



## **General Certificate of Education**

### **Leisure Studies**

**8641/8643/8646/8649**

**LS04      Leisure Facilities**

## **Report on the Examination**

*2007 examination - June series*

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## GENERAL COMMENTS

The paper appeared to be accessible to the full range of candidates. Almost all of them made a reasonable attempt to answer all sections of the paper, with only a very small proportion failing to produce sensible answers for all four Assignments. However, the paper differentiated well across the range of candidates and produced a mark range from the mid teens to the low seventies. A large majority of candidates had been well prepared and were able to do themselves justice in the exam.

In general, candidates seemed to have done good preparatory work and to have prepared good case study files to take in to the examination. Then they generally used their information sensibly.

### The preparatory folders

Following this exam series, a number of centres were asked to send in a few candidates' preparatory folders, to allow the examiners to see the type of folders that were being produced. From these folders it was clear that:

- some contained collections of handouts from the leisure facilities visited along with the candidates' notes on their visits, whilst others consisted entirely of the answers to questions set in the classroom after the visits with no primary source material. These latter folders had obviously encouraged the candidates to think carefully about their visits and to practice the type of skills that are useful in an exam. However, they did not provide as much information as the former type. The examiners felt that some balance between the two types of folder was probably the most useful
- some folders were very well organised, with some kind of filing system to make referencing particular topics easy. This was obviously much more useful than the jumbled collections of material produced by some of the less organised candidates, who must have wasted a lot of time searching for information during the examination. Using dividers to indicate the location of material on topics from the specification proved to be a very successful technique.
- the quantity of information held in the folders varied enormously, even in the small sample seen. The shortest contained only about five sides of material and the longest contained over 300 sides. Others contained 40-60 sides. Five sides seemed too short. Many of the 40-60 side folders were well organised and so were quite manageable in the examination. They were probably not too long for the candidate who had produced them although weaker candidates might find so much material unmanageable in the exam. The very long folders seemed to contain a whole term's work. They appeared to be rather unmanageable and examiners felt that candidates would have been well advised to edit their files, limiting the contents to details of their chosen facilities.

## Assignment 1

The most worrying aspect of this Assignment came in part (a) and was the common misinterpretation of the wording of the question. The specification (page 47, section 13.3) makes a distinction between 'leisure facilities' and 'category of facility'.

A category is the section of the industry such as:

- cinemas
- theatres
- museums and galleries

A facility is a single establishment such as:

- an Odeon cinema
- the Grand Theatre
- the British Museum

Many candidates listed the range of areas within a single facility (such as box office, refreshment stalls, screens, toilets within a single cinema) rather than the range of facilities within a category (such as multiplex cinemas, small art-house cinemas, I-max cinemas, occasional screens set up in a local hall, etc.).

(a) (ii) and (b) were generally done well. In (a) (ii) an overwhelming majority of candidates wrote about cinemas. In (b) most wrote about extended opening hours and the then imminent smoking ban. Others wrote about the increasing provision of food or about the growth in 'family friendly' pubs or about the crackdown on underage drinking.

One of the main areas where good candidates showed their strengths was in their responses to the second bullet point in (a) (ii). They were able to base their answers on present trends and then think creatively about those trends. In fact, some of the best answers predicted a decline in the cinema sector due to the advances in home entertainment systems, and went on to suggest that the only cinemas to survive would be the ones that could provide a much higher quality of entertainment in terms of vision or of sound or of other more peripheral experiences within the cinema complex.

Weaker candidates merely wrote that in future there was likely to be even more of what had already happened.

## Assignment 2

This was generally answered well. The two main concerns were:

- the narrowness of candidates' interpretation of 'design'
- the failure of all but the best candidates to evaluate well.

The examiners hoped that work on design might include references to aspects such as colour schemes, lighting, use of different types of floor covering, ease of maintenance and cleaning, heating and energy conservation, security and safety. Sadly, most candidates limited their answers almost entirely to layout. Layout is obviously important but there are so many more opportunities for interesting work.

