

Level 3 Certificate in Advertising



International
Qualifications from EDI

Annual Qualification Review

2009

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Pass Rate Statistics	1
General Strengths and Weaknesses	1
Teaching Points by Syllabus Topic	3
Further Guidance	9
Examples of Candidate Responses	10

INTRODUCTION

The annual qualification review provides qualification-specific support and guidance to centres. This information is designed to help teachers preparing to teach the subject and to help candidates preparing to take the examination.

The reviews are published in September and take into account candidate performance, demonstrated in both on demand and series examinations, over the preceding 12 months. Global pass rates are published so you can measure the performance of your centre against these.

The review identifies candidate strengths and weaknesses by syllabus topic area and provides examples of good and poorer candidate responses. It should therefore be read in conjunction with details of the structure and learning objectives contained within the syllabus for this qualification found on the website.

The review also identifies any actual or proposed changes to the syllabus or question types together with their implications.

PASS RATE STATISTICS

The following statistics are based on the performance of candidates who took this qualification between 1 October 2008 and 30 September 2009.

Global pass rate 45.27%

Grade distributions

Pass	26.17%
Credit	16.33%
Distinction	2.77%

GENERAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths

- Overall understanding and greater depth in answers
- More readiness to explain, justify and qualify answers
- Consistent answering to all five questions rather than too much emphasis on the compulsory first question
- Evidence of understanding bullet points and dividing answers into headings and subheadings

Weaknesses

Too many candidates are adopting a high-risk strategy and doing the minimum to pass exam rather than show knowledge and understanding of a business process that may impact on their future livelihood so they should:

- avoid too much repetition of textbook information without reference to any scenarios or situations mentioned in question
- include equally acceptable local practice as chief examiner wants to encourage candidates to understand their indigenous working environment
- show evidence of observing advertising and promotion in practice which might simply require studying advertisements and commercials that appear in newspapers and magazines that the students read regularly or commercials on television and radio that candidates view or listen to frequently

TEACHING POINTS BY SYLLABUS TOPIC

Syllabus Topic Area 1: Role of Advertising

Many of the observations made previously still apply but candidate's attention should be focussed on clues given in the questions especially as they fail to spot phrases such as the question 'does *not* refer to objectives'. Candidates should be aware that it is the role of advertising and also all other forms of an organisation's communications but related to its operations, marketing and sales as well as business in general.

This syllabus topic often appears in the question papers as there are several aspects to each component of the topic area (e.g. 1.7 can cover all promotional tools integrated in a campaign or questions on individual components of the communications mix)

Specific recommendations are that candidates must:

- realise that this is about the fit of advertising and promotional techniques within the real world
- must pick up key phrases such as 'an actual campaign' and not just repeat textbook information
- must describe advertising and promotional campaigns they have observed, when asked and not explain how they would mount a campaign
- review the role of promotional techniques relevant to actual economic and market conditions

Syllabus Topic Area 2: Types of Advertising

It is more than likely that advertising other than consumer advertising is likely to be covered so candidates would do well to study them from textbooks but also observe them in use in the advertising industry in their locality – much of the specialist advertising is undertaken by companies in the provinces. Frequently, there are more vacancies available too (compared with working in consumer advertising) and likely to offer great job satisfaction because of its intellectual content. These forms of advertising often have a greater significance a company rather than to consumer advertising and its variations. .

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to:

- consider other, often more important or more applicable forms of advertising (e.g. trade, B2B promotions)
- avoid too much emphasis on repetition of learned textbook information
- consider the question posed, reading it carefully to respond to what has been asked – not what they think has been asked
- avoid past model answers without modifying them to the response needed
- show fuller understanding and use of all types and forms of advertising

Syllabus Topic Area 3: The Advertiser

Candidates must clearly understand the job of the advertising manager and then any additional roles – related to marketing – that the brand manager has. In addition, they must fully understand objectives, how they are set and their significance and not just memorise lists and past answers as questions require the candidate to relate them to a situation or scenario.

