



General Certificate of Education

Applied Business 8616/8619

BS12 Managing People

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - January series

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General Comments

The paper and marking scheme performed well and clearly differentiated between candidates. Some exceptional candidates' scripts were seen this series evidencing that the candidates had a very clear grasp of the issues in the items, plus the ability to apply new ideas and analysis within their answers.

There is evidence that some centres are teaching this unit very well, with most candidates in these centres well able to tackle the full range of the unit specification. In these centres, the candidates have also clearly been schooled in analysis and the full development of their answers. These candidates also make firm conclusions supported by their analysis.

Weaker candidates need to pay more attention to the use of command words in the questions to ensure that their answers are focused on the actual question posed. For example, in question 2(c) candidates are asked for the impact on the **business**, but some candidates concentrated instead on the impact on the **staff** without referring to the business.

In the evaluative (12 mark) questions, candidates must focus on developing in-depth answers. In question 3(c) in particular, weaker candidates produced long lists of actions that the manager could take, but none of these were developed beyond a basic identification level. Inevitably, this affects their ability to score well in a levels of response mark scheme.

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 a management role and describe it although some talked about management styles rather than roles.
- (b) Most candidates were able to identify the basis of position power and most could relate this to Josh's position in the business. The weakness, in most answers was in not being able to explain why position on its own may not be enough to give him authority and thus why it was potentially a limitation.
- (c) This question allowed candidates to explore the skills Josh would have, and to think about how these would apply to his new role at the Hotel. Most candidates correctly identified some skills he had, but, in many cases, they needed to do more to explore both the positives of these skills, ie how they could they help him in his new role, as well as the limitations, ie why he might find it difficult to exercise these skills given the change of sector.
- (d) Candidates clearly like talking about autocratic managers and most found it easy to explain why this would cause problems to the staff and/or business.

Question Two

- (a) Many candidates correctly identified the type of decision which needed to be made although fewer were able to explain it within the context of the item which was needed for higher marks to be awarded.

- (b) Candidates generally identified some reasons why the part-time staff would be demotivated by the changes. For higher marks they needed to analyse why this would be the case, and the better candidates made good use of theory to support their answers although this was not required for Level 3.
- (c) This question was answered correctly at a basic level by virtually all candidates. Weaker candidates needed to move on beyond the impact on the staff to look at the impact on the business as asked within the question. Judgements for AO4 were generally weak and candidates need to demonstrate both more evaluation of the impact of the change as well as being prepared to make a firm judgement, ie will it help the business or not.

Question Three

- (a) Many candidates only gave a basic description of the leadership style adopted by Sarah. They needed to go further to obtain high marks by explaining whether this was appropriate to the management of the climbing instructors, and if so why. Some candidates failed to answer the question by writing instead about the instructors at the council centre.
- (b) Candidates had mixed views about whether the flat structure would be suitable for the council owned centre – which is fine. Most could explain some of the features of a flat structure, but only the better candidates really got to grips with exploring how the council centre staff would respond to a flat structure. There were some very strong answers amongst the best candidates, showing a real understanding of the way that people respond to organisational structures.
- (c) As a large evaluative question it was expected that candidates would identify one or a few ideas on how Sarah could make the centre run effectively and develop these fully. Unfortunately, many candidates produced a list of many different actions which could be taken (10 or more in some cases), but failed to really explain or develop any of them fully. Candidates need to recognise that in evaluative questions they need to not only identify an idea, but to also explain why this would work and then evaluate its likelihood of success.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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