

Examiners' Report

Summer 2011

GCSE

GCE Leisure Studies (6971) Unit 6: Current Issues in Leisure

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General Comments

There were a moderate number of entries for the January 2011 moderation window. Comments towards the report are generally in line with reports from the previous with a few additional recommendations. Cohort size still remains relatively small for this series and does not reflect the full range of grades.

The guidance and preparation by centres followed the Edexcel guidelines with OPTEMS and front sheets being presented accurately. Declaration sheets had been completed by the learner and the centre assessor. There was 100% 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 although 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 can 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 or Gantt chart 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. Candidates should be encouraged to comment upon the validity of the source of information or the website.

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. There is a requirement for centres to develop a more comprehensive form of annotation. This appears to be weak with most centres.

Annotation was evident and assisted the moderation process. Annotation by assessors showed improvement. Detailed annotation further guides the learners. 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 and other supporting evidence.

The work of the candidate must show assessment has taken place and that a judgment has been made throughout the stages or milestones set in the project. Work showed that learners had been guided well for this unit and evidence was consistently of a higher standard. 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 i.e. football.

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 regarded as 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 previous 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 A2 level covering the scope and a literary review which sets project direction.

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 AS 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 some centres often leave students unsupervised throughout long periods without sufficient tracking and monitoring. This results in learners performing at the lower grades at A2.

AO1 - A research proposal that identifies the research topic together with the project aims and methodology.

Topics chosen were acceptable and clearly demonstrated an understanding of the scope of the intended research and the relevant methods that could be employed. However candidates did not take into account how sample size and method of sampling may affect the results that were arrived at. There was clear evidence that a logical progression was evident throughout and that there were clear stages that candidates had followed. Planning still remains the weakest area with many plans not followed or retrospectively completed. A checklist approach may help candidates plus regular monitoring. Timescales were generally realistic.

A02 - Research that includes references related to the topic.

All research projects were completed with some sections in more detail than others. Centres should guide learners to the word count. Explanations of intended aims were well presented. Methodology / analysis and conclusions were provided well. Results were presented in a variety of formats which were acceptable. Conclusions were drawn throughout most stages of the project.

A03 - A completed research project.

Leisure research projects all showed well constructed research. There was a substantial amount of information taken from a wide range of sources which were appropriately referenced throughout the project. Centres should be developing candidates to use the Harvard referencing system. There was evidence of extracted and presented factual data which was presented appropriately and analyzed with conclusions. Interpreted and presented information showed valid points linked to the aims. Sophisticated analysis was evident with emphasis to both the topic and the process.

A04 - An evaluation of the research project

This section has improved dramatically and shows that candidates have an insight on limitations and opportunities to improve their research projects. Valid methods for improvement are well developed. QWC is demonstrated well however centres do not necessary credit this fully.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
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