It is also important that candidates understand how advertising strategy is set and therefore how branding and positioning are established within the organisation by the internal department based on the organisation's sales and marketing relating it to Syllabus Topic 1

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to:

- encourage appreciation of the role of the in-house department as its importance has grown significantly
- the advertising manager controls the advertising and promotion process (even if advertising agencies believe that they do)
- appreciate the pivotal role of the advertising manager and the department in communicating to target audiences
- appreciate the role of advertising within the functions of the brand manager's responsibilities
- speak to, or get a guest speaker to talk about the work of a company advertising department.

Syllabus Topic Area 4: Advertising Agency

Although candidates are fully aware of the full service advertising agency, and show understanding of Media Independents and using the A la Carte agency, they are failing to grasp the real reasons why Media Independents may be used by a client alone with too much concentration focussed on the potential cost savings.

Students should also study and understand the way that agencies earn income or are remunerated via commissions and handling fees as well as learning about the technical definitions of Recognition and Accreditation.

Teaching points:

- encourage actual principles of agency practice not just the mechanics
- get students to think about what an agency does and the individual functions and roles of the people that work in them when planning and implementing campaigns
- arrange, if possible for students to visit an agency or get a member of the agency management to talk to the students (they usually have a presentation about the agency, its work and its clients).

Syllabus Topic Area 5: Creation of Press Advertisements

Firstly candidates must appreciate that there are two components to this topic (i.e. 5.1 and 5.2) – other than those required for the Compulsory Question 1 – where they will be examined. Too frequently, these questions are mis-interpreted so when asked how to prepare a press advertisement for pitching, the candidates provide format for the copy and layout and fail to write about briefs, visualising, copywriting and plansboards etc.)

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to:

- appreciate that the actual techniques (or the technicalities of formats for press advertisements [e.g. Headings; Subheadings and Body Copy etc.]) is equal to the ability to write creative text for copy or prepare drawing in visuals for the layout (but listing the elements of a layout is not acceptable).

Syllabus Topic Area 6: Creating Broadcast Commercials

Compulsory Question One has required a storyboard or radio script on two out of three occasions during the period under review but many provided copy and layout for a press advertisement (which was the third part of the cycle).

Although variations on the technicalities are acceptable, there are number of candidates who fail to fully include them and so don't obtain the marks on offer.

Although, the rotation of copy/layout, storyboard and radio script has become established in this order, there are centres which consistently produce copy and format for a press advertisement which will only receive nominal marks.

Specific recommendations are that candidates should:

- be shown how to prepare storyboards and write scripts in addition to any tutoring on preparing copy and layout for press advertisements not only for examination purposes but because broadcast commercials are now an important means of promoting brands, products, services and organisations
- get an understanding of the actual techniques (or technicalities of broadcast commercials) as this is more important than drawing and the ability to write creative text for storyboards and scripts so, as said previously, must concentrate on showing knowledge of camera directions, voice-overs [with variations of personnel and tones], effects etc.
- do not include a cut-out coupon at the end of the answers – the sign off should be in the script (especially for a radio script) or as a frame in a storyboard.

Syllabus Topic Area 7: Producing Advertisements

Understanding of the production of promotional material and of press advertisements and using printing techniques is vital especially as the cost to the advertiser can vary considerably so the advertising/brand manager needs to understand the processes to ensure that work is efficiently produced and budgets are spent effectively.

Specific recommendations are that candidates should:

- ensure that they read and understand that the answers must relate to press advertisements, brochures and direct mail shots etc. not broadcast radio or TV commercials.
- appreciate that it covers a wide area of techniques and technicalities
- visit a nearby newspaper printing works and printers producing brochures and other promotional print.

Syllabus Topic Area 8: Production of Commercials

More often than not, the production stages of a television commercial were correctly included in response to the appropriate question but sometimes they appeared in answers to a question related to the production of a press advertisement.

As control of television commercials is becoming increasingly topical (especially with the advent of multi-national satellite stations), candidates should be aware of the issues being debated by reading the trade and technical press related to advertising and the media as they affect production (see also Syllabus Topics 12/13).

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to:

- *be aware that controls are not only focussed on the concept stage but also in the production stage*
- *understand that a client company's reputation is damaged by attacks on the authenticity of claims and promises made in broadcast commercials especially on television – this is particularly true if they have been seen to exploit controls and regulations during the making of commercials.*

Syllabus Topic Area 9: Media Selection

Candidates fail to always understand the need for a mix of media nor do they appreciate that the selection has to be divided between Primary and Secondary media and there is the perennial perception that Above-the-Line media is always the Primary Media.