Similarly, the examiners hoped that good evaluation would make reference to the criteria against which a design was being judged and then assess how well that aspect met those criteria. Alternatively, candidates might have made reference to the point of view from which they were evaluating (e.g. customer, staff, management). Having done this the answers could then be made much more objective. Unfortunately most candidates are still too vague and subjective in their evaluations.

## Assignment 3

This was generally answered well and there were many very good answers.

Most candidates distinguished between the two parts of (a) and wrote distinct answers without much repetition. Most candidates also *compared* well in part (ii). Unfortunately some candidates, even some who scored well elsewhere on the paper, completely failed to *compare* the two facilities in (ii) and so limited themselves to Level 1 marks.

Some problems might be avoided if candidates were encouraged to highlight the key command words on the paper. It is always distressing when good candidates lose marks because of such failure to follow simple instructions. This does often happen under examination pressure and so any strategy to minimise the problem ought to be tried.

#### Assignment 4

Again, this question was well answered by most candidates, but two points need to be made, concerning candidates' interpretation of the meaning of questions.

Firstly, in (a) (i), many candidates misinterpreted the word 'describe' and limited themselves to one mark out of three. The weakest candidates simply 'listed' the features of the photographs and so gained 1 mark.

However some candidates, who might have been expected to do better, actually did not describe what they saw. Instead they listed items such as lockers, benches, vending machines and showers and then went on to state the obvious such as '...lockers for storing clothes in...', '...benches for sitting on while drying your feet...', '...vending machines for buying drinks....', '...showers for having a shower after you have finished your work out....' and so on.

The examiners were looking for description such as '...lockers with solid and quite attractive wooden doors. They have rails with coat hangers and are tall enough so that users can hang up their suits without creasing. They seem to have coin operated locks where the coin is returned when you have finished...' and '....benches close to the lockers and with enough space for three or four people to sit down on....'

Secondly, the wording of (a) (ii) really means the same as 'evaluate'. However, this wording gave more help to candidates and so even those of fairly average ability managed to evaluate the changing room's suitability for its function.

When these same candidates came to (b) (ii) they did not interpret the question as competently. Candidates must be able to respond to higher order commands such as 'evaluate'. They could refer to the glossary of command words in the Teacher's Guide. Then, perhaps, teachers could help candidates by showing candidates how questions like this could be interpreted. This question could be rephrased as

"Discuss the suitability of (the chosen topic) from the point of view of:

- members using the facility
- staff working in the facility
- the management of the facility
- the requirements of the law...."

and so on.

Finally, two interesting real-life points might be worth commenting on in view of candidates' responses.

It is interesting to note that there was a very obvious gender difference in answers to (a) (ii). Many of the girls answering this question felt that the changing rooms lacked privacy and would have been far better with some separate changing cubicles or curtained off areas. Very few of the boys commented on this point. Candidates might be interested to note that when workmen were called in to do some repairs to the ladies' changing rooms at the gym the men had to use the ladies' changing room and the ladies had to use the gents' facilities. Many of the ladies were horrified by the lack of privacy in the gents' changing room whilst many of the men were surprised by the "fussiness" of the ladies' facilities with all the separate little areas.

The examiners also noted that many candidates were concerned about health and safety issues with the iron and the position of the ironing board. They will be relieved to hear that both iron and board were removed some weeks after the photos were taken. Candidates will be pleased to know that their concerns were correct and that they applied their knowledge and understanding well in a real context.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. Ensure that folders contain plenty of detail on the facilities studied but that they are organised well enough so that candidates can find all the material that is needed to answer most of the topics that might arise in the exam.
2. Ensure that candidates understand the meaning of all the command words that are listed in the Glossary in the Teacher's Guide.
3. Think about advising those students who have particular difficulty in understanding the precise meaning of questions to try underlining or highlighting all the key words in the questions.
4. Make sure that candidates – and particularly the more able who are aiming for the higher grades – think about how they can answer the 'evaluation' questions. It is often these which present most difficulty to candidates and it is clear that no-one can achieve the top grades without doing well on such questions.

#### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.