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Examiners' Report
Summer 2010

Principal Learning

Manufacturing and Product Design
MP101 Introduction to Manufacturing

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1. PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT – LEVEL 1 UNIT 1

General Comments
In this series, learners attaining a B grade were expected to be able to answer, correctly, questions 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 17, 22 and 25. Learners were not expected to be able to answer the remaining questions in order to achieve a pass mark. The said questions covered all learning outcomes.

Further, learners attaining an A* grade were expected to be able to answer, correctly, all of the questions on the paper, except numbers 10, 20, 21, 29 and 30. These questions required learners to have a greater depth of knowledge and to be able to filter the stronger distracter answers.

Possible approaches to improve learner performance, in specific questions, are suggested below, with the intention of helping centres to prepare learners for future examinations.

Questions 1-3 related to main business processes. Within the context of the specification this is a finite list of nine separate processes. A method that might help learners to recall the nature of each process could use a relevant image and a simple sentence describing the process. This could be produced by learners as PowerPoint presentation.

Question 4 had the focus of wealth creation. Learners need know about benefits for a company, the community and the employee. The use of case studies may be an appropriate method to deliver this learning. Internet sites such as www.employeebenefits.co.uk may be a source of suitable information.

Question 5 targeted environmental issues, and in particular reducing energy usage. The internet website www.cokecorporateresponsibility.co.uk has a series of relevant articles related to a product that learners will be familiar with.

Questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 24, 25 and 26 tested learners' knowledge of sub-sectors and products. This learning outcome has an extensive list of sectors and products associated with it. Learners are likely to be familiar with some sub-sectors, such as bakery; other sub-sectors, such as those that produce technical textiles, may be less well known. It may be appropriate to identify those sectors and products that learners are not knowledgeable about and focus teaching sessions to address these.

Questions 11, 13 and 15 were about the linked concepts of price and cost. The specification makes the explicit link between 'increased costs = increased selling price = potential loss of business' and 'decreased costs = larger profit margin/increased production' etc. Learners should be taught to realise that they need no knowledge of the specific manufacturing sub-sector in order to be able to apply the said principles.

Questions 16, 19 and 20 related to fixed and variable costs. It may be appropriate for learners to be shown the total costs of manufacturing a familiar product. They could then identify those elements of the costs that are fixed and those that are variable.

Questions 17, 18, 27, 28, and 30 required learners to perform simple calculations relating to the costs of manufacturing products. Examples from previous examination series are a good indicator of the level of complexity learners are expected to process. Centres could keep the wording of previous questions and simply change the figures involved. It is likely that learners will benefit from practising the use of a calculator to solve these types of problems. As this learning outcome will account for between 10 and 20 percent of the examination, proficiency in performing costing calculations is important.

Questions 22 and 23 related to demographics. This appears to be an area where learners are not familiar with the terminology. It is particularly important for Level 1 learners that the meaning of specialist wording is clearly explained.

The comments above are not intended to be definitive; they are suggestions about possible methods and resources to help teachers deliver the learning for the externally assessed unit of this specification.

2. STATISTICS

2.1. Level 1 Unit 1 Introduction to Manufacturing

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	U
Raw boundary mark	30	25	18	11	0
Points Score	4	3	2	1	0

Notes

Maximum Mark (raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the Mark Scheme or Marking Grids.

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

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