The selection of media is focussed on ensuring that the messages reach the right target audience at the right time in a specific campaign so less formulaic responses are needed in answers.

Teaching points:

- candidates seeing the word 'media', react with all the knowledge that they have committed to memory but fail to understand that it might need to be in an actual context (e.g. describing the above-the-line media in a developing country, possibly comparing it with a developed country).
- 'above-the-line media' has a specific traditional meaning and the term still applies in the context of modern advertising but it does **not** include the Internet
- candidates to appreciate the filtering process based on looking at 'Intermedia' and 'Intramedia' to fine-tune media mixes
- As questions often relate to actual use of media in the candidate's locality, attention should be paid to analysing campaigns that use combinations of the above-the-line media and below-the-line activity
- Candidates need to be aware of actual publications, radio and television channels, their readers, viewers and listeners etc.

Syllabus Topic Area 10: Media Research

Candidates need to appreciate that media research deliberately focuses, as precisely as possible (even scientifically), on the profiles of readers, listeners and viewers etc. so that the advertiser's message effectively and economically reaches the advertiser's target audience with the greatest penetration and least wastage.

Hence, it is essential to know all available independent research such as NRS, BARB etc. in the UK but overseas candidates can study and include local forms of media research in their answers to questions but all responses require description, justification and qualification to make them plausible to the examiners.

Syllabus Topic Area 11: Media Planning/Buying

Candidates at many centres have at last appreciated that they are required, when asked to produce an actual schedule based on the textbook (or any equivalent source such as a local advertising agency) but it is obvious that there are others who use prose to describe the media that is planned.

Thus there is failure to show understanding how media is planned, programmed and scheduled for a campaign but resolving this can gain the substantial marks that are allocated for well-presented schedules. This failure to earn marks is compounded in the second part of such questions where candidates do not explain, qualify and justify the media selected which is vital when pitching to clients.

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to:

- practise preparing schedules
- obtain schedules from agencies (usually available once campaign has launched)
- ask member of the media department from nearby agencies to explain the principles of media selection, research and planning and buying
- be reminded that it is vital in any business situation to explain, qualify and justify their choices.

Syllabus Topic Area 12: Voluntary Controls

Candidates need to be better informed on voluntary controls due to the increasing regulation of advertising and promotion by law, and the advertisers and associated agencies and consultancies desire to resist it by opting for self-regulation.

The chief examiners is aware that there are candidates from all over the world who sit the examination so if they wish to pursue a career in the communications industry, they must understand the codes of practice that exist or are developing locally.

However an understanding of the situation in the UK can be beneficial to all responding to questions on this topic, it is the principles of honest and ethical trading that underline knowing about self-regulation and the beneficial effect on organisations' reputations.

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to:

- study the International Chamber of Commerce codes on advertising and promotion (accessible via the internet)
- understand the significance of controls based on fair trading with customers and managing reputation and image
- appreciate the importance of acting responsibly and ethically towards customers and society
- realise that organisations cannot exploit customers or consumers especially the vulnerable in the current climate of opinion.

Syllabus Topic Area 13: Law and Advertising

Candidates shy away from this topic possibly because of their perception of law but it is becoming increasingly important due to the power of consumerism and companies exploiting their customers.

It need not be old and 'crusty' – as it is dynamically changing due to the impact of government (which can be local national and international legislation e.g. European Union Directives) as well as changes in societies attitudes towards big business and, of course, precedents being established by case law.

Some aspects of the law are endemic to any vital business operation but as stated in the last annual review, *'candidates should realise the syllabus topic consists of four separate areas relevant to advertising and promotion (and not marketing):*

- Civil laws (contract and copyright)
- Agency agreements/contracts/terms
- Legal relationship – agencies/media owners
- Consumer protection and its role in advertising.

Syllabus Topic Area 14: Evaluation and Testing

With the increased costs of creating and producing campaigns, it is vital that candidates are aware that it is essential that the right messages related to the organisation's reputation are being and have been communicated to the target audience. The value of brand and image need to be safeguarded so that is why candidates will be asked – in separate series (subsequent examinations) – to only answer on testing prior to launch, the during and finally after the campaign – not all three in one go.

