

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2012

GCE Travel & Tourism (6991)
Paper 01

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Unit 5: Travelling Safely (6991)

General Comments

The paper followed the format of a question and answer booklet. Candidates were required to respond in the spaces provided. There were 7 questions and 90 marks were available.

The questions related only to the travel and tourism industry. All questions linked to the information under 'what you need to learn' in the qualification specification.

The questions were linked to the assessment objectives (AO's). Candidates therefore needed to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and skills in vocationally related contexts. Candidates needed to use appropriate research techniques to obtain information to analyse vocationally related issues and problems. Finally candidates were required to evaluate information to make reasoned judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations about vocationally related issues and problems.

Most candidates attempted all questions and consequently they picked up marks across the paper.

Question 1

Q1(a)

Most candidates scored 2-3 marks here. There were some good responses around licensing of pilots and ATOL bonding. However there was confusion evident over air traffic control responsibilities.

Q1(b)(i) & (ii)

The majority of candidates attempted this question, but very few candidates were able to gain full marks. Most gained four of the available marks.

Common responses included:

Q1(b)(i) 'They are both regulatory bodies and have powers over offenders they regulate.'

Q1(b)(ii) 'ABTA is a British union whereas IATA is international. ABTA focuses on travel agents in Britain and IATA focuses on things internationally.'

Both of these are descriptive answers rather than explaining the similarities and differences.

Q1(c)

This was a well answered question with all candidates gaining the two marks available for stating 'European Aviation Safety Agency.'

Question 2

Q2(a)(i)

This was a well answered question. Candidates were able to use the information provided to give the correct information.

Q2(a)(ii)

Again this question was generally well answered with most candidates gaining the full six marks available. All candidates were able to use the information required to obtain relevant information.

One excellent response:

'They all require to have a visa when travelling to Australian. As they're British citizens they can obtain types of electronic visas. They will need an eVisitor visa. This will allow them to stay in Australia for three months. They will all need to have one of their own each including those under 18 on their parents' passport. The eVisitor visa is linked to the passport number you use in your application and you must use the same passport to travel to Australia. If this has changed you will need to tell the department otherwise you may not be allowed on the flight.'

Q2(b)

Candidates often did not gain as many marks as expected here. There tended to be a lot of repetition between the points, for example 'swim where it is popular where you are not alone' then 'don't swim alone.' One candidate did not read the question properly and explained where you would put advice rather than what the advice should be.

Q2(c)

All candidates scored two marks here. They were able to identify malaria was spread by being bitten by an infected mosquito but did not then describe the process of infection after this; i.e. how the infection is transferred around the body.

Q2(d)

The majority of candidates were able to identify three symptoms of malaria and gained maximum marks here.

Question 3

Q3(a)

Responses to this question were generally weak. The majority of candidates gave descriptive responses often copying sections from the sources provided without further comment.

One such response:

'British Airways had to cancel flights from Heathrow and Gatwick. All the flights due to leave from Terminal 5 at Heathrow before 5pm had to be cancelled. British Airways staff had to tell passengers that they couldn't rearrange their flights as there wasn't enough check in desk worker. They gave advice to passengers to call the same BA rebooking number. The British Airports owners (BAA) said runways were closed as snow had to be cleared. Meanwhile Gatwick brought in a fleet of 47 snow ploughs and tractors and 150 extra staff to attempt to clear the ground and create safe take off. Gatwick and Global Infrastructure Partners(GIP) have pledged further upgrades over the next year to increase their fleet of snow ploughs. The government stepped in to help with flight chaos by allowing flights through the night.'

This is a typical level one response gaining two marks.

The response below did show more reasoning and gained marks from level two:

'In some ways it was dealt with well. For example Gatwick airport brought in a fleet of 47 snow ploughs and tractors and 150 extra staff to clear the ground and make it safe and Heathrow already had 66 tractors. BAA also deployed additional staff to provide comfort for customers. However thousands of passengers were left stranded. BA also cancelled all flights before 5pm and provided not much information for customers. British Airways also told customers to call the same BA rebooking number which was very busy. The government also allowed extra flights but they didn't realise it would be too dangerous. Overall I think the situation was dealt with badly.'

Question 4

Q4(a)

The majority of candidates scored well on this question. Most gained 6-8 marks.

One three mark answer:

Recommendation: 'Put restrictions on the amount of fishing that can be carried out.'

Justification: 'This would stop the sharks coming closer in shore in search of food.'

An additional line here explaining why the sharks near to come closer to shore to catch the fish would have meant the candidate scoring maximum marks.

