**

### **General comments**

Unit HO301 requires candidates to demonstrate an understanding of a number of key aspects of the UK and worldwide hospitality industry; these include the scope of the sector, types of outlets, the impact to the economy, career opportunities, social, economic and industry trends, research sources. During this June 2012 series the exam paper performed as expected with candidates being able to give a range of responses to questions related to the unit specification. The overall performance of the paper indicated that the analytical questions and questions related to trends within the UK hospitality industry again presented a challenge for a high proportion of candidates. However, it was clear from candidate responses that overall knowledge and understanding had been demonstrated effectively enhancing the final grade. Responses further demonstrated that the majority of candidates made a good attempt at the examination paper and were allocated successful marks accordingly.

### **Question 1 (a) (i) (ii) (iii) and (iv)**

This question gave candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of various outlets within the UK hospitality industry for specific groups of customers. This question was answered well by all candidates with examples of outlets that included hotels (boutique and budget), fast food establishments, restaurants, coffee shops and city centre rental apartments. Candidates demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of relevant outlets for each of the specific groups thus gaining full marks for the various elements of Question 1. It was positive

to see a range identified by candidates as this demonstrated an awareness of outlets within the industry.

### **Question 1 (b)**

This question allowed candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the hospitality services sector of the UK hospitality industry. The range of responses included the types of outlets, services offered by the sector and whether the sector operated for a primary or secondary purpose. A high proportion of candidates answered this question correctly being able to give a good description of the hospitality services sector supported by examples and these candidates were awarded marks accordingly. Unfortunately, there were a small number of candidates that still appeared to be confused about whether the hospitality services sector operates for a profit and/or is run by government. This is where learner responses were incorrect and did not differentiate the primary function of the hospitality services sector. A couple of candidates responded by describing the commercial sector of the hospitality industry and therefore were not allocated marks.

### **Question 2 (a)**

This question required candidates to state two other industries with links to the UK hospitality industry. The majority of candidates were able to give correct responses to this question thus being allocated the full 2 marks. It was clear from the range of responses given that candidates understood the links the UK hospitality has with other industries with this being positive to see. A good range of responses were given including travel and tourism, retail and music and sports venues. These responses demonstrated a breadth of knowledge of the hospitality sector and were awarded marks accordingly. One response given was police station which was not allocated a mark.

### **Question 2 (b)**

Part (b) of Question 2 required candidates to give an explanation of how UK hospitality outlets make an important contribution to the growth of the service industry economy. This question appeared challenging for some candidates with confusion being demonstrated about 'how' hospitality outlets contribute to the economy. The correct range of responses included economic growth, employment, changes in consumer spend and growth of niche markets. The explanation part of the response was somewhat weak for a small minority of candidates and it is suggested that practice with examination technique will improve this. Some candidates presented a very brief list not fully explaining their response that was necessary to achieve full marks. However, within the

correct responses it was clear that the majority of candidates had understood the question and responded accordingly.

### **Question 3 (a)**

This question required candidates to analyse how changing industry trends affect UK hospitality outlets. Whilst the majority of candidates showed some understanding of trends the analysis part of the question was unfortunately lacking. Responses given by candidates were mainly of a descriptive nature and ranged from a demand for value and budget hotels, changes to products and services, the smoking ban, gaming issues, market saturation, globalisation, cultural issues, and the closure of some establishments. These responses were positive as it was clear they were related to the specifications. There was still confusion with industry, economic and social trends and incorrect responses given by candidates unfortunately could not be allocated marks. The confusion in differentiating industry, social and economic trends led to a few students responding completely incorrectly against question criteria. Whilst their incorrect response did demonstrate understanding of other trends it seems that the question was unfortunately misunderstood. The depth of response was satisfactory overall with only a small number of candidates being able to fully demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the question criteria. There was a lost opportunity for candidates to fully demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and therefore analyse the impact of industry trends.

### **Question 3(b)**

This question presented an opportunity for candidates to describe how a hospitality manager can respond to changing trends and encourage commercial success. The majority of learner responses for this element of Question 3 were positive and demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the question criteria. Responses given included offers and promotions, incentives for customers i.e. loyalty schemes, price cuts, offering products and services specific to a customer group and carrying out research on other establishments to match what competitors were doing. The range of responses given by candidates was comprehensive with most being able to collect marks for this part of Question 3. There were also partial marks awarded across the board demonstrating that candidates did understand the question and were able to respond accordingly.

### **Question 4(a)**

Question 4(a) required candidates to identify two job opportunities available in the hospitality service sector. A high proportion of candidates were able to answer this question correctly giving two examples of job

opportunities that consisted of chef, food operative and team leader. Only a small proportion of candidates gave other job opportunities that were not hospitality specific so were therefore not awarded marks. A greater range of responses could have been demonstrated by candidates however it was positive to see that the majority were able to collect full marks for this question.

