Examiners' Report January 2009

GCE Leisure Studies (8761/9761)

Edexcel is one of the leading examining and awarding bodies in the UK and throughout the world. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers.

Through a network of UK and overseas offices, Edexcel's centres receive the support they need to help them deliver their education and training programmes to learners.

For further information, please call our GCE line on 0844 576 0025, our GCSE team on 0844 576 0027, or visit our website at www.edexcel.com.

If you have any subject specific questions about the content of this Examiners' Report that require the help of a subject specialist, you may find our Ask The Expert email service helpful.

Ask The Expert can be accessed online at the following link:

http://www.edexcel.com/Aboutus/contact-us/

Contents

Chief Examiner's Report

The qualification is now in its fourth year and this session has again shown an improvement in overall candidate performance. Although the 'application' issues outlined in previous reports were less evident this before, they still remain the single largest reason for candidates failing to achieve the top grades in most units. Obviously for an Applied GCE this is a major omission and further consideration should be given to the following ideas.

In the external assessments at both AS and A2 level, many of the questions require candidates to relate their knowledge of the leisure industry to the specific organisations described in the stimulus material. This will mean that, in order to gain the higher mark levels, candidates will need to use the stimulus information and relate it specifically to the theoretical or learnt idea that forms the basis of the question. Where generic responses only are offered, i.e. they could relate to any organisation, candidates will not be able to score marks above level 1 in the mark scheme, however comprehensive their list of possible benefits, advantages, disadvantages etc.

In the internally assessed units there are still candidates who are producing assessments that are of a theoretical nature. In many cases this consists of a mere précis of one or more textbooks, perhaps mixed in with some downloaded material. This again does not fulfil the requirements of an applied subject. Candidates should be encouraged to seek information from real organisations and then to use this material in an applied way to demonstrate the skills that the assessment criteria demand. In many cases the candidates do have the necessary information in their coursework, but have not applied it and therefore, at best, they are providing descriptions only.

This is an applied subject and, in order to allow candidates to access the higher grades, centres should ensure that their approach is practical rather than theoretical. There are a few points from our Principal Moderators' reports below that I would like to add emphasis to.

Annotation of work by assessors is of the utmost importance. It serves as guidance for candidates in seeking to improve, for assessors themselves in carrying out the assessment and to the moderators in understanding how assessors have come to decisions and therefore in feedback to centres. It should be referenced as far as possible to the assessment criteria, particularly where it is designed to help assessment. Use of the specific terms such as 'explanation' and 'evaluation' will help to improve accuracy of assessment.

Candidates include leaflets, brochures etc., from organisations as evidence in support of work in a number of units. These should always show evidence of being actually used, for example by annotation to show how a list of policies and procedures links to customer types in Unit 3. Their existence without application to the assessment criteria is of no benefit in an applied subject. Similarly, large amounts of theoretical material is rarely required. In Unit 3 again, candidates would be far better employed analysing the use of their actual marketing activities, linking them to their products and services, rather than writing out theoretical explanations as to why marketing techniques are used. Without doubt, the former is more interesting for candidates as a learning experience also.

For Unit 1 every effort should be made to ensure that data used is current. Data that is pre-2000 is unacceptable for a description of the leisure industry and in such

a fast changing industry every effort should be made to keep data to the last 5 years.

In Unit 4 the use of ongoing diary sheets to include evaluation (as well as all the usual items) should be the norm. This encourages students to evaluate their, and their peers', roles as they go – this is far more successful for candidates than trying to do it all retrospectively at the end, as many find it difficult to remember what happened in the early stages and simply evaluate the final event. If assessors 'witness statement' these each week it gives a chance for feedback to candidates. They can put this feedback into practice in later diary entries, leading to higher standards and hence higher mark bands achieved.

In some internal units there are occasions where candidates will undertake work as part of a group. This is particularly evident in Unit 4 but occurs elsewhere also. In this case centres should ensure that the evidence produced by each candidate shows their individual contribution. Without this it is difficult to award the higher mark bands to candidates.

Whilst we are keeping our definition of leisure as wide as possible at all times, it is vital that candidates do take their evidence from organisations in the leisure sector and that the basis for Units 4 and 6 is leisure oriented. One particular area of concern is the use of part-time jobs for the customer service (AO2) of Unit 3. It is not acceptable to use non-leisure examples, however well they show the skills required. As a guideline as to whether an organisation/role is acceptable as leisure it is often necessary to consider the context. For example, someone working and advising customers on sportswear or sports equipment in a department of a large store such as John Lewis is acceptably defined as carrying out customer service in the leisure industry, but the use of John Lewis as an example of a leisure organisation, perhaps in marketing activities for Unit 3, is not acceptable. Similarly, there are many uses of computers in the passive – and increasingly active - leisure sector, but a firm manufacturing computers is not acceptable as a leisure organisation.

Looking to the future, it has become evident that the majority of the work submitted for assessment and moderation in the internal units is presented in the from of a formal assignment or wholly written report. Whilst this is often preferable as a safe option, there are many other possible assessment methods, many of which may actually be more suitable for learners with different capabilities.

Some learners are very strong in certain areas. For example, some learners are very good at talking about a subject but when it comes to writing it down they struggle. The same can be true of those that like to write lengthy essays - ask them to discuss it and it is their worst nightmare. It will be worthwhile ensuring that learners are aware of the range of possible options open to them – the assessment criteria can be conveyed through many methods, both written and non-written. This is particularly true of a unit such as unit 4, 'Leisure in Action', where the key evidence is that which demonstrates that the learners are capable of running an event. In many cases this is hidden amongst a lengthy description of what happened in general terms, not necessarily all of which provides such evidence.

Written evidence/methods of assessment include leaflets, brochures, assignments, check sheets, annotated diagrams, labelled photos, reports, PowerPoint demonstrations. In some cases the simple addition of annotations to pre-printed materials such as leaflets (or even downloads!) can produce a very valid piece of analytical work without the necessity for pages of prose.

Non-written evidence/methods of assessment include observations, practical activities, demonstrations, role plays, presentations, discussions, debates and committee meetings. Many of these will have limited written evidence in support of them so this is where the role of detailed, signed witness statements becomes of paramount importance also.

Whilst appreciating that not all of these are practical for all units, and some candidates will still achieve their best results through simple report style projects, it is to be hoped that these suggestions will provide some extra inspiration for helping learners to achieve their full potential at the same time as having the best possible learning experience.

Unit 1 - 6966/01 The Leisure Industry

General Comments

Comments relate to the marking from the January 2009 series. A fairly small number of samples were received for this series. Samples received were generally well organised with the majority of Centres submitting the OPTEMS forms correctly and following the administrative instructions for mark submission. Centres did not always include the justification of individual assessment outcome marks and these are important in the facilitation of the moderation process.