Thankfully, fewer attempts are made to 'shoe-horn' market research techniques into answers

Specific recommendations are that candidates need to: -

- focus on the fact that there are three aspects of evaluation and testing and that they are being asked to provide knowledge and understanding, separately (and in rotation) of pre-production, post production or continuous monitoring
- appreciate that it is counter productive to write everything that they have memorised on the whole syllabus topic especially as the examiner does include clues such as 'before the campaign is launched' etc. in the questions when set.

Syllabus Topic Area 15: Impact of Technology

Even though there may not be a question specific to the impact of technology, its role in the creation, production and operation of advertising and promotion may be included in questions throughout each series.

Candidates should be aware, though, that it is overall understanding of the use of technology as applied to advertising and promotion so they must avoid concentrating on the wonderment of the technology especially the latest fashionable developments or internet, world wide web and mobile phones.

It would be useful for candidates to get an awareness of systems within the commercial, retail and industrial organisation such as databases EDI and EPOS, JIT etc. not just those used by, and for customers and consumers.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

To help students in planning answers, organising information and using appropriate technicalities, they may like to commit to memory the following acronym:

The need to RABBIT

- R** = Read the question, carefully, and a number of times
- A** = Analyse what the questions is asking - not what you think it is asking(e.g. advertising agency or advertising department?).
- B** = Brainstorm by dumping speedily all that you know about the actual topic on the nearest sheet of paper – it can be the question paper or the answer book and don't worry about neatness
- B** = Be selective – choose only that information that relates to the question as set and not everything that you know about the topic, the syllabus topic and the world around you
- I** = Inform the examiner what you know, and so explain, qualify and justify. Do it clearly and precisely in form required – letter, memorandum notes or report – if in doubt use headings sub-headings and bullet points. Do not assume that examiners will know what you mean, you must tell them what you know
- T** = Technicalities (or anything related to the techniques of advertising, promotion and associated sub-sections) must be used (describing their relevance to the question set). Advertising and promotion are business processes with their own vocabulary of jargon which you need to show that you know and understand.

EXAMPLES OF CANDIDATE RESPONSES

Note: these answers have not been penalised for poor English and they are transcribed virtually verbatim

SERIES 2 EXAMINATION 2009 THIRD LEVEL – ADVERTISING

- 2 (a) Describe and explain, separately, each of the following terms
- (i) branding (5 marks)
 - (ii) positioning (5 marks)
- (b) Describe five (5) advantages for a company effectively branding its products (10 marks)

(Total 20 marks)

Answer (a): Pass Response

- (a) (i) Branding

Branding is whereby a retail outlet or retailer uses its name e.g. OK uses “Pot ‘o’ Gold”, TM (Thomas Meikles) uses ‘Super Saver’ which promotes its goods.

Branding make (sic) a product or (good (sic) to be known and helps retailers and wholesalers to make profits by using their own name. It makes retailers known by customers thus becoming household names e.g. Jaggars Wholesalers in Msasa has branded good like Astor and Ortem. The layout of the product has to be attractive and might lead customers to impulse buying

- (ii) Positioning

Positioning means strategising a place to market your goods or products for consumers to buy as well as convenient to you. (for deliveries) and the consumer.

Positioning is very vital in Advertising or Marketing It has to be situated in place where it is safe and targets consumers. For example, a retail outlet has to have big space for parking cars, have an attractive entrance, have long shelves with lots of space so customers can move freely with trolleys when shopping. The environment is important too as to the type of people living there.

Key word is ‘strategising’ – despite its poor grammar although the answer does go off-course and talks about location

Answer to this part is saved by hinting at the class and style of the store and neighbourhoods where the stores are located

Answer needs to emphasise the perception of the brand relative to the way customers see its rivals

(b) It is an advantage for a company to brand its goods for profit reasons

- a company or retailer or wholesaler is known because of branding its goods
- for wholesalers like Jaggars, retail outlets like OK can order and buy products which are branded in their name to resell in their shops
- If the product is still new (problem child or question mark) customers would be still eager to want to buy the product thus more consumers will buy
- If the brand is known, everyone will buy it as to become household name

