

Examiners' Report

January 2010

Principal Learning

Information Technology Level 3 IT302/01 Understanding Organisations

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Principal Examiners' Report

Level 3 Unit 2 - Understanding Organisations

General Comments

This was the second exam series when this unit was examined. The exam focused on the hypothetical study of a customised T shirt printer.

The quality of entry has greatly improved on the last occasion with good evidence of learners having made good use of the pre-release to prepare for the exam.

Most learners had attempted all questions on the paper, there was some limited evidence of learners running out of time on the last two questions but all questions were answered in full by some learners.

Many learners might have significantly improved their marks if only they had read the whole question carefully.

Pre-Release

The pre-release was issued at the start of December 2009, it introduced the organisation 'Tees4Today' and provided information on the issues that would be investigated in the question paper. It was evident in many learners answers that they had studied the pre-release carefully and had prepared accordingly. There were however clearly some centres where limited attention had been paid to the pre-release prior to the exam and learners struggled to manage all the information presented to them in the exam.

Not everything in the pre-release will be tackled in a direct way in the exam, some of the pre-release information is provided to get learners to think around a particular topic.

Equally not everything on the question paper is directly referred to in the pre-release and learners need to be ready to answer questions from any Learning outcome.

Question 1

Learners were asked to identify the organisational objectives of Tees4Today, comment on the benefits of its organisational structure and finally to describe the work of the office management team.

The question was answered well, although it was evident in a few cases that learners had not covered typical functional activities within a business.

Question 2

Learners were presented with a SWOT analysis which was competently answered by most learners. Quite a few learners incorrectly placed an equal number of responses in each category.

Question 3

Learners were required to study a cash flow diagram and draw conclusions, calculate return on investment and related calculations.

This was pleasingly attempted with some excellent answers for the cash flow diagram. In a few cases learners had not read the data values correctly and thus identified the right answer but with the wrong values.

Return on Investment was correctly calculated by most learners although there were also some imaginative and well argued attempts at solving this question where learners did not know the correct formula.

There were a handful of learners for whom the calculations were evidently a challenge even with a calculator and this suggests that some learners might need practice at calculating answers using the few statistical techniques that are found in the specification.

Question 4

Learners were required to study a data flow diagram and investigate improvements in the stock ordering system. They were also required to discuss integrating two systems. This was the first question where major differences in performance appeared, there were some excellent answers on the issue of batch ordering. On the other quite a few learners struggled with integrating systems. It is becoming apparent that whilst this is an IT exam learners seem better prepared for the more 'business orientated' questions than the 'IT orientated' questions.

Question 5

A short but significant question on internet trading. A good number of the higher grade learners performed well on this question especially in discussing the value of purchased internet research in improving internet marketing.

This topic had been introduced in the pre-release and evidently learners had prepared possible answers, unfortunately several learners did not read the instruction part of the question carefully enough and offered 'correct' answers but in the wrong part of the question.

Question 6

This question asked learners to look at varied approaches to staff training mostly using IT. Answers were disappointing with many vague offerings to the advantages and disadvantages of each method could be. It was also evident that many learners had not studied the implication of introducing differing technologies on training.

Question 7

This question explored the roles and responsibilities of a team leader and the implications of introducing new technology.

It led to a wide variety of responses with most learners doing well on the first part of the question but the second part of the question proving more challenging for most.

Question 8 and 9

The final questions in the paper are structured to allow learners to consider a particular issue for the organisation in the pre-release but to draw in examples from other studies that they have made.

The questions produced some excellent well argued answers but unfortunately for many learners the answers were both brief and poorly attempted.

Learners are urged to prepare more thoroughly for these final questions which encourage them to think more widely on a particular topic. They carry a significant number of marks.

Question 8 asked learners to consider the issues of using laptops at a summer music festival. Many learners understood data protection issues but were unable to process this information to make it meaningful to the issue in the question with many resorting to generic data protection statements.

Security issues were better considered but answers were often narrow in their vision and many went no further than simple physical protection of the laptops.

Question 9 asked learners to consider how the introduction of a customer relationship management system for Tess4Today would improve customer relations. This question generated some sound answers, some with a broad overview and others with a narrow but deep consideration of a few benefits. Both approaches are valid and generally where learners wrote at length this question was answered well.

Conclusion

There was much more evidence that learners had a sound body of knowledge to call upon to answer the questions. There was good evidence of preparation using the pre-release materials and a good grasp of a range of business concepts. The weak point currently seems to be, surprisingly, the understanding of IT systems and how these impact on business.

Statistics

Level 3 Unit 2 - Understanding Organisations

| Grade | Max. Mark | A* | A | B | C | D | E |
|-------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 90 | 80 | 71 | 62 | 53 | 45 | 37 |
| Points score | 21 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 |

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme or marking grid.

Raw boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a learner to qualify for a given grade.

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