Centres are encouraged to annotate candidate evidence identifying where assessment objectives have been met and where higher mark bands have been awarded. Some portfolios had little evidence of marking on the student work. In examples of best practice, the front sheets gave reference page numbers indicating the evidence and this was then supported by annotation throughout the student work. All portfolios should clearly have page numbers that can be referenced.

There was still instances where centres were consistently generous in their application across the mark bands and it may be beneficial for some centres to scrutinise the 'what you need to learn' and assessment guidance sections of the specification for further information on how to meet all the grading criteria and to award marks within the appropriate mark bands.

Centres should also note that a Teacher's Guide is also available at www.edexcel.com which provides examples of annotated candidate evidence to illustrate the depth and breadth of evidence required at mark band 2 and 3.

AO1: the range, scale, and importance of the leisure industry in the UK and Europe

This task addresses AO1 - *demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

This assessment objective requires learners to be able to describe what the leisure industry is. The assessment guidance requires reference to active, passive and home-based leisure in the description. This part of the assessment objective was again addressed well by all candidates.

The evidence provided relating to participation rates, employment numbers and consumer spending in the UK and Europe, continues to be variable and some candidates were still being awarded mark band three for this outcome, with very little or no reference to Europe. Where there are significant omissions in the information provided, the higher mark bands should not be used. Candidates are still providing general employment numbers or data and Centres are reminded that all data should be leisure specific. With regard to regional variations, there are still some candidates identifying variations with no explanation for such variations.

Some statistical data used was rather outdated and does not provide a realistic picture of the current scale and size of the leisure industry and it appears that some candidates still need guidance in the selection and use of valid and relevant data. It is disappointing that very few candidates produced the standard of response needed to achieve mark band three.

AO2: Commercial and non-commercial sectors of the industry

This task addresses AO2 – *apply knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of industry vocationally-related issues.*

Learners were required to give an explanation of the differences between the commercial and non-commercial sectors covering the differences in aims, methods of funding, different partnership arrangements and methods of marketing.

The majority of candidates clearly understood the difference between public, private and voluntary sectors and their aims and funding. Some candidates are still producing theoretical descriptions of marketing strategies and failing to apply this to leisure organisations.

It may be helpful for some Centres to guide candidates to directly compare the differences between commercial and non-commercial organisations for each component identified, with the more able candidates offering accurate explanations and justifications for these differences.

Reference to partnership initiatives was often weak, and is an area for continued focus and development by many Centres. Candidates must include at least a summary of partnership initiatives and should refer to both PPPs and PFIs. Few Centres had candidates achieving mark band three for this outcome but some were comfortably achieving MB2.

AO3: Current Developments in the leisure industry

This task addresses AO3 – *use appropriate research methods to obtain information from a range of sources to analyse leisure industry vocationally-related issues.*

For this assessment outcome, learners are required to research current developments in the leisure industry. All candidates had made some references to the increasing use of technology and explored the growing influence of the media on the industry. Few candidates had explored potential future developments. It would be encouraging to see more candidates investigating a more diverse range of emerging developments.

There was a heavy reliance on the core text and/or website only information sources but often candidates had failed to reference their work. It is difficult to assess whether the candidate has a wide range of sources if they are not referenced.

Centres are reminded of the importance of candidates clearly and explicitly demonstrating their comprehensive research from a broad range of information sources. This can be achieved through accurate referencing within the text or through a bibliography. Again it is suggested that Centres could also consider including observation records as an alternative way to authenticate the range of sources used by candidates.

AO4: Customers of the leisure industry

This task addresses AO4 – *evaluate evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

Learners are required to identify the factors which influence participation and non-participation in the leisure. The factors are clearly identified in the specifications in the section covering assessment guidance as well as in the 'what you need to learn' section.

In order to achieve mark band 2, it is essential that explanations are clear and supported by data. Some candidates are still not including data to support explanations of factors influencing participation and therefore unable to achieve the highest marks bands.

Candidates are also required to identify barriers to participation and to make recommendations on how to overcome the barriers. Most candidates are able to describe barriers to participation and although some candidates were identifying a range of measures already being taken to overcome specific barriers, most failed to include any of their own recommendations and this is still a key area for focus and development by many centres.

Unit 2 - 6967/01 Working Practices in Leisure

General comments

Performance on this paper showed a slight improvement compared to last January. The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates, with only occasional areas of general weakness.

Most candidates were able to respond effectively to most questions. There was evidence that most candidates had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set, offering valid answers, though at times without the depth needed to achieve the higher grades at AS level. Almost all candidates answered all questions. There was evidence that candidates are continuing to tackle Question 2 more capably than in the past, as was the case in June.

Candidates were able to use information taken from the WYNTL section of the unit, although the characteristics of quality systems showed weakness as in previous series. They appeared to be familiar with the command verbs as a whole. Candidates appeared to manage their time effectively and did not produce lengthy passages of irrelevant information. The vast majority of candidates appeared to complete the paper in the time available, with little evidence of rushed work towards the end.

Candidates still did not always make full use of the stimulus material. The emphasis in this paper will inevitably be on the application of their knowledge to a variety of practical situations and the higher marks, particularly in levels of response questions, will always be characterised by the ability to demonstrate application rather than theory. It will be important for candidates to have practice in doing this in their preparation for the assessment. This paper contained more stimulus material than the previous two and this will be the pattern for the future. This is an 'Applied' GCE and therefore in the longer explain/analyse questions the mere repetition of generic material, however valid, is unlikely to achieve beyond a Level 1 response.

Exam technique is an aspect that requires improvement, particularly in the longer questions. There will always be a number of longer questions on this paper that have a levels of response mark scheme. This will continue in the future so candidates should be made aware how these work. At the moment most candidates of E grade and above are reaching the top of level 1 (3 marks) in the 8 mark questions but higher ability candidates appear unable to lift this mark much further. Candidates must be able to use the stimulus material (the 'applied' bit) if they are to access the higher grades with ease, rather than repeat pre-learnt generic responses.

Question 1

Scenario was of Cambria Leisure Park. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

(a)(ii) Most candidates were able to identify at least one of the key requirements of the act and most 2 or more. The most common response were the need for CRB checks and trained/qualified staff, together with an identification that there was a minimum ratio of staff to children. A significant number of candidates are still not keeping to the command word here and are identifying one/two requirements and then explaining why they need to be there. This question has been in the same

format for each exam series and preparation for the exam should include practice at following command words exactly as there are no marks available for explanation/application here.

(a)(ii) Most candidates knew at least one of the sanctions available to the HSE, with as usual the option of closure being the most popular. There was some confusion amongst a minority of candidates who consider that any HSE action – for example, ordering staff training – is also a sanction. The difference should be made clear to learners. Candidates tended to be better at describing the sanctions than identifying the correct nomenclature for improvement and prohibition notices. This is an area for further improvement.