Answer deserving of a Pass due to:

- it has put over the basic principles, does mention brand names and suppliers
- later parts of the question do clarify some of the points attempted but not fully explained in earlier sections
- reference to Boston Consulting Group matrix shows appreciation of understanding
- also expresses role of branding in promotion of new and existing brands, products or goods

There are some improvements that could be made:

- failed to mention the role of manufacturers and producers
- implies benefits to the intermediaries rather than the customers or consumers
- needs to sort out roles of customers and consumers – thinks that they are interchangeable

Answer (a): Credit Response

- (a) (i) Branding is a name letter or symbol that is used to identify a product unique from other rival products and easily identifiable. Some brands include Nike, Puma and Gucci. Brands cannot be shared and belong to one organisation
- (ii) Positioning is the image that an organisation wants to create about its products or services in the minds of customers. An organisation might want to position itself as offering quality products and services while another might want to position itself in the mind of the consumer as being affordable and economical. Positioning can be delivered through pricing, packaging, distribution and advertising

Good follow up to part (i) as now into perceptions and relationship with competitors

Use of pricing, packaging, distribution and advertising to justify is good but more detail would have made it even better

(b) The advantage of a company effectively branding its products includes: -

- repeated sales. If a customer with the products, they'll (sic) purchase the product again
- customer loyalty. If the customer is impressed with the product, they'll only buy products from that brand
- less time spent on the buying and selling process as the customer already knows the brand that they prefer
- having competitive advantage over rivals because of brand loyalty
- reduced prices as a company faces little competition, they can control their prices and make them more affordable to their customers

Answer deserving of a Credit due to:

- nicely bulleted point answer – examiner can see immediately that candidate has knowledge and understanding
- implies that the product has to meet customers' needs but that they'll remember it
- alludes to brand extensions and developments
- although starts with indirect benefits to intermediaries, quickly gives advantages to them as required in the question
- alludes to differentiation

There were improvements compared with answer (a) such as: -

- gives more detail about what a brand can consist of
- recognised examples
- reference to exclusivity

There is room for improvement:

- would have liked to see related associations and perceptions mentioned
- last point debatable as branding leads to premium pricing

Distinction Level

(a) (i) Branding

This is a promotional mix element a company uses to differentiate its products from the rest. This can be achieved through use of better attention-drawing packaging or even product naming. Trade names such as Spotless Cleaning Liquid can be used to name a liquid detergent

The actual physical feature of the product can also be effectively be used to give a product that uniqueness which separates it from the rest in the market-place. These features include shape and sizes or even the state it is in, powdered or liquid just like with milk or some agricultural chemicals

(ii) Positioning

Positioning refers to the way a company's products and services are rated by the market. This is purely based on the market's perception of the company and its products. This is normally based on the extended 7Ps which (includes) promotion - the way a company promotes a product going a long way on how the market perceives it.

Also pricing as well as product quality itself also is very critical in positioning

(b) Advantages of Effectively branding products

Branding products helps companies flight competition in the market through branding its products can be easily distinguished from the rest.

Effective branding also helps build up the company's image. Well packaged products are normally well received by the customers and more enquiries are made of the company and products

Branding also helps the an organisation gain market share as more of its products will bought and this will result in profit maximisation

Branding also helps company to enter new markets – people will always want to try well presented new products

Branding can be used to directly increase sales volumes as your products will be distinctly identified thus resulting in repeat purchase.

Answer deserving of a Distinction due to:

- effective use of the technical word 'differentiate'
- expressed very directly and emphasises perception
- even if 'Spotless Cleaning' doesn't exist as a brand, the candidate implies a very important point
- this point being extended in the second paragraph
- part (b) comprehensive but needs some editing (points put clumsily but do communicate knowledge and understanding)
- statements in each part reinforce those made throughout answer
- mentions the company and its products

There is room for improvement:

- answer reads as if it is giving the advantages to the intermediaries but could have been more explicit
- would have liked to see reference to premium pricing (especially in the last paragraph)
- answer would have been helped with a little more explanation
- some actual real branding, explanatory examples would have been useful (e.g. 'Cadbury's Dairy Milk chunky bar sold more effectively, gaining x% market share because of the brand according to Marketing Week)

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