

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCE Travel and Tourism (6987)
Unit 1: The Travel and Tourism
Industry

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General introduction

The questions in this paper were set to assess candidates' learning of the content of the specification, and devised to meet the assessment objectives as given in the specification. Summarised below are the weightings applied to this unit.

Summary of AO Weightings and Question Requirements

	Summary of AO	Weighting	Question Requirements
AO1	Knowledge and Understanding	25-35%	Describe, Explain, Compare
AO2	Application of Knowledge and Understanding	25-35%	Explain, Suggest
AO3	Research and Analysis	20-25%	Examples you have researched, Analyse, Explain why, Comment on
AO4	Evaluation, reasoned conclusions, justified recommendations	20-25%	Evaluate, Suggest, Assess, Explain, Analyse, Justify.

Candidates lost marks on this paper by not reading the question correctly. For example on Q1(c) many missed the words 'incoming tourists' and assessed the apartments' suitability for any type of tourist.

Candidates also lost marks on this paper by explaining when the question had asked them to describe, or vice versa. Reading and understanding the command verb is a skill which was not well developed in some candidates, obvious by their answers.

As with all previous papers, there were 90 marks available. Candidates were allowed calculators. To calculate the answers to Q4(b) it was necessary to use a calculator; candidates are advised to always have one with them in the exam.

Some candidates continued their answer on additional sheets. Although this is permissible, when excessive additional sheets are used, the candidate may be unable to complete the whole paper in the time allowed, and this sometimes led to weaker or non-existent answers for later questions in the paper.

Also, when additional sheets are used it is recommended practice for candidates to write "continued on additional sheet" at the end of the appropriate section of the answer booklet. Many did not do this.

The Quality of Written Communication (QWC) has been assessed in this Travel and Tourism GCE paper.

Candidates were assessed on their ability to:

- Ensure that text is legible and that spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate so that meaning is clear
- Select and use a form of writing appropriate to the purpose and to complex subject matter
- Organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Questions 2(b) and 3(d), marked with an *, were the questions where this was taken into account on this paper.

This report will comment on each question in the paper. It will comment on the overall performance of the question, key strengths and weaknesses in responses and in some cases will give example answers.

Q1(a)

The stem of this question was supposed to guide the candidates to the correct definition of incoming. However, many incorrectly defined this, but then went on to give a correct example, so a lot of candidates scored only one of the possible two marks. Good responses would include a definition, using the words “into” arriving in” or “entering” and an example.

“This is a tourist that is coming into the UK from another country for a holiday, such as Eric from Paris who comes to the Lake District for a week”

Q1(b)(i)

The vast majority of candidates picked out two suitable named features/attractions of Edinburgh, and scored two marks, the most popular choices being Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace.

Q1(b)(ii)

Most candidates were able to explain Edinburgh’s appeal, but many did this in general terms using phrases that could apply to any tourist, as they seemed to have forgotten that the question was related to incoming tourists. These types of responses would only be awarded 2 of the 4 available marks.

To achieve three of four marks they would have had to include explanatory phrases in their answers, such as

“Holyrood Palace could appeal as our royal family is of great interest to incoming tourists as many other countries have not got this”.

Q1(c)

Similarly to Q1(b)(ii) this question was related to incoming tourists. Many did not apply their answers to incoming, and thus limited the marks they could achieve. Many others did not relate back to the stem of the question, i.e. travelling in groups and usually only staying for one night. Others focused their answers solely on the location of the apartments, which in fact

could apply to any tourist visiting Edinburgh, not necessarily just those from overseas.

Better responses, did relate the features of the apartments to the specific needs of incoming tourists including positive assessment such as parking for a hire car and satellite TV, and negative assessment such as only 10 apartments.

A better applied response is shown below....

"They are located 2.5 miles from the city; therefore they are quick to access, so they will have more time to see all the attractions. However, incoming tourists only usually stay for one day, so they could not stay here for one night as there is a 2 night minimum stay. Also there are only 10 apartments which isn't suitable as they usually travel in coach groups of 50 or so people, and they would not need the free parking either as they are on a coach."

Q1(d)

A well answered question, most candidates were able to score both marks here. The best answers gave both a definition and a detailed example. When giving an example, candidates should not just say "travelling from Manchester to London" as this could be business travel or VFR. They should be encouraged to give a little more detail e.g.....

"Domestic means someone who lives in the UK and takes a holiday in the UK, such as a group of friends from London to go to Newquay for a week's camping."

Q1(e)

Most candidates correctly identified wi-fi as the suggestion to increase appeal to business travellers. Some gave more detail on this and were also able to justify why this would attract them.

"Offer free wi-fi in every room along with a suitable place to work e.g. a desk. This would allow them to work whilst staying there so encourage them to book"

Families proved a little more difficult for candidates, better responses suggested adding beds to the apartments, or adding a babysitting service. However, justification was much weaker, and usually related to the parents being able to go out, NOT to the increased appeal to families.