(b) Most candidates managed to identify two acceptable measures although there was a tendency in some candidates to wander into things that should be done whilst cooking rather than measures, for example '*they should wash their hands regularly*'. This unit is concerned with thee organisational aspects of the problem, hence needs specific measures that the organisation would have to put in place rather than what the staff do. However, many candidates did develop their ideas well, particularly with respect to labelling and the need for organised storage in connection with temperature or different types of foodstuffs.

(c) There was some confusion at times with this piece of legislation. A number of candidates seemed to wander readily into HASAWA as opposed to the First Aid Regulations. It is unfortunate that that the 'First Aid' only appears in brackets, but this is the correct title for the regulations and candidates must be made specifically aware of this little quirk of our legislative system for future series.

Those who dealt with the correct regulations seemed well versed in their basic content, although in application their grasp of fact sometimes let them down. A ratio of staff that are first aid trained became applied as '*all the instructors coming in would have to have to be given first aid training*'. Despite this, many did apply it to at least one of the points in the given scenario, whether it was the multitude of types of accidents there could be leading to demand for a variety of first aid materials or the wide range of locations leading to demand for more first aid kits/first aiders. The evidence of the responses still indicates that learners need more practice at applying the requirements of the act to different situations in preparation for this assessment.

Candidates at the E grade boundary were able to gather 2 marks easily, but indications are that the better candidates do not know how to apply the act so only gain an extra 1 or 2 marks

(d) As in past series this question was well answered by the majority of candidates. Almost all of them understood the basic premise on which a risk assessment is carried out and were able to produce simple scales for likelihood and severity, although a little more care was needed in places to ensure that the steps within it are in a logical and consistent sequence. There were very few unrealistic suggestions for measures to minimise risk compared to the previous series and the balance of their severity and likelihood was much better than in the past.

Candidates do need to be a little more careful with their choice of scales, which was perhaps the weakest part of this question this time. Far too many of the likelihood scales contained at least one stage that did not show a logical sequence from the others, restricting them to 1 of the 2 available marks. Typically this might be a sequence such as 'highly unlikely-unlikely-*possible*-likely-highly likely' where the 'possible' is not a logical development – all of them suggest it is possible for it to occur. Similarly the use of 'never' on the likelihood scale and 'no harm' on the severity scale is invalid, as in these cases a risk assessment would not be required.

Most candidates managed to identify 2 or more correct measures to minimise the risk, although some tended to miss out on possible credit by being too brief - a short phrase/sentence is what is really required and although it can be done in less the risks of not making the answer clear are correspondingly greater. It should be emphasised that measures to minimise risks in a risk assessment are those that are set out by the management or similar in advance.

The most common suggestions were for a one way system, different age/ability sessions – or splitting them between the two rinks, staff in attendance to clamp down on reckless skating, signage for this also. A number of candidates suggested the need for protective equipment, but this is unrealistic in terms of enforcement.

It is envisaged that the basic format of the risk assessment will appear on the question paper as it has on this one (or in a very similar format) so it would be useful for candidates to be made familiar with this so that they can concentrate on the task of applying the risk assessment correctly in future. To this end candidates need to have scales for both severity and likelihood that can lead to the application of a logical risk rating.

Question 2

The knowledge of quality systems is an area of the specification that has caused problems in previous series. It forms a significant part of the requirements for the assessment and candidates must ensure that they know the main quality systems outlined in the specification. If the basics of the systems are poorly known then the questions based on their application will be more difficult to access as well. There was some improvement in responses to this question compared to the past, but basic comprehension of the Investors in People system is still weak in many candidates.

(a)(i) Although most candidates could identify one feature of the IiP system – usually that it is staff training/development focussed - knowledge of it beyond that was often very sketchy. Some had an idea of its structural framework for operation, but too many launched into benefits for customers at this point. This is not required in a 'describe' question.

(a)(ii) Too many candidates gave responses that implied that the system was customer focussed. This is not the case with IiP and candidates need to be made aware of this basic difference from Quest.

(b) As stated in previous reports, we have moved towards a paper where there is rather more stimulus material in order to give candidates the chance to apply their knowledge well. This question in particular was one where there was plenty of material and although there was some evidence of candidates using it, many were hampered by an apparent lack of knowledge of what Investors in People really did for an organisation. It is not sufficient for candidates to say that '*having Investors in People will help to achieve these things*' or '*people will recognise it and come to the Centre*'- this could be any quality system in a whole variety of ways. It is unlikely that anyone would go to one particular leisure centre just because it has IiP.

It is necessary to link the areas that IiP focuses on – staff training and development, communication, - to the aims of the centre centre. Simple links such as '*a better system for staff development would mean they got the training they needed – if this was in customer service skills then customers would get better treatment making them more likely to return and so increasing loyalty*' is

application of IiP. Most candidates could achieve the top of level 1 with generic comment as to the benefits of a quality system but it will be useful in future if they can be more focussed on the need to relate to the given situation.

I make no apology for quoting again the example below of a typical generic response that is as relevant to this paper as it was to last summer's. It is a totally generic response to the benefits (and disadvantages, in this response) of introducing IiP to the Leisure Centre. Its lack of application is indicated by the fact that if we swapped 'Quest' for 'IiP' it would still read the same, as it would if 'centre' were swapped for 'gym'. This, therefore, on an applied paper, is a level 1/level 2 boundary response only.

> *'If they introduced IiP a larger number of customers would come because they know it's a good place to go. This would give them a greater income, more profit which would mean they could improve the centre. The staff would be better trained so it would be a better environment for the customers. It would become well known as a top quality centre. It can give a framework for continuous improvement. The service given to customers would therefore improve. Staff would be more highly motivated in their jobs so more people will want to work there. It would cost a lot of money to get it and it could take a long time. Staff may not like different work patterns and training or the hard work needed in order to achieve IiP. Trying to achieve this could put more pressure on them and they could leave. The centre may take their focus off the customers in trying to achieve this.'*

There was a also a requirement in this question for candidates to analyse the suitability of the system for achieving these aims. Only a few candidates attempted this, often pointing out that Quest might do the job better as they might be improvements in the equipment or buildings that would make the biggest difference to customers

(c) Candidates again tended to be a little too generic with their responses to this question. Although many were successful with comments relating to improved customer service, there was often too little detail to get beyond a basic single mark. It is vital that candidates are aware of how to respond to a question such as this, with the need to identify the element of Quest that is relevant and then to link it specifically with one of the two required aims.

