CONTENTS

Cambridge Career Award in Travel and Tourism - Modules

TRAVEL AND TOURISM CORE MODULE

Paper 5251
Standard

General comments

The May examination produced a good range of entries and it was pleasing to see that some Centres have quite a large number of candidates studying the Standard Level Core Module. There were some excellent papers and the vast majority of candidates were able to complete all four questions within the time available. However, some Centres need to clearly remind candidates about the instructions printed on the front of the Question Paper - do *not* use staples or correction fluid. If a candidate chooses to write at greater length then a supplementary sheet should be attached using a treasury tag or string. It is quite unacceptable to have 3 or 4 sheets of paper stapled throughout an answer booklet. The Question Paper provides an appropriate amount of space for each particular answer. Many candidates waste space by repeating the question.

The written content of most scripts showed a good level of understanding about selected Travel and Tourism topics. In particular, there were frequent references to accurate industry examples and many candidates are able to refer to specific case studies to help illustrate their answers. These are very positive signs and it is hoped that such trends will continue in future examination series.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was set in a cruise context and part **(a)** invited candidates to identify major cruise circuits. It was a shame that a significant minority of scripts provided details of three types of pollution. This suggests a rather careless approach to reading the wording of the question in some cases. Similarly, it was rare to read a full mark answer to part **(b)** as far too many candidates gave insufficient attention to the ideas of meeting demand and achieving economies of scale. The four environmental problems asked for in part **(c)** were generally clearly identified but it was only a minority of candidates who correctly explained an identifiable problem in terms of the details provided on Figure 1. Part **(d)**'s four recreational facilities were not always clearly identified and it was only the better candidates who were able to categorise types of facility effectively. It was, however, very pleasing to see a very positive attempt being made to explain the socio-cultural impact of cruise ship arrivals and there were many good answers to part **(e)**.

Question 2

This began with an interpretation of an Emirates' Route Map and most candidates were able to correctly identify the destinations asked for in part **(a)**. There were frequent valid comments about the expansion of routes into Europe in part **(b)** but it was only the minority of candidates who were able to talk about tourism generating areas as part of their reasoning. The Australian routes were very well identified in part **(c)** and the concept of a stopover is clearly well understood. It was, however, quite surprising to see only a minority of candidates being able to correctly identify five customer care procedures appropriate to the needs of younger passengers in part **(d)**. There were far too many comments about ticket prices and general service features at the expense of precise details about what can be supplied for the younger age groups. Those individuals that spoke about supplying activity packs, special meals, baby changing facilities and the like were properly rewarded. Answers to part **(e)** tended to be either quite good or rather poor depending on the amount of emphasis that was given to the actual making of travel arrangements. There were far too many bland references to either using the internet (passengers) and/or using CRS (agents) without any real comment as to how either system was actually used to make particular arrangements. Credit was usually quite limited as a result.

Question 3

This was set in the context of a Thailand Spa resort and answers to part **(a)** were usually accurate and precise and there were few difficulties. There was a major problem with part **(b)** and the concept of *ancillary services* is clearly not understood. There were no full mark answers and the vast majority of candidates managed only limited credit. Too many candidates spoke only about Chiva-Som and thus missed the point of the question which was about "international 5-star resorts". Suitable illustrations could have covered the needs of business tourists as well as general services such as tour desk, car hire, restaurant/theatre reservations and private airport transfers. There were also problems with part **(c)**'s different types of holiday package. Far too many candidates were unable to provide an accurate example of each of the three types and many were less than convincing in their attempts to explain what was actually involved. It was often a similar story with answers to part **(d)** and many candidates were unaware of the ways in which a National Tourist Board is able to promote the number of arrivals from both business and leisure visitors. Those candidates who managed to speak about overseas promotion, trade fair participation, advertising campaigns, agent visits and the like were very well rewarded.

Question 4

This was about aspects of National Parks and parts **(a)(i)** and **(ii)** were frequently correctly identified. However, part **(iii)** tended to be vague and only a small minority of candidates made any attempt to identify something from the two images and link this as an attraction to certain types of visitor. There were far too many generalised statements about Tourist Information Centres (TICs) in part **(b)** and few candidates could clearly itemise five different products/services that such centres usually supply. However, answers to part **(c)** tended to be better and most candidates do appreciate the differences between the four types of accommodation provider that were asked. Finally, it was surprising to see that so many candidates remain unfamiliar with the concept of National Parks and the idea of visitor overload. Few actual examples were quoted and very few candidates could identify particular problems caused by increasing visitor numbers. This topic has been examined in the recent past and candidates are expected to be aware of the pressures that can exist in "honeypot" locations and how appropriate measures can be put into place to solve such problems.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

| Paper 5252 |
| Standard |

General comments

Entries were received from a number of Centres and a wide range of ability was demonstrated in the responses made by candidates. The majority of candidates had clearly been prepared for the requirements of the examination, displaying a fair understanding of the principles of marketing within a Travel and Tourism context, and there were fewer candidates entered for this examination, who were not able to respond to the assessment objectives at an appropriate level, than on previous occasions.