"Offer more beds in the rooms, e.g. a double and two single beds. This would mean that families would not have to pay for two apartments if there were 4 of them, and this would reduce the cost and make them more appealing"

Again, candidates are reminded to relate their suggestions to the case study, (a 10 apartment complex) as many unfeasible suggestions, such as

adding a swimming pool, health club/spa, conference centre, were made by many.

Q2(a)

Motivating factors were not well defined. Candidates should not repeat the question in their answers "motivating factors are what motivates you to go there" would score no marks. Many candidates confused this with facilities that give a destination appeal, e.g. attractions such as the Eiffel Tower; Motivating factors are better defined as intrinsic and extrinsic (see below) or by example using terminology such as 'sunlust' and 'wanderlust'.

"Motivating factors are what makes travellers want to travel. Intrinsic is a burning desire to visit a destination, and extrinsic is when they have been inspired to go by a TV advert or programme."

Q2(b)

Some candidates evaluated the article from a marketing point of view rather than a 'motivating people to take the holiday' point of view. However, a lot of candidates were able to pick out appropriate features and evaluate their importance in motivating customers, however, some answers were again quite generic, and specific customer types were not named. e.g. "this is good for all types of customer". This limited the marks they were able to achieve. A better evaluative response is shown below...

"The Adventure break is effective in motivating potential customers, particularly younger tourists due to the dangers and risky activities offered, as this is what they like. It also appeals to couples because of the good deal on the price, which includes a luxury stay in a 5 star lodge with food which is good as they would like somewhere comfortable after a busy day of activities and not have to cook themselves. Also this break includes transfers from station, so they don't need to know how to drive to go there. The wide range of activities means that customers won't be bored."

Q2(c)

The candidates' knowledge of positive and negative impacts of tourism is generally good. However, where improvement is needed is in application of the knowledge to the case study. In this instance it is an adventure centre in Wales, so large scale impacts such as traffic congestion and air pollution would probably not be appropriate.

To enable candidates to score better on questions like this, they should be encouraged to give examples and be able to apply to the local area or situation. For example "creates jobs" would only be awarded 1 mark, but with the addition of "as surfing instructors or catering staff in the centre" would be awarded 2 marks. A better response to the negative impacts part of the question...

“Activities such as the coastal hiking could cause erosion to the natural cliff tops due to people walking over it constantly. The sea activities may scare wildlife due to surfboards and kayaks crashing around in the water frightening fish and seals which feed in the water in this area.”

Q2(d)

Many candidates guessed this one. There were many made up answers, just initials and incorrect responses such as ABTA, Visit Britain and CAA. The two most obvious correct answers were National Trust and English Heritage. However, there were many other answers worth credit, such as the Forestry Commission, UNESCO/World Heritage sites, The Environment Agency, Tidy Britain Group, Blue Flag, and Woodland Trust to name but a few.

Q2(e)

To gain both marks for each part of the question, named examples had to be given. Candidates simply forgot to do this in many instances, or just did not know one. A lot of answers related to demand rather than expectations and fashions, but if the examples were appropriate these were credited.

“There is a higher demand for comfort and luxury when travelling now. Virgin Trains have more legroom, comfy padded seats and free wi-fi on board now.”

Q3(a)

Most candidates were able to give examples of external pressures. Currency fluctuation, war/civil unrest and terrorism were the most common responses from the terms in the specification. Others gave examples such as recession/credit crunch; Iceland volcanic eruption or civil unrest in Egypt. All these were credited. However, “weather” on its own is incorrect, an example of extreme weather or a natural disaster such as a flood caused by it are better responses.

Q3(b)

Most candidates were able to score at least two marks as they were able to identify private sector organisations as being primarily for profit. Better responses, were able to link this to higher demand in school holidays and thus even higher prices, and related this to the domination of the big two. Weaker responses concentrated on the “parent having no choice” aspect, or simply described the price differences from the article.
A better response...

“Because they are private sector led, they are doing this to make more profit. These large organisations will research each others prices, as they are in competition with each other, so when one increases prices the other does too, to make even more money. Large companies like Thomson and Thomas Cook know the legislation and that a parent has little choice but to spend more money in the school holidays as that is when they can go. Lots

of people also prefer to travel with these big 2 as they are well known, they know their money is safe and they have a good reputation.”

Q3(c)

Generally a well answered question. Most candidates were able to identify that it was ‘a combination of flights and accommodation’ for one mark and most were also able to say ‘sold at an inclusive price’ or ‘put together by a tour operator’ or similar to gain both marks. However a minority of candidates described an all inclusive package (as in Jan 11). Candidates should not really give “food” as included, as many package holidays are self catering.