(d) There is pleasing evidence that candidates are learning the basics of the assessment of quality systems more thoroughly than in past series. This was evident here, with most at least knowing that there might be an element of internal and external assessment, and the latter might include a 'mystery visit' element. Many were able to explain how the internal assessment worked. There was still some confusion, although less than in the past, as to what the maintenance assessment is – a number of candidates still suggesting that it is to look at the state of the buildings or equipment!

Question 3

(a)(i) Most candidates were aware of the basic operative procedure of a direct debit, although some explanations were too general. '*Money that goes straight from one account to another*' conveys neither the regularity that direct debits tend to have or even that it is some form of payment for services etc. One common source of confusion was with debit cards.

(a)(ii), (a)(iii) It still seems to be the case that a substantial proportion of candidates is omitting to take a calculator into the examination. Particularly in

part (ii) a considerable number produced an average visit for the 3 months by rough guesswork, taking it as 13 often. Basic mathematical skills will continue to be required in this paper for the foreseeable future and practitioners should ensure that candidates are aware of the need for accuracy.

(a)(iv) A couple of issues in this question highlighted the need for candidates to read the question carefully. Firstly, the question directed them to use their answer from part (iii). Many did not and as a result restricted themselves to a rather vague generic response based on guesswork. Secondly, the question asked whether it would be worthwhile to the centre. A significant minority of candidates argued that it was/was not beneficial to the casual users. It was possible for candidates to argue for or against the proposition, given the correct figures and justification. Most felt quite reasonably that the annual profit of £80 was enough to offset the cost of advertising.

(b) As in the other longer applied questions there was considerable evidence of candidates having learnt the basic benefits of membership schemes without really having the experience to apply these to a new situation. This produces generic responses that struggle to get beyond level 1. Some candidates did make good use of the stimulus in linking membership details to the events that the centre is running or in having better knowledge of future income in order for them to be able to plan for the new building. One common misconception that needs to be addressed is that members coming more often to classes automatically brings more income – learners should be aware of the real benefits of membership packages to help them inform their judgements. Often there is increase secondary spend as customers feel more part of it etc., as many candidates pointed out, but this needs to be stated. As in the previous question a small, but significant proportion of candidates failed to read the question properly and answered it from the point of view of the benefit to the customer.

(c) Most candidates did manage to suggest two reasons why electronic systems might be used. Often these were backed up well by explanation and tended to focus most successfully upon the need for it to be beneficial to the organisation financially and that this might not be so if it were small due to the cost of purchasing the system and training staff to use it. Some good responses also showed awareness of the loss or personal contact that can come with these systems in use. Unfortunately there does seem at times to be a bit of an obsession with electronic systems breaking down. Although this does happen, and some candidates justifiably pointed out that this can be inconvenient for customers, the wholesale loss of data is a very rare occurrence. Whilst many of us have had experiences where data has been totally lost, for large systems such as these the back-up mechanisms are generally secure and to claim that all the data will be lost is unrealistic.

(d) This was the most effective of the longer questions with regard to candidates' ability and willingness to apply their knowledge. Many were very knowledgeable about the possible effects of electronic stock control systems and used their knowledge to explain how some of the problems given in the stimulus could be avoided. Two areas of weakness restricted marks overall. Firstly there was a tendency to simply say that 'a stock system would stop them over ordering pizzas and make sure they did not run out of water' without identifying the link as to how this occurred (e.g. the epos indicating when each one was sold, automatic ordering etc). Secondly there was often limited analysis as to the benefits to CLC. Although responses asserted that they would not over order, the benefits to the centre – as required in the question – were often left entirely implicit, so little real analysis was at times carried out.

Unit 3 – 6968/01 The Leisure Customer

General Comments

Comments relate to the marking from the January 2009 series. This report comments on the assessment evidence requirements, the accuracy of the marking and the administration.

The tasks for the unit are set within the specification. There are four tasks for the unit and shown on page 31 of the specification.

AO1 (a)   an understanding of how the leisure industry views the customer
AO4 (b)   an evaluation of customer service, in the leisure industry, through acting as a 'mystery customer'
AO3 (c)   an investigation into marketing activities used within the leisure industry
AO2 (d)   the provision of customer service, dealing with a range of customers in different situations.

Each task is linked to a specific learning outcome, which details the knowledge, skills and understanding that learners are required to demonstrate.

AO1:   Knowledge, skills and understanding
AO2:   Application of knowledge, skills and understanding
AO3:   Research and analysis
AO4:   Evaluation

Marks should be awarded within three mark bands, according to assessment outcome criteria, level of independence and depth and breadth of understanding.

Key Issues

A- AO1
Marks awarded were generally appropriate for this outcome, with most candidates selecting at least three appropriate leisure organisations. Some marks were generously awarded at the top of Mark Band 3 even though the selected organisations were not sufficiently contrasting, for example three leisure centres or three visitor attractions. Centres are reminded that candidates should be encouraged to explore a range of different organisations that make up the 'leisure industry' and to apply their underpinning knowledge of customer care, and the associated policies and procedures, to the practices of different types of organisations across the industry.

B - AO4
The majority of candidates were conducting mystery visits at appropriate leisure organisations and considering a range of customer service factors, for example: cleanliness; staffing; health and safety; range of facilities. In order to award the highest marks, candidates should be guided to ensure they include detailed descriptions of the products and services offered by the chosen leisure organisation and a range of examples of the information available to customers.

C - AO3

It was encouraging to note that the majority of responses were less theoretical in nature that in previous series and instead more applied to appropriately selected leisure organisations. The highest marks were awarded to candidates who has explored a contrasting range of marketing activities, clearly linked to detailed information regarding the specific products and services these activities are designed to promote.

D - AO2

As this evidence is very reliant on observation records and witness testimonies, it was disappointing that some Centres are still reluctant to provide detailed Assessor comments relating to individual candidates and their performance in each practical demonstration of their customer care skills. Centres are reminded of the importance that appropriately detailed and authenticated observation records play in the awarding of marks to this outcome. Generic records and comments which do not sufficiently highlight the observed skills of individual candidates can severely limit the marks available for this practical outcome.

Administration

OPTEMS forms and Candidate Mark Record Sheets were completed correctly. Samples received were also accurate, with all centres submitting the highest and lowest scoring candidate evidence. Most centres submitted Candidate Authentication Records. This is a JCGQ requirement. Copies of all the forms required are available on the Edexcel website.

Annotation on some coursework was rather limited or not present for some centres. Annotation should highlight where key evidence could be found, e.g. specifically where explanation, analysis and evaluation can be found. Annotation is most helpful to the internal and external moderation process.

In B (AO2), for example, annotation could be made where the candidate has included a description of the organisation's products and services and details of the information available for customers.

Marking

This series found the majority of the marking to be appropriate, although some centres were being too lenient in awarding marks where the evidence did not meet the specification requirements.