It appeared that the majority of candidates were familiar with the nature of the assessment methods used within this examination, and responses were generally well structured and well paced. It would be beneficial in preparing candidates for future examinations to ensure that questions have been carefully read and understood, as relevancy of responses was an issue on several occasions for this Paper.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question used a specific case study within a Travel and Tourism context to explore candidates' understanding of the general principles of marketing. Candidates were expected to demonstrate appropriate industry knowledge and understanding of the tools associated with positional analysis – namely SWOT and PEST, as well as knowledge of the specific aims and objectives of a National Tourist Authority.

(a) This question caused some confusion – candidates were asked to identify ways in which the Hawaiian Tourist industry would benefit from product development. Better responses correctly identified that the benefits include increased visitor spending, improved product image and the encouragement of repeat business. However, several candidates clearly misread the question and provided methods of carrying out strategic product development, rather than outline the consequences of such activity.

(b)(i) This question tested candidates' understanding of the Product element of the Marketing Mix and expected a named example of the types of changes that could be made to existing products and services. This question posed some difficulty for the majority of candidates. Many gave examples of other aspects of the Marketing Mix – namely price reductions or promotional activities, rather than suggesting additional products or services that could have been considered.

(ii) Having incorrectly answered the first part of this question made it very difficult for candidates to provide an appropriate impact of improved product mixes. Many also disregarded the necessity to view this from the tourists' perspective and identified benefits to the organisation.

(c)(i)(ii) Some candidates found some difficulty in performing a SWOT analysis using the distinction between internal and external factors, rather than having to complete the more customary SWOT Box.

(d) This question required a PEST analysis using a range of positive and negative statements. Many candidates found this task straightforward.

(e)(i) Candidates generally identified three appropriate examples of primary research materials as required by this question.

(ii) Whilst the majority of candidates correctly cited examples of secondary data sources, fewer were able to specify the disadvantages of such sources.

Question 2

The focus of this question was the new concept of space tourism as a product. It allowed candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the product life cycle and to differentiate between travel and tourism products and services. The more complex issues of brand image and pricing policies are tested through this scenario, using level of response assessment.

(a)(i) The majority of candidates scored the mark for correctly identifying that space tourism is in the early stage of its product life cycle and should therefore be placed at the development or launch stage. Some weaker candidates placed it at the growth or saturation stage, without clearly understanding the importance of the model or the concept of space tourism as a specific product.

(ii) All candidates attempted a justification of the stage at which they had placed space tourism on the life cycle model. Better candidates were able to give specific information relating to the market in terms of number of sales and time, whereas weaker candidates relied more heavily upon the stimulus material, which mentioned the first two space tourists by name, but did not define the characteristics of the market at the development or product stage.

(b)(i) Many candidates seemed confused about whether space tourism was a product or service – only the very best candidates recognised that travel and tourism products are distinct from most other forms of products, in the fact that they are not always tangible.

(ii) Most candidates were able to identify the four main differences between products and services. Many responses were made in list format, despite the command verb asking candidates to explain the differences.

(c) There was a great deal of variation in the quality of responses to this question about brand images of products, as would be expected in a level of response type question. Average candidates were able to describe the term brand image and give generalised examples, thus achieving a level one assessment. To progress beyond level one, candidates were required to apply their understanding of branding to the Space Adventures organisation, which only the better calibre candidates were able to do. Several candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of branding and used industry specific examples to illustrate their answers, but were unable to score higher marks, because the examples did not relate specifically to the question set.

(d)(i) The responses to this question reflected the wide ability span of the cohort of candidates undertaking this examination. Better candidates were able to clearly identify an appropriate pricing strategy and explain its significance in relation to space tourism, whereas less able candidates wrote in general terms about the high costs associated with space travel to justify the high prices charged. Several candidates saw this question as an opportunity to outline every pricing policy in general terms without actually applying this knowledge within the given question framework. Whilst the factual knowledge these candidates demonstrated was sound, they were not accredited for their response, as they did not answer the question.