#### **Question 4(b)**

The majority of candidates were able to answer this question successfully describing how an individual can develop skills for working in the worldwide hospitality industry. A good range of responses were given that included gaining part time employment in the industry, practice a variety of skills within a work setting, shadow other managers and undertake study at college or university. A small proportion of candidates did not achieve full marks for this question as they listed the skills and unfortunately did not describe how to develop them. Some candidates described the benefits of working in the industry; this demonstrated that the question had not been read properly. Overall however candidates demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the skills needed to work within the worldwide hospitality industry.

#### **Question 4(c)**

This question allowed candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the range and responsibilities of an effective hospitality manager. All candidates attempted this question with success and were awarded marks accordingly. Responses included managing staff, monitoring standards, ensuring that staff fulfilled their work duties and dealing with problems and complaints. It was positive to see that candidates had understood the question and responded with examples that were directly relevant to the question criteria. An excellent range of responses were given for this question with full details provided by each candidate.

#### **Question 5(a)**

Question 5(a) gave candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the routes that a supervisors working in the hospitality industry may take to develop their careers. This question was answered successfully by the majority of candidates with responses being directly applicable to the question criteria. Responses consisted of an industry route and academic route i.e. undertaking training at a college or university, developing skills by working their way through positions within the industry and gaining promotion and securing a place on a trainee management programme with an employer. A low proportion of candidates also stated the apprenticeship option which was positive to

see. It was clear that candidates had understood the question and were allocated marks accordingly. Only a small minority of candidates did not provide a fully explicit response but were awarded partial marks based on knowledge and understanding. The range of responses clearly demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the question criteria across the cohort of candidates.

### **Question 5(b)**

Question 5(b) required candidates to explain the benefits of pursuing a career as an accommodation manager in the hospitality industry. The majority of candidates attempted this question satisfactorily demonstrating that they had understood the question. Responses given consisted of ability to travel, increased salary and the opportunity to develop a variety of skills. There were some candidates that gave responses that included meeting new people and job satisfaction that were not awarded marks due to the fact they were not explicitly related to the hospitality industry and the role within the question criteria. It was positive to see that candidate responses demonstrated a range of benefits to working in the hospitality industry, and they were allocated marks accordingly.

### **Question 6(a)**

Question 6(a) required candidates to identify four examples of secondary research that a manager may use to explore current industry trends. A high proportion of candidates achieved full marks in this element of the examination paper demonstrating they had a good knowledge of secondary research used within the sector. Only a small minority of candidates did not achieve full marks for their responses as they had stated examples of primary research. Responses demonstrated a good range that included industry reports, the media i.e. TV, published sources such as books and journals with most candidates also identifying the internet. A clear understanding of secondary research was demonstrated by the majority of candidates with appropriate marks being allocated for this element of the HO301 examination paper.

### **Question 6(b)**

This question required candidates to analyse how secondary research can be used to benefit the hospitality industry. Only a small number of candidates were able to answer this question successfully giving a full response that demonstrated knowledge of how secondary research can be used. Unfortunately, the analysis part of this question was missing from most candidate responses resulting in only partial marks being allocated across the cohort. Responses included researching the competition, understanding trends and identifying niche markets within the industry.

Whilst the correct responses demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of question criteria it was again the analysis part of the response that lost candidates vital marks. Some candidates were able to provide a more justified response and were awarded higher marks. A more comprehensive answer that detailed and analysed 'how' secondary research can be used to benefit the hospitality industry would have allowed all candidates to be awarded a higher grade.

### **Recommendations for centres:**

- Ensure that candidates are able to understand, and distinguish between the use of active verbs in the question i.e. state, identify, outline, describe, evaluate and analyse
- Use practice revision sessions for candidates to assist them in structuring examination answers to ensure full marks can be allocated
- Ensure that centres cover the whole unit content in delivered sessions and practice assessment of each component where necessary
- Use past exam questions and mark schemes with candidates to identify where allocation of marks are awarded
- Use SAM material to develop a range of skills within the Diploma programme
- Use practice assessment sessions when necessary to allow candidates to develop confidence and ability in examination technique
- Attend appropriate Edexcel training events that focus on planning and preparation for Diploma assessment.

### **Further guidance and support**

Centres are reminded that a range of tutor materials, including example schemes of work and assignment briefs, are available to support this qualification. A range of training opportunities are also available to support centre assessors. Further details can be found at Edexcel Online: [www.edexcel.com/resources/training](http://www.edexcel.com/resources/training)

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