Candidate evidence should be assessed against the assessment criteria in the specification. For each task there are three marks bands. Assessors should first determine the mark band statement that 'best fits' the evidence submitted. A note should be taken of command verbs and discriminators for each statement. For example, for A (AO1) where candidates have produced a lengthy **description** of how the leisure industry views the customer, marks would generally be limited to mark band one. Mark band two requires an **explanation** and mark band three a **comprehensive explanation**.

D (AO2) is an outcome where assessors most frequently award marks too generously. Care should be taken to ensure the candidate has independently demonstrated skill and expertise in the provision of customer service to a **range** of customers in a **range** of **contrasting** situations.

Assessment Evidence

AO1: The leisure customer.

This task addresses AO1 - *demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

This assessment outcome requires candidates to explore how the leisure customer is viewed by leisure organisations and to understand the importance of the customer and customer service to the industry, supported through the review of appropriate policies and procedures.

Whilst most candidates provided a useful definition of customer care and its benefits to leisure organisations, it was noticeable that again, some candidates were simply including copies of relevant policies and procedures with no or very little interpretation of how they impact on the quality of customer care. On occasion, some candidates appeared to have simply 'cut and pasted' unreferenced text relating to generic customer service policies from the internet. Not only does this practice present issues relating to plagiarism but does not demonstrate that the candidate has any understanding of how organisational policy impacts on the level of customer care provided.

As well as identifying and describing the various policies and procedures, candidates awarded the highest marks need to provide a **comprehensive explanation** on how specific issues are managed or monitored and how this impacts on customer satisfaction.

As in the previous series, a minority of candidates were still choosing three very similar organisations, for example three visitor attractions or three leisure centres. In order to award the highest marks, evidence must relate to a contrasting range of leisure organisations. Candidates could be encouraged to examine how leisure centres, gymnasiums, cinemas, theme parks, visitor attractions, sports clubs etc. view customers, supported and illustrated by a review of their customer service policies and procedures and how these contribute to customer care.

AO4: Operational aspects related to the leisure customer.

This task addresses AO4 – *evaluate evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

The marking criteria require candidates to present information related to customer service provided by a leisure organisation, gained through a 'mystery visit'.

The majority of candidates undertook a mystery visit of one appropriate leisure organisation and presented details of their findings. Most were able to provide examples of customer service gained from the visit, although some were not providing details of the range of information available to customers or a description of the products or services provided by the leisure organisation.

Centres should note that to achieve the highest marks in this band, candidates should be evaluating the success of the provider in satisfying customer needs and be able to comment on the tangible methods the provider has in place to measure standards, for example customer comment cards or surveys.

Some candidates were also gaining examples of customer care provided by an organisation by making telephone contact and exploring their website before an

onsite visit. This enabled some candidates to provide more detailed evidence and achieve Mark Band 3.

Some candidates were still limiting the marks available by not providing a description of the products and services the organisation provides. This could be provided explicitly in an introduction to the mystery visit report or throughout the report narrative.

AO3: Marketing activities and the leisure customer.

This task addresses AO3 – *use appropriate research methods to obtain information from a range of sources to analyse leisure industry vocationally-related issues.*

In providing evidence for this outcome, candidates are required to research a range of marketing activities used in the leisure industry, applied to specific products and services from a single leisure organisation or many. In order to award the highest marks, Centres should ensure that at least three different marketing activities have been explored.

It is encouraging that this series saw a continued improvement in the evidence presented; with less theoretical evidence and more application to activities used within the leisure industry.

Where candidates are producing a high standard of response for this outcome, evidence relates to a range of contrasting marketing activities, clearly applied to specific products and services provided by a leisure organisation or a range of contrasting leisure organisations. Many candidates explored the online and multi-media marketing activities of selected leisure organisations to compliment the more traditional print based ones.

AO2: Dealing with leisure customers.

This task addresses AO2 – *apply knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of industry vocationally-related issues.*

This assessment outcome should demonstrate candidate's ability to provide effective customer service to leisure customers. The outcome lends itself to practical activities such as customer service role-plays; face-to-face, over the telephone, responding to customer letters and emails, or through technological or visual means; giving presentations, creating displays etc.

Centres are again reminded of the importance of detailed, candidate specific and targeted observation records and witness statements used to provide evidence of competency for this outcome. Some candidate marks were limited by observation records that were very brief, generic and lacked any clear assessment judgement based on the skills demonstrated.

Individual observation records, for each scenario, should reflect the range of customer types and situations dealt with, the different methods used in dealing with leisure customers and the level of independence demonstrated. Detailed assessor comments should clearly reflect the candidate's ability to work independently and to reflect the different customer types and situations dealt with. Each record should be completed, signed and dated by the assessor.

A range of example scenarios and documentation templates are available in the Teacher's Guide available to all centres at Edexcel Online www.edexcel.org.uk .

Unit 4 - 6969/01 Leisure in Action

General Comments

There was a relatively small sample put forward for moderation in January 2009. All the activities chosen were suitable for the course and had been chosen carefully given the small class sizes. The standard of work was very similar to that seen in previous series. However, there was evidence that one or two centres were not taken advice from the previous moderators' reports and consequently, some of the same errors were again evident.

Centre assessors' marking and annotation was generally sound, but centres are to be reminded of the importance of internal standardisation.

AO1: The Plan of the Event.

There appeared to be confusion between AO1 and AO3 as candidates failed to identify a plan for the chosen activity. To achieve marks in the higher mark bands there must be a clear cut plan (one that could reasonably be taken up and followed by a third party). All aspects of the specification notes should be clear. Plans still lacked detail and learners need clear guidance to ensure that the expected range of information (aims, objectives, plans, dates etc.) is provided. It was evident that many centres are not monitoring the planning stages which results in misdirection later.

Timescales were lacking from much of the work sampled this series, or often appeared to have been added retrospectively. Again, too many of the plans were similar in presentation with their colleagues and gave a view that the plans were undertaken as a group with minor alterations. The type of events chosen provided the candidates with the opportunities to achieve good marks, but this was not always taken.

AO2: Individual contributions.

There was little in the way of evidence for this assessment objective in this series. Centres where candidates were adjudged to have achieved higher marks had encouraged the use of a diary or of regularly kept logs. These were usually supported in their evidence by the tutor either signing the logbook or providing a witness statement showing the candidates involvement.

Minutes of meetings, however, were usually very brief and did not convey enough evidence of the candidates' involvement. Submitting the same set of minutes for each candidate is not acceptable unless the candidate has identified and explained their role at the meetings in more detail. Where group work has been submitted centres need to clearly guide their candidates to ensure that they explicitly demonstrate which work is credited to which learner.