Q3(d)

The quality of answers varied greatly on this question. Many candidates focused solely on the use of the internet for bookings, and wasted space explaining the differences between independent holidays, direct bookings and booking with travel agencies. Others forgot that the question was about booking methods for package holidays, and explained how package holidays themselves have changed in terms of destinations offered and types. Better candidates, in addition to direct bookings on the internet, will have explained other changes such as call centres, tour operators and travel agencies having websites, and maybe even changes to payment methods. Very many candidates forgot that examples had been asked for, so limited marks available to them.

Parts of better responses...

“Travel agents are still used, but now there is internet and online booking systems, so customer tend to use these as it is quick and easy to find package holidays. This means that tour operators save money if they sell on the internet as they do not have to pay commission... However, small travel agents do not have websites, as they can’t afford them, so they have less of a chance of taking bookings this way, so may go bust.” (No examples used)

“Nowadays people are more likely to used call centres to book their holidays than go to the travel agent as they are open longer. Also you can now view Thomson on the TV where they advertise their deals and then you book them online rather than go to the travel agent like you used to.” (Example used)

Q3(e)(i)

Some candidates mixed up perishability with intangibility. Others gave unclear definitions such as “when it’s gone it’s gone”. Others concentrated their answers on “once you have been on the holiday it has finished, perished and you can’t have it again’ – not correct.

Much better responses can be seen below – candidates have used examples to good effect.

“Perishable is something that has a shelf life – it is a product that goes out of date or expires, e.g. a Valentines Weekend cannot be sold after 14th February.”

“Perishable means a product or service that can only be sold for a limited time, e.g. seats on tonight’s flight to Madrid cannot be sold tomorrow.”

Q3(e)(ii)

Candidates that did not know what perishability was scored no marks here. Others simply described what they could do and did not explain this. E.g. “they should have offers” or “reduce the prices” etc...

“Travel agents and tour operators could address this by reducing the price of the holiday, lowering it to the lowest they can to ensure they sell it, even if they did not make a profit, at least they would get some money rather than lose all the money for the holiday.”

Q4(a)

Most candidates were able to describe the role of Visit Britain. However, they were sometimes lacking in detail – this is a two mark question, so some detail would be expected. Answers such as “to promote Britain” would only get one mark; to achieve two they would need to add where and how, e.g. “to promote Britain to overseas tourists by advertising and having their website in different languages” is a much better response.

Similarly “to give information to tourists” would only be awarded 1 mark, they would need to add information about what e.g. “the attractions in the UK”, or “how to get to and around the UK” would give the extra mark.

Q4(b)

Candidates who had calculators were able to score all 4 marks for this question. The use of the “table” format seemed to make it easier to work out what to divide by what. Candidates should make sure that the decimal point is in the correct place, as some lost the mark for example in (ii) by putting £427.30 instead of £42.73.

Q4(c)

Analysis questions such as this are not usually very well answered. There always seems to be confusion about ‘nights’ , which some candidates took as ‘stay in at night’ and ‘visits’ which they took to be ‘day visits’. This led to some incorrect analysis. However, due to the guidance given in the question (bullet points) many did start to look at the factors which may have influenced the statistics, and suggested reasons for these –like in the part of the answer shown below....

“...In 2008, the spend per visit shot up to £333.33, this may be due to the recession hitting people in the UK, who then chose to go on more domestic holidays like to Cornwall to save money.”

Q4(d)

Many of the answers to this question took a very short term approach – i.e. when the actual filming is taking place – “seeing/meeting Johnny Depp” and “being in the film” type answers were common. Fewer candidates looked at this from a long term point of view, as in when the films are released, Cornwall’s appearance may attract more tourists.

“The types of tourist who may visit are niche market, i.e. film fans. They will want to see the places where the film was set. They may need to stay for longer than one night to see everything. Whilst in Cornwall they will spend money on accommodation and maybe souvenirs, so tourism income and numbers will increase. The visitors are mainly likely to be domestic tourist, though some may come from overseas as well as they have seen the views of St Ives in the film”

Q4(e)

There were some very interesting responses to this question, however not all were not clearly linked to film or TV coverage e.g. ‘London’. However, most candidates did identify famous destinations associated with Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, (New Zealand) Braveheart (Scotland) and very topically Essex – The only way is Essex.

Final Points

- Read the question carefully e.g. Q1(b) and Q1(c) ‘incoming tourist’; Q3(d) ‘booking methods’
- Look beyond the obvious – consider the customer in the stem, and their characteristics and needs e.g. Q1(e)
- Apply your answer to the case study, and consider its scale and location e.g. Q2(c)
- Give examples if the question asks for them (these may be local, national or international) e.g. Q2(e) and Q3(d)
- Look for how many marks the question is for e.g. Q4(a) – if more than one mark, then you will need an extended answer with more detail.

Grade Boundaries

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