(ii) This question was answered reasonably well by most candidates, who outlined a wide range of factors which would affect the long term pricing policy of the organisation. A few candidates used this question to produce all the theory they had learnt about price, without again relating their answer specifically to the Space Adventure organisation.

Question 3

The third question of this Paper was designed to ascertain candidates' understanding of two of the components of the Marketing Mix – Place and Promotion, using the Hong Kong Disneyland scenario to contextualise their answers. Factors of location and distribution channels were considered, as well as methods of promotion and factors affecting choice of promotional material.

(a) The majority of candidates found this a relatively straightforward task, and most were able to identify a reasonable range of locational factors. A few candidates seemed to focus only on Hong Kong as a destination, rather than on general locational factors, thus limiting the marks achieved for this question.

(b) It was pleasing to note that the majority of candidates understood the concept of distribution channels, although there remained several who wrote only about methods of promotion in response to this task. It was important that candidates understood the different distribution channel models, so those who used diagrammatic forms as part of their answer were awarded level two for clearly illustrating the differences between models.

(c) All candidates were able to make appropriate suggestions regarding promotional materials to use. Most scored maximum marks for this question, although those candidates who cited more than one form of advertising were not awarded double accreditation. Reasons for choice of material were largely realistic and again scored highly.

(d) It was surprising to note how many candidates misunderstood the requirements of this question. A large number of responses made reference only to the AIDA principle, which limited marks – factors such as target audience, budget or timing were overlooked.

Question 4

This question used a Case Study approach to test candidates' understanding of the market segmentation and product differentiation.

(a)(i) Geographic characteristics were identified appropriately by the majority of candidates.

(ii) Socio-economic characteristics caused a few more problems, with a significant number of candidates identifying ethnicity incorrectly in this section.

(iii) This level of response question required candidates to give a detailed examination of how demographic information is used to cater for different market segments. Those candidates who listed age, gender and income levels without providing specific exemplification were awarded level one. Those who targeted specific products at specific market segments gained higher grading.

(b)(i)(ii) This question presented the most difficulty on the whole Paper. Both halves of the question aimed at testing candidates understanding of the different needs and expectations of different client groups. The better candidates were able to provide a comprehensive overview of travel and tourism products and services appropriate to the needs of each client group. Many did not answer this question from an industry perspective – and overlooked features of accommodation, transport, meal options etc, which the question expected.

(c) The final question of this Paper was generally poorly answered. Very few candidates seemed to recognise the term "differentiated travel products and services" and few picked up on the fact that they should have considered benefits to tourists and providers of a differentiated range of products. Weaker candidates used this question to provide further evidence of their ability to define products and services. Only the very best candidates identified the range of actual differentiated travel products and services – e.g. budget/economy, business class and first class flights; etc and explained the relationship between increased usage, profit generation and providers' ability to reach a wider target audience.

TRAVEL ORGANISATION

Paper 5253
Standard

General comments

The performance of candidates was generally improved on previous examination series. This could be due to candidates and Centres being more aware of the types of questions which may appear on this Paper and the responses required from candidates. However, there were still too many instances of candidates not using the stimulus material provided in order to respond appropriately to the questions and responses being too general in nature. Many of the marks for this Paper rely on candidates being able to complete documentation used within the travel and tourism industry in a legible manner and more practice would benefit candidates in these areas. Generally scripts were more legible and candidates had attempted to respond to questions more fully. Centres are strongly recommended to study this report in order to develop their candidates further in order to achieve improved performance. Centres should be emphasising to candidates that the space allowed on the Question Paper should give them an indication of the length of the expected answer and avoid using supplementary sheets, and the points awarded should indicate the number of features required (as in **Questions 1 (c)** and **3 (d)**).

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was aimed to test the candidates' ability to guide potential customers as to the most appropriate accommodation for their needs and complete a suitable Customer Enquiry Form. They needed also to be aware of international driving regulations and sources of information prior to travel.

(a) This was generally satisfactory, though candidates tended to omit the date of the enquiry (examination date) and their name as the consultant. They also completed departure date, but this was not given on the scenario, and the accommodation section required the names of the selected accommodation to meet the customers' requirements, with 'self-catering' being entered in the Room Type/Meals basis.

(b) Many candidates failed to get full marks for this as they did not relate the convenience of the use of a hire car within the package whilst at their destination.

(c) Most candidates identified that an International Driving Licence would be required, but few included such things as Accident Cover, Full Insurance, Petrol costs, etc.