AO3: Research and Feasibility of the Event.

Most candidates showed that research had been undertaken but few provided the evidence of the source of the research or provided a bibliography. Others, however, did not provide evidence of what research had been undertaken nor what

had been previously written. There were a few who copied copious pages from other text and used this as their evidence but did not use the information themselves. Research was limited, particularly in terms of supporting the rejection of alternative events before making a final choice. Where research was evident it was rarely made clear how it was linked to the final decision making process. It is also unnecessary to provide planning information for several activities before narrowing down to one. A record of the discussion and selection in making the choice of activity is more important than detail on more than one.

AO4: Evaluation of the Event.

Many candidates attempted to evaluate their event with some undertaking sound evaluation of their own and the team's involvement. However some evaluated the event merely by a description of what happened and who did what. "How" and "why" is more important than "what"!. Most provided recommendations with a few giving very good evidence. Learners need more guidance with regard to the evaluation required. Much of the information related to whether or not the event was a success, but there is no evidence of greater levels of reflection upon the contributions made by the various members either during the planning stage or on the day.

Unit 5 - 6970/01 Employment in Leisure

General comments

The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates and there was a slight improvement in performance compared to last January.

Most candidates were able to respond effectively to most questions. There was evidence that most candidates had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set, offering valid answers, although many candidates did struggle to achieve the higher levels in extended responses. Almost all candidates answered all questions.

There is still a tendency for candidates to be able to cope with the demands of the paper comfortably at a basic level without managing to raise their mark beyond the level of grades D and E. There appears to be a number of reasons for this, associated with both the nature of the applied GCE and the lack of exam technique in some candidates.

Exam technique

Whilst underlining key points in the stimulus material is a valuable tool when used well, some candidates are underlining far more than they are not. This defeats the purpose of underlining. For the applied questions in particular it would be beneficial for candidate to read the question before they underline the key parts of the stimulus to focus them more carefully on what they need to pick out.

Many candidates are wasting too much of each response on non-rewardable material. This happens in two ways:
- Re-writing the question first. For example starting 2(b) with '*It would not be suitable to advertise this post by putting an advert in the local newspaper or putting up posters in the venue itself because….*'
- Providing recall information that the command words in the question do not require. An extreme example was for 3(d) '*Annual leave means that full-timers get 4 weeks paid leave per year and part-timers 2 weeks annual leave per year. Staff are entitled to the break whenever they want to, with restrictions. A system that could be used by the Arts Arena could be that….*'. This also includes re-writing the question and covered 7 lines out of the 12 available.

Both of these errors mean that time is wasted and, in a structured paper such as this, candidates do not leave themselves room to answer fully.

The applied nature of the GCE

The purpose of this GCE is to give learners an applied, work related approach to the leisure industry, involving active learning and the ability to take basic principles and apply them in unfamiliar situations. A few questions will always be aimed at AO1, straightforward recall of knowledge and understanding, but the majority – particularly the longer questions - will require learners to apply this. This is the key skill that they need to tackle this qualification successfully, but only a limited proportion are, as yet, doing so. Application requires more than saying 'The *advantages of this post for a job share at the Arts Arena are….*' and then

going on to give a learnt generic response. It involves active use of the stimulus material as indicated in the 'indicative content' parts of the mark scheme for levels based questions. Without this application responses cannot get beyond 3-4 marks out of the 8 available for longer questions, i.e. a grade D/E level.

Whilst in preparing these papers we will always try to keep as much of the information needed for a specific question on the same page, candidates should be aware that for the later questions information from the earlier parts of the paper could be useful. The papers are designed to focus candidates on one organisation/person so that they can get a feel for them i.e. a possible real-life situation. Candidates should be made aware of this.

Candidates were able to use information taken from the WYNTL section of the unit. The requirements of some of the command words were generally known by candidates, although many did not manage to access the higher marks in the longer questions as a consideration of terms such as 'analysis' did not show enough depth in response. Far fewer than last year responded to the longer questions with simple explanatory points or, worse still, with a series of (bullet) points. Candidates appeared to manage their time effectively. The vast majority of candidates appeared to complete the paper in the time available, with little evidence of rushed work towards the end.

Question 1

Scenario for the whole paper was of The Arts Arena, a theatre/concert venue. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

(a)(i) Most candidates were aware that these were workers who might not have a set contract or, if they did, that it was a 'zero hours' contract. There was a tendency for candidates to go in to the reasons why they were used by organisations, which only gained limited credit as this was not the main thrust of the question.

(a)(ii) Most candidates were aware that casual and part-time workers might be employed when The Arts Arena was busy, although there was some confusion as to how they were different. At the lower end candidates tended to lump them together. Better candidates were able to say that part-timers would have a regular job there, and often then went on to illustrate how they might be used to cover weekends or evenings when there were performances. Casuals, on the other hand, were linked to the winter season and many candidates successfully suggested the types of jobs in which they might be involved.

(b) There was plenty of evidence of sound understanding of the concept of a job share, although a few candidates seemed to suggest that it would be a problem because they have to pay both of them. A good number of candidates mentioned the problems that it would create for other members of staff having two managers and also covered issues with communication between the managers and management style. There was relatively poor use otherwise of the stimulus information. Although a number of responses put forward that it was an advantage because it might attract mothers returning from child rearing etc., few of these then went on to suggest why this was a benefit – there was little analysis. Some did give a generic '*it would increase the pool of labour to choose from'* but why this might be important in this case – 'low unemployment', 'difficulty filling posts' - was not considered. There was an overall tendency simply to state a large number of advantages/disadvantages just as they might have been learnt without attempting application and/or analysis. This approach can only get to the lower end of level 2 at the maximum.

Question 2

(a)(i) Too many candidates spent most of the time describing what might be found in a job description. The point of the question was its role in the recruitment process, something that was generally poorly understood. Some did suggest that it was to inform the candidate to help him make his decision, but its role within the organisation was weakly dealt with, often eliciting the response that the candidate was compared to the job description. Learners would benefit from the recruitment section of this unit being carried out as a complete 'mock' process so they have to deal with the documents in the correct way to improve their understanding of their role in the process.

(a)(ii) Most candidates were aware what was included in a person specification. Many then related their explanations well to the post of Manager, particularly in explaining the importance of experience, qualifications and skills/attributes. Good explanations for experience included the reduction in need for training as a result or the benefit of having led a team before. Some weaker candidates do tend simply to repeat the item '*experience, because they would need experience to do this job*'. This is at too basic a level to credit as an explanation.

(b) Most candidates scored 2-3 marks. They grasped the idea that these methods of advertising were not suitable as they only reached a limited audience, although explanations as to why this was a problem were often left implicit. Many correctly suggested that a national newspaper would be better. Some added that the Arena needed to attract a wider/more specific target audience and suggested that the internet/specialist magazine would be better. A few added that it was an area of low employment so there was little point advertising there, hence using the stimulus material well.

