



General Certificate of Education

Applied Business 8616/8619

BS12 Managing People

Report on the Examination

2007 examination - June series

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

General Comments

As the first June paper for BS12, this examination was successful in assessing candidates' abilities in the subject area. The marking scheme performed well and clearly discriminated between candidates.

Some centres are clearly teaching this unit very well. In such centres, the candidates have been schooled in the application, analysis and development of their answers. For an applied paper, this ability to apply ideas and concepts to the items is critical and is the major factor which leads to higher marks.

However, it is disappointing that, in several cases, candidates are obviously not aware of some key subject areas which are in the specification. This suggests that some candidates are not being taught the full syllabus in sufficient depth to be able to apply it within this applied examination. In this examination, this was true of some basic issues such as the roles and skills of management, where candidates failed to use the correct terminology or theoretical underpinnings.

Candidates were generally satisfactory in their use of trigger words in the questions. This ensured that their answers focused on the actual question(s) posed.

Virtually all candidates completed the paper in the time allotted and for those that did not manage this it appears to be have been subject knowledge gaps rather than time which defeated them.

Question One

- (a) Most candidates could identify two management roles and described them in context.
- (b) Many candidates only obliquely referred to how a matrix structure functions. Too many answers were, therefore, very generic and did not really address the central features of a matrix in this context, namely that a group of experts with different skills would jointly make the decision on how to protect the new plant.
- (c)(i) This question was answered well at a basic level by virtually all candidates. Many candidates also went on to explain why expansion would be causing a problem (Level 2), but only a comparatively small number of candidates moved on to analyse why this would have an impact on Sarah's ability to deliver her role.
 - (ii) A wide range of suggested solutions were presented for how Sarah could deal with the problems she was facing in managing the Trust. Most were sound and clearly focused on the central issues of management time usage and focus.

Question Two

- (a) Most candidates were able to talk sensibly about the type of skills which managers in this context would need, in addition, to technical skills. However, as with previous papers in this subject area however, several candidates failed to fulfil their potential as they described the same skill twice using different words.
- (b) This question acted as a good discriminator in that whilst most candidates could identify some of the factors which motivated the volunteers, their ability to then explain why

these factors were motivating and to apply appropriate theory to this analysis was more limited. Able candidates showed a sound grasp of theory and used a range of theories to support good answers.

- (c) In general, candidates did make the link between management style and volunteer motivation and commitment to the reserves. Fewer candidates were able to produce an evaluation as to why a consultative style would be successful, although there were some candidates who produced very mature, applied and complete answers which scored full marks.

Question Three

- (a) Most candidates could give a basic explanation of the type of decisions which the Senior and the Junior shelf stackers would be able to make. However, many are still confused by the use of terminology to describe decision making and too many believed that the ability of the Senior Shelf Stackers to decide how to restock the shelves amounted to a strategic decision.
- (b) This question produced very mixed responses. At one extreme, candidates failed to fully grasp the question focus and thus talked in very general terms about how staff may respond to delegation without any reference to Lucy's attitude. At the other end of the spectrum, some candidates were robust in looking not only at the staff response but also at why Lucy may have the concerns she expressed.
- (c) As the last question on the paper it was pleasing that most candidates had clearly not run out of time. Many candidates wrote two or more pages although many of these answers tended to wander off the central issues raised by the question. In general, candidates were able to identify a range of reasons why it may be difficult for the more senior staff to exercise authority. Weaker candidates need to develop their ability to take their answers further in terms of analysing why this is the case and the impact that it may have.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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