

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

PL Hospitality (HO307)
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.

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

Unit 7. Sales and Marketing in the Hospitality Industry

General comments

This external examination paper generally performed well with candidates being awarded a broad range of marks, demonstrating a variety of ability at Level 3.

Unit HO307 gives candidates the opportunity to study sales and marketing and to apply principles and techniques to organisations and businesses within the hospitality industry by means of a scenario on which the questions are based. It is clear that teaching sessions had focussed on most of the required key learning outcomes with some candidates demonstrating a good knowledge. The area of weakness continues to be with Learning Outcome 4 'Understand how to evaluate the effectiveness of hospitality marketing activities' as candidates seem confident with understanding marketing activities but not how to evaluate them. Candidates appeared to have been prepared well for the paper but most were unable to provide responses which were detailed and comprehensive particularly with the questions requiring extended written responses. It appears that the active verb in questions is either misunderstood or is largely ignored by candidates with many candidates unable to discriminate effectively between the action verbs of identify, describe, evaluate, analyse etc. Most candidates did make a good attempt at answering all the questions, and the more able candidates displayed an up-to-date knowledge of current issues and trends. Less able candidates or candidates who had not completed the unit content offered confused responses. As such the paper performed effectively to discriminate between the different abilities and levels of learners. Centres are strongly urged to ensure that the whole unit content is covered, using practice

assessments as appropriate, before candidates are entered for the paper in future.

Question 1 (a)

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates with all achieving either one or two marks, as the definition they gave of the term marketing was satisfactory with some candidates giving appropriate extended detail.

Question 1 (b)

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates with all achieving either one or two marks as they described what is meant by the term marketing research appropriately with some candidates giving relevant extended detail.

Question 2

Most candidates scored highly with this question with nearly all correctly identifying how each element of the marketing relates to the Stopover Lodges gaining maximum marks. The few candidates who did lose marks did so by only describing each element of the marketing mix in general terms rather than specifically to the information given in the scenario, which suggests that some candidates did not read the question properly thereby losing marks.

Question 3 (a)

Nearly all candidates identified two good examples of promotional techniques that could be targeted at weekend guests with most achieving full marks. Those candidates who lost marks did so by identifying two very similar techniques and not differentiating their suggestions sufficiently well eg 2 for 1 and bogof.

Question 3 (b)

Most candidates were able to describe how the two promotional techniques they identified in (a) could have an effect on sales and profits at the hotel. Again the few candidates who lost marks did so because they failed to differentiate between the two techniques sufficiently.

Question 4

Most candidates made a good attempt at this question and were able to describe three different ways in which businesses could brand a product or service. However some candidates scored no points as they seemed not to understand the word 'brand' in the question.

Question 5

Most candidates struggled to make an analysis of the external factors that would need to be considered when developing an alternative, improved breakfast product and discussed mainly internal factors such as service style and only gained marks in MB1. However some external factors that were suggested were good. Overall, learners answered the question adequately with improvements needed in providing more ideas of external factors and of analysing these. It is important that learners understand what the question is requiring them to do (i.e. explain, evaluate, discuss, analyse etc.)

Question 6

Most candidates scored marks around the MB1/MB2 borderline as the answers they gave were relevant to the question but were not sufficiently evaluative. This suggested that candidates were unable to apply the knowledge they had learned or that centres had concentrated too much on their teaching of marketing activities with insufficient emphasis on how to apply this knowledge which is required for LO3. This question was designed to give the higher level candidates the opportunity to fully demonstrate and apply their knowledge and understanding of how to evaluate the use of marketing activities but no candidate was able to do this effectively.

Question 7

The majority of candidates did not score well on this question with most only achieving marks in Mark Band 1. This suggested that candidates were unable to apply the knowledge they had learned to look at the bigger picture of how businesses could carry out marketing activities jointly. This question was designed to give the higher level candidates the opportunity to fully demonstrate and apply their knowledge and understanding of marketing activities but no candidate was able to do this effectively.

Question 8

This question was tackled well by some candidates who were able to make some good and well thought out suggestions on how to review the effectiveness of advertising in different brochures. However some candidates did struggle to produce some simple suggestions which were undeveloped and lacked detail. Most candidates were very broad in their answers and only demonstrated a limited knowledge with little attempt at applying it to the question.

Question 9 (a)

Some candidates answered this question confidently and had obviously been taught well about different types of secondary market research and were able to make some well constructed suggestions. However some candidates were unable to differentiate in their responses between what was 'internal' secondary market research and what was 'external' secondary Market research and gave inappropriate responses.

Question 9 (b)

This question was to challenge the higher level learner and some were able to make an appropriate analysis of how 'external' statistical information could be used to develop a business through marketing activities. Learners who lost marks were generally those who made a weak attempt in part (a) and were therefore unable to carry relevant thought processes through to part (b).

Recommendations for centres:

- Ensure that candidates are able to understand, and distinguish between, the use of the active verbs in the question i.e. identify, state, outline, discuss, evaluate, explain and analyse.
- Use previous examination papers for practice revision sessions to assist candidates in structuring suitable examination responses to ensure that high marks can be gained across possible questions from all the learning outcomes.
- Encourage candidates to give breadth and depth within responses to questions to demonstrate a full knowledge and applied understanding.
- Ensure that centres cover the whole unit content in teaching sessions with more equal weighting cross the four learning outcomes.
- Use typical examination questions and mark schemes with candidates to identify where allocation of marks are awarded and can be gained.
- Use practice assessment sessions when necessary to allow candidates to develop confidence and ability in writing examination responses
- 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

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