(c) There was considerable uncertainty as to exactly what the shortlisting process is for many candidates. Most were aware that it occurred between the receipt of applications and the interview, although a significant minority confused it with the interview itself. The details as to how it worked were often hazy. Many were unaware that the scoring criteria were largely determined by the person specification – indeed the most common assertion seemed to be that those with spelling errors/poor handwriting were rejected and that was it! As in Q2(a)(i), the best way for candidates to really understand this process would be for them to carry it out in conjunction with the other documents – applied to themselves for jobs they might want to do it would also provide them with valuable feedback for when they apply in real life.

(d) Most candidates achieved at least the upper end of level 1 here but, although many did understand the purpose of each of the individual tasks, all too often they failed to follow the command word in the question and did not *analyse* the benefits to The Arts Arena. A typical response was '*if they give a presentation they can see how well they are organised/whether they are confident speaking to people*', which in itself is true but does not address the issue as to how it is beneficial to the Arts Arena as a technique for this post. Level 2 tended to be achieved by those who related the individual tasks to the post of manager '*the problem solving activity would be good as he would have to think on his feet when customers/staff come to him with problems*'. Again, though, the overall benefits – seeing the strengths and weaknesses of candidates in order to make the best possible choice – were often omitted. A number of candidates did correctly assess that it was a costly procedure – top quality responses suggested that it was worth it for such an important post as the cost of the wrong candidate would be greater!

(e) Most candidates appeared to be able to suggest how the inductions would be similar and posed a few suggestions as to how they might be different, but there were few who put forward explanatory comments to justify their decisions. This meant that it was difficult for them to achieve past level 1 as the key command word is 'explain'. Differences were often only briefly dealt with and tended to focus only upon the size of their role within the organisation rather than levels of responsibility etc.

Question 3

(a) Most candidates were aware of the key requirements of the Working Time Regulations, but comments relating to their use were often couched in fairly general terms '*they can only work 8 hours per day so that they would have to hire extra workers to cover*'. The best responses used the stimulus material to suggest why these extras were needed '*the Arts Arena is open up to 13 hours a day and employees only have to do 8 maximum, so a rota for employees would be needed to ensure they did not go over this*'. Some sound use was made of the short gap between closing and opening and also that young employees could not be used for the evening shows because of the late finish. It is necessary, for the top marks, for candidates to relate exact information from the stimulus to that in the act.

(b) Candidates did have basic ideas as to some of the principles that a system for annual leave might involve, but these were not often articulated into a coherent system. Too many candidates seemed to want to give solutions to the current problem at the Arts Arena and simply suggested that they could hire casual labour for the Christmas period to make up the numbers. This is not a system for annual leave. Basic procedures such as these should be the starting point for learners' study of the running of the working practices in the leisure industry. As with shortlisting, it is important that all parts of the WYNTL in the specification are covered in preparation for the external assessment.

(c)(i) Most candidates scored 1-2 marks for knowing the basic principles of time off for pregnancy/having a baby. Many knew that this was paid up to a point and that the mother could return to the job afterwards.

(c)(ii) The vast majority of the candidates understood the term 'notice period' and were able to make simple suggestions as to why it was beneficial or not to the company. The benefits usually revolved around giving them time to appoint a replacement and some candidates then developed this idea to show how it would benefit the organisation through maintaining customer service levels or reducing stress upon the rest of the staff. The stimulus was developed quite well in the disadvantages through suggesting that lack of motivation in the leaving employee might, to the contrary, have a negative effect on other staff and customers. Occasional flashes of inspiration were welcome – a few candidates did point out that it gave the opportunity for employees to help themselves to customer details to take to their next jobs, unfortunately a genuine working practice!

Question 4

(a) Most candidates were able to give some advantages of both team work and profit related pay, although a significant minority could not differentiate between profit and performance related pay. Unfortunately for most candidates this is where they stopped, content with generic advantages and sometimes some disadvantages. This does not answer the given question. The requirement to 'evaluate the use of' means that they need to show how it might motivate, or not, the workforce in the given situation. In order to do that they must try to apply it to the scenario.

Although much of the relevant stimulus material was on the previous page, it would be useful for practitioners to emphasise to their learners that for longer, and some of the shorter, questions that refer specifically to the named organisation, it is important to use this specific information. Without this it is impossible to adequately evaluate the use of techniques as the exact situation will determine whether they help or not. If, as in this case, employees have not been working well together then the use of team working may well be more beneficial than in cases where they already do. Hence the listing of advantages/disadvantages is never going to get beyond the lower end of level 2 at best.

(b)(i) Most candidates did understand that job enlargement meant the addition of extra roles/responsibilities to a job, but in many cases it was unclear as to whether they were referring to job enlargement as such or, in fact, job rotation.

(b)(ii) The basic benefits of job rotation were soundly understood, although unfortunately this was the stopping point for many candidates who reiterated the same thing a number of times – usually that it relieved boredom and so would give her back her enthusiasm. How it would give enthusiasm back was not always clear. There was more use of the stimulus than in Q4(a). Many candidates picked up the idea that a variety of roles might give her more experience and linked that to her desire to manage. Others suggested that she would pick them up easily as she was bright. Better candidates tended to see the fuller picture in terms of assessing its use and considered that it might not be the most appropriate. Some suggested that they might all be at the same level and therefore no more motivating and that perhaps training would be more appropriate in view of her ambition. Others could also see that it might not be the best from the Arts Arena's point of view as it would mean other employees would have to rotate and more training costs would be involved. Overall, though, it is the ability to evaluate the technique's use in the given situation that is the defining factor in terms of level of achievement for most candidates – without it, they will only achieve at the D/E/U boundary levels.

Unit 6 – 6971/01 Current Issues in Leisure

General Comments

There was small number of entries for the January 2009 moderation window. Some centres had chosen to resubmit work with the necessary corrections. Cohort size is relatively small for this series and does not reflect the full range of grades.

The guidance and preparation by centres followed the Edexcel guidelines – OPTEMS and front sheets were accurately presented. Declaration sheets had been completed by the learner and the centre assessor. There was accuracy in the recording of marks. Coursework was received within the required window.

All centres correctly utilised the mark record sheets providing centre name /candidate name / number.
- It was clear to see where the assessor had made the assessment decisions.
- It was unclear if internal standardisation activities had taken place throughout the stages of the unit. Centres will need to consider the most suitable way of presenting this information for moderation.

Only one set of front sheets is required to be sent in for moderation. Multiple sheets tend to be confusing. Comments made by assessors varied considerably in depth. Assessment feedback must relate to the mark band as well as the assessment criteria. Reference to page numbers greatly assisted the moderation process.

