

Examiners' Report

January 2012

Principal Learning Public Services
PS201

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Unit PS201

Exploring Public Services

This was the third external assessment series for Level 2 Principal Learning in Public Services. The paper is supported by pre-release material to set a context for questions in Section A. The questions in Section B are not directly linked to the pre-release, but learners can use their research to support Section B responses.

It was apparent that some centres are still not delivering the whole of the 'what you need to learn' content of this unit and basic public services terms such as 'means tested benefits' were not understood by learners. Some candidates were also not able to distinguish between the role and funding of public, private and third sector organisations. A clear understanding of the different sectors, their roles and funding is critical to the understanding of both this unit and the whole of the Principal Learning Public Services at Level 2.

Basic responses were provided to most Section A questions. In questions 5-9 some candidates were able only to put forward simple responses with little understanding of the need to examine all aspects of the scenario presented by the context in the question set.

In general learners did not ensure responses (especially for the extended writing questions) focused on the command verbs in the questions.

In response to Question 1 most candidates were not able to name three different sources of funding for initiatives aiming to improve the health and fitness of the population, or to identify three different public service organisations who may be involved.

For Question 2 few learners showed a full understanding and ability to explain what a means tested service is and most were not able to support their explanation with an example.

Question 3 was not well answered with many learners showing a minimal understanding of partnership working and the developments in delivery of healthcare over time.

Some learners provided good responses to Question 4, showing awareness of the wide range of media available to the public services to support the provision of information to the public.

Responses to Question 5 showed some learners had clearly appreciated the issues related to expenditure on preventable illness at the expense of non-preventable and the information from the pre-release was used well by learners to illustrate their responses.

Only a few responses to Question 6 demonstrated effective analysis of the impact on NHS expenditure if population was healthier.

Question 7(a) was well answered with some good examples given but part (b) was not as well answered and it was clear that many learners did not understand what organisations are involved in the provision of law and order. Part (c) responses tended to repeat the question ie learners wrote that the National Lottery provides funding without discussing how this funding supports public service delivery.

Question 8 responses were often a basic list of alternative funding sources, which were not clearly linked to the context of the question (third sector community organisations). Some learners were not able to address that the question was looking for alternative funding sources (not Central and Local Government).

Responses to Question 9 tended to focus on the negative impacts and potential cuts in funding and often did not discuss both the potential positives and negatives that the involvement of private and third sector can have.

Centres are reminded that Tutor Support Material (TSM) has been written for every Unit and provides detailed guidance for delivery. It can be downloaded at <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/diploma/publicservice/Pages/default.aspx>.

Recommendations

Effective preparation with the pre-release material allows learners to answer the questions directly related to the pre-release material as well as use their research for the other questions set.

Learners should be made aware of the meaning of the command verbs that appear in the assessment criteria for this unit ie outline; explain; identify; describe; analyse; propose. Definitions of these words are given in the specification and learners should answer questions with these definitions in mind.

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