One four mark answer:

Recommendation: 'Forbid customers and locals from putting meat in the sea near the beach to attract sharks.'

Justification: 'If they feed them sharks will associate the meat with humans which will have the consequence that they may eat swimmers. Sharks will also come closer to the beach where the feeding occurs.'

Q4(b)

This was a differentiator question. Many candidates did not fully understand the concept of short term and long term. However below is the response from one candidate who scored 7 out of the available 8 marks:

'It may affect it in the short term as people are aware of these shark attacks and don't want to go there now due to the fear of a shark attack. The publicity will stop when the shark is killed or goes away. In the long term people are likely to forget about it and publicity will stop and numbers of visitors will go up again, as people still want sun and sand and use of a swimming pool.'

Question 5

Q5(a)

Most candidates were able to score the mark available here. Both 'Sale of Goods/Services Act' and 'Trade Descriptions Act' were acceptable answers.

Q5(b)

Most candidates scored well here and gained 6-8 marks. Below is a response from a candidate who gained maximum marks:

'Recommendation: 'Make sure you park in a safe and well lit place which has security cameras nearby.'

Justification: 'This will put thieves off as they may be caught on camera or seen by other people as it is a lit up area which will put them off.'

Recommendation: 'Make sure your car is locked at all times and no valuables are visible in the car.'

Justification: 'This is to make sure the job is more difficult for thieves as they will take longer opening the car. Or if nothing in the car is seen as valuable it will put them off as it is not worth taking the risk of being caught.'

Question 6

Q6(a)

All candidates scored five or more marks here. They understood LOCATE and could understand the benefits of the scheme. One response from a candidate who scored 6 marks is shown below:

'1. If a customer uses this it is good because if there is a catastrophe happening in the foreign country where they are, the embassy would have the necessary information need to find them and help them as quickly as possible. The embassy would also know how to inform the relatives of the situation of this person.

2. LOCATE is also a good website because if British people are abroad when an emergency occurs they can put their circumstances on the website.'

Q6(b)

Despite a similar question appearing in past papers, this was not a well answered question. Medical assistance companies appear in the specification as one of the key organisations candidates should learn about. A couple of

candidates mentioned 'arrange repatriation' and they were awarded one mark.

Question 7

Q7(a)

All candidates except one understood that the incident described was a large scale emergency

Q7(b)

Most candidates scored at least two marks here. They appeared to have been taught well and knew what was expected. They were able to apply their explanation to the situation given.

Q7(c)

Overall this section of the question was answered well. Most candidates gave a detailed description of an emergency situation. The Icelandic volcano was an example used by many candidates. It was good to see such up to date research. A recent event is considered to be one that has occurred in the last five years. Candidates who use events older than this such as the tsunami in 2004 or the 9/11 terrorist attack tend to be vague in their descriptions.

Q7(d)

This question is challenging and is weighted AO4 which requires candidates to evaluate. The emphasis of the question also changed from previous series. Candidates should refer to a number of emergency situations and identify where lessons could be learned so that the travel and tourism industry can improve its response in similar situations in the future.

Some candidates referred solely to the situation they outlined in Q7(c) and mainly included further description of the event – see example below:

'The travel and tourism industry reacted poorly to this natural disaster as thousands of people were left stranded in the airport waiting to fly and others were stranded abroad hoping to fly home. Some of these people included teachers, policemen etc. so people back in the UK were suffering, for example children at school having no teachers and emergency services being very low on staff. A hotline was set up so people could phone the UK or in some cases ABTA to find out the whereabouts of loved ones or people wanting refunds etc.'

A better response that gained level two marks can be seen below:

'They could learn from these situations by doing several things. For example in the Icelandic ash cloud in May 14th 2010 which went across Europe, travel insurance sometimes did not pay out which gave a poor impression. The same thing happened in the tsunami. Insurance companies should revise their cover. To improve their response, tour operators should have specially trained staff who move in when these situations occur so they know what to do.'

PLEASE NOTE THAT CANDIDATES ARE EXPECTED TO RESEARCH TWO OR MORE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS THAT HAVE AFFECTED THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY. THEY SHOULD CONDUCT RESEARCH INTO AT LEAST TWO TOPICS FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST:

- WARS
- TERRORIST ATTACKS
- STRIKES
- MAJOR OUTBREAKS OF DISEASES
- NATURAL DIASTERS

In preparing candidates for the exam, centres are reminded to advise candidates to read the first page of instructions. Centres are advised to ask candidates to ensure that they have attempted all questions. Candidates must make sure they follow the instructions of the question i.e. describe, explain, assess, analyse etc.

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