(d) Candidates were aware of sources of information but some did not consider the stimulus, which was 'before they travel' and gave examples of sources which could only be accessed on arrival at the destination.

Question 2

This question was generally well answered by the majority of candidates, which reflects their knowledge of selecting appropriate information from advertisements and understanding of terminology used within the industry. However, their ability to accurately complete a Booking Form, particularly in the sections regarding Deposit and Holiday Insurance payment is still not good.

(a) Few candidates achieved full marks for this question, as not all the appropriate figures were used to make the calculation for the couple, and in some cases the costs were calculated for one person only (not the couple where the totals for an individual would be doubled).

(b) Most candidates understood the terminology and were able to apply it correctly to each of the three providers of this holiday.

(c) Generally candidates understood the term 'all inclusive' though there were examples of those who omitted the initial transport and transfers to the accommodation.

(d) The booking form showed that candidates could identify the name address, other passenger details, hotel name, date of departure, and number of nights, but failed often to identify the insurance requirement or type of room required. The main failings of candidates was in the completion of the Deposit and Holiday Insurance payment section. As the booking was being made prior to 8 weeks before departure, all that was required in payment was the deposit and insurance, totalled. The Declaration should have been signed in the name of the passenger (Lee Kwon) and the date was the examination date. The Method of Payment section generally was satisfactorily complete.

(e) This type of question requires candidates to 'discuss' the issues, rather than just list travel service providers and specifically to explain the benefits received by them when producing a package holiday. This was a level of response question where increasing depth of knowledge and explanation was required in order to achieve higher marks. Generally this was not well attempted by candidates (though there were one or two exceptional responses) and again is an area which needs further development by Centres. Candidates may have commented on increased sales/improved image/higher profits, but failed to explain how these are achieved through development of a package and working with other providers to meet these targets.

Question 3

This question was aimed to cover candidate understanding of water forms of transport and was not well achieved particularly in **(a)** and **(d)**.

(a) Candidates did not understand the main features of ferry services and few obtained maximum marks for this section of the question. Most related their responses to the types of ferry given in the scenario rather than ferry services generally.

(b)(i) Most candidates achieved full marks for this by correctly identifying reduced travel distance in the UK to the port, and cheaper costs of travel with more sailings.

(ii) This was generally satisfactorily completed with candidates using the stimulus to identify one advantage and one disadvantage of each route.

(c) This question was aimed to test the candidates' knowledge of appropriate services provided by a Tourist Information Centre, such as brochures, leaflets, advice, reservations, though there were examples of candidates identifying 'book a bed ahead' which was not appropriate for the family with their own caravan.

(d) To achieve full marks for part **(i)** of the question, candidates had to identify one of the suggested forms of water transport and give five characteristics of that specifically. Many selected cruise ships but few identified specific features relating to cruise ships as opposed to ferries. For part **(ii)**, the types of customer had to relate to the chosen water-borne transport selected in **(i)** and required responses relating to age, economic, social groupings, such as elderly couple with high level of disposable income, or honeymooners for romantic break, or single, middle-aged people looking for social contacts, for cruises.

Question 4

This question was aimed to identify a candidate's ability to extract relevant information from the scenario to produce an accurate listing of travel arrangements which gave succinct details of dates, times, details rather than full details of activities which could be undertaken at the destinations. Centres do still need to develop candidates' ability to construct precise itineraries suitable for a traveller, which give the check-in, departure, arrival times, flight numbers, etc.

(a) Most candidates were able to identify the components of a package holiday, though there were examples off transfers being omitted as part of the package. Entertainment and excursions are not part of a 'package' but forms part of an 'all-inclusive' and candidates need to be able to distinguish between the two.

(b) Generally this was satisfactorily answered and most obtained full marks for this question.

(c)   Candidates would benefit from further practice in this type of question in order to be able to extract the relevant information from the stimulus material and achieve full marks. The Examiner would recommend that candidates are trained to prepare a succinct travel schedule, possibly using three or four columns to focus candidates on the detail needed, and also to check that correct dates are given to meet the scenario.

(d)   The majority of candidates were able to identify four features of a travel insurance policy in order to achieve marks in this question.

(e)   All types of currency used by travellers were expected in the response, with justification for the use of different types. This was not well attempted by the majority of candidates and is an area where Centres could improve candidate performance by raising awareness of the benefits of different currency forms and relevant security. Very few candidates achieved full marks, as the majority failed to justify their choice of currency type and some only listed types of currency which could be used so only reaching level 1 response. The question clearly states 'with reasons' and if these were given candidates were able to achieve level 2 or level 3 points.