Centres submitted portfolios in an acceptable format (in one plastic wallet). Centres are advised that surplus material taken from internet sites must be removed but must be sourced at the stage that it is used within the research project. This may also require an endorsement from the assessor. Centres are following the guidance on 'word count' for this unit which guides learners and prevents them from deviating from the title chosen .The use of a time line is important to keep the learner on track

Work submitted showed a good understanding of the importance and relevance of sourcing and referencing. The use of websites was more frequently referred to throughout the work. This is an acceptable way of acknowledging evidence at A2 level. Centres had allowed learners to use a range of appropriate evidence – the inclusion of dates is important in ensuring the authenticity and validity of evidence and more importantly its relevance to the scope of the research project.

Annotation was evident and assisted the moderation process. Annotation by assessors showed improvement. Detailed annotation further guides the learners. In most cases this was clear and transparent. Signposting clearly where the assessment opportunities had been provided in the evidence further guides the moderation process. Assessors must fully annotate the work throughout including appendices. Some centres are of the opinion that the work should remain unmarked- this shows that there has not been any judgement made throughout the stages / milestones set in the project.

The general performance for this window showed improvement with research projects accessing the higher mark bands. Work showed that learners had been well prepared for this unit and work was consistently of a higher standard. There were few adjustments made and these were within the accepted tolerances. Sub-sampling did show that learners were able to access mark band 2/3 more frequently.

Appropriate topic titles were chosen which clearly focused on the identification of a current issue in leisure. The topic titles allowed learners to develop the research project. Where proposals moved away from the topic title learners were not able to access full marks throughout. Topic titles tend to concentrate on health related issues i.e. obesity or sporting events – football. There were some excellent titles – game consoles, smoking, fast food, clubbing for young people and salary capping in football. Learners were able to identify the scope of the issue chosen.

Learners must be guided by assessors on how to process information taken from secondary sources. Downloaded pages from websites if used in an applied way and linked to the project title are acceptable. These require referencing to show authentication. Some information presented by learners was clearly not their own work and could be seen as plagiarism if not sourced and referenced appropriately.

There was some evidence to show that learners had accessed other research projects and used these as their own. This is not acceptable and is plagiarism. If used as part of their own research and used in an applied way to support or refute their proposals then this is acceptable.

There was a marked improvement in the standard of work produced from the last series. There was clear evidence that learners had been guided, given clear parameters for the unit and had been well supported throughout the research project. It is very pleasing to see that centres are now developing the concept of research projects with learners at the A2 level required.

Context of the unit

Centres are reminded that this is an A2 unit and requires the learner to reflect on the knowledge that they have gained from the AS examination and portfolio units. Learners are required to choose an issue that is leisure related - this can extend into the area of the sport and recreation industry. It is essential that all research meets appropriate ethical guidelines, including permission being granted before 'real life' examples are included. It is suggested that between two and four thousand words would be appropriate for a written research project.

Although this is an A2 unit the guidance throughout the stages is paramount to ensuring that learners are on the right track. It appears that centres leave students unsupervised throughout long periods without sufficient monitoring. This result in learners performing at the lower grades at A2.

A01 – A research proposal that identifies the research topic together with the project aims and methodology

Very clear research proposals were evident with the scope identified more clearly. The use of literary reviews had been developed well by centres and showed relevance to the topic title.

Plans varied and some had been retrospectively developed. When these were realistic they matched good research projects allowing learners to move throughout the mark bands. Aims and objectives were used with accuracy. Centres need to plan with learners the use of timescales and milestones throughout the stages. The lack of adequate planning throughout the stages shows imbalance. Insufficient attention is placed on sample size and its parameters and can move learners to mark band three if applied to the title.

Some learners had difficulty in demonstrating organisational skills that are involved in research projects i.e. to produce and submit their project to meet deadlines. When a checklist approach was developed by centres this guided the learners well. Proposals took the format of a series of intended questions to be answered. Some learners included feasibility studies – these showed a marked improvement. Plans were highlighted against timescales with some more detailed than others. It was apparent that plans were rarely focused on in the evaluation section and were not applied within the unit. It is important that centres see this as an important part of the development of the research project.

AO2 – Research that includes references related to the sport.

Research was good throughout the projects with most learners including both primary and secondary research. The internet had been used widely with some other sources also used. Data collection, data presentation and analysis showed marked improvement with good analysis and conclusions being drawn. On the whole this section is completed well.

Learners are required to research the chosen subject area and possible methods of data collection. Learners should be able to reference the text and include quotations. When learners were able to compare findings from previous research in order to establish the relevance of current information, this was acceptable within the research and was rewarded. Some learners had difficulty in extracting the relevant information from other sources for their own projects. There was a tendency to download substantial information with very little processing and application.

AO3 – A completed research project

Research still tends to rely on the internet and this limits some learners who only use this information source and more importantly only use a few websites. It is evident to see that these learners find it difficult to move up the mark bands. Learners are required to organise the collection and analysis of data and to complete the research project. Most projects were completed however some proposals had not been addressed and information had not been presented in a format to make considered judgements. Some conclusions were presented in a statement format and in bullet points. Learners must include explanations of intended aims, methodology, analysis and conclusions that acknowledge formal structures. The aspect of the leisure industry discussed in the research project must clearly reflect the project aims and objectives. Results must be presented in a variety of formats where findings and conclusions can be drawn from. It was evident that centres did not provide appropriate guidance here. Some learners had included all the raw questionnaires carried out. These must be processed and removed with one copy being placed in the appendix as evidence. It is the processing of the questionnaires that is more important. This should also be placed in context with the sample size used highlighting any limitations here.

AO4 – An evaluation of the research project

There was a marked improvement demonstrated here. Evaluations were detailed and showed clear evidence that the learner had reviewed each stage of the research project.

Learners are required to review their completed project and identify areas where improvements can be made. These suggestions must be relevant and realistic.

Learners had attempted to evaluate the research project in relation to their proposals. Evaluations were still sometimes brief statements and descriptive accounts. Evaluations must consider the intended research proposal as well as the methodology that has been used. Learners should be able to put forward other recommendations on how the proposal could have been improved if research had been focused in a completely different way. Some conclusions given did not demonstrate that the learner had understood the chosen issue.

Grade Boundary Statistics – January 2009

Unit 1: The Leisure Industry (6966)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	47	40	34	28	22
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 2: Working Practices in Leisure (6967)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	52	44	37	30
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 3: The Leisure Customer (6968)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	47	41	35	29	23
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 4: Leisure in Action (6969)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 5: Employment in Leisure (6970)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	53	46	39	33
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 6: Current Issues in Leisure (6971)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	47	41	35	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Note:

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.