



**General Certificate of Education (A-level) Applied
January 2012**

Leisure Studies

LS09

**(Specification
8641/8643/8646/8647/8649)**

Unit 9: Working in the People Business

Report on the Examination

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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General Comments

What was done well

There was much evidence that centres had helped to improve the quality of their candidates' answers by studying the advice given in past Reports on the Examination and scrutinising mark schemes.

What was not done so well

It is admirable that candidates have practised past papers but they should not respond in an exam only by remembering and repeating answers to questions they have tackled before. Candidates must look closely at the wording of the questions set. For example, question 5(c) did not ask for the contents of a contract but for reasons why it is important.

Answers on appraisal were limited by most candidates to simply reviewing recent performance rather than the motivating aspect of looking at how an employee might like their career to develop within the context of the organisation.

Question 1

Mostly, candidates scored well on this question because they demonstrated understanding of flexible working and knew that organisations could refuse flexibility to their employees if it would hurt the business. On maternity leave, candidates were not penalised for making errors in the length of time or amounts of pay that were allowed for such leave since these figures have been subject to frequent change by governments. Even so, some candidates gave accurate details about the rules.

Question 2

It was pleasing that more or less all our candidates knew the meaning of these three types of employment. However, the task was to suggest particular situations in which each would be a helpful form of employment for the organisation. Some answered this generally, focusing too much on the characteristics of the employment type, rather than explaining the suitability in the specific situation of, for example, volunteers at a museum or agency workers at a festival or a self-employed person running an aerobics class in a leisure centre.

Question 3

Most candidates correctly gave the difference between part-time and full-time, though some failed to explain it clearly enough to gain the marks. Candidates also knew the main advantages for organisations of receiving application forms rather than CVs. They were less assured on the content and purpose of a job description, though it was noticeable that fewer candidates than in previous years confused person specification with CV.

Question 4

Even though this question asked for *specific qualifications*, candidates continue to write generally about, for example, 'needing a first aid qualification' rather than writing specific details like 'the 3-day First Aid At Work course with St John Ambulance which is valid for three years'. Centres are reminded that candidates should study at least two jobs so that they may choose one which gives scope to answer the question set. It would not be easy to gain the marks here by choosing a basic job that did not require any qualifications or experience. Some candidates chose a job outside the leisure sector, such as Teacher (education) or Shop Manager (retail), which did not fit the demands of the question.

Question 5

Virtually every candidate scored at least some marks on the advantages of advertising online but more credit went to those who found a wider range of advantages and made a *discussion*. They might have argued that the advantages of the internet were not as great as they at first appear.

Candidates needed to see that there are two sides to a contract: the entitlements and obligations of both the employee and the employer. A contract is an agreement that has legal force, which also applies to the outline of certain procedures such as giving notice or disciplinary steps. Some candidates gave a list of contents in a typical contract but that does not answer the question posed. Other candidates were probably thinking only of footballers' contracts in their answers where a long contract may be necessary to bind top players to clubs so that they do not seek a better offer elsewhere. In many temporary leisure jobs, this situation is not very likely to occur.

Question 6

Too often candidates looked at appraisal from the employee's point of view alone and what would drive them to achieve, without awareness of the organisation's needs. Appraisal reminds employees of the job-holder's role in the context of the organisation's goals or of developments in its activities and working relationships with colleagues. Answers seemed to focus solely on performance rather than on what an employee would like to do in future, developing their skills or their career direction. Thus some candidates confused appraisal with performance-related pay and other financial incentive methods.

Question 7

Candidates had a good understanding of what a panel interview is and of appropriate strategies to ensure that the best candidate for the job would be appointed. Thus, a discussion about the importance of criteria in the person specification and of how preconceptions, bias, inaccurate judgement and partiality are avoided would be likely to gain good marks. Detailed descriptions of the procedures for running an interview did not score well until they focused on strategies to ensure that the best person for the job is selected. Candidates were deliberately told that the applicants had been shortlisted and narrowed down to five interviewees, so it was not necessary to go any further back in the recruitment procedure.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates

Candidates answers are improved when they have practised past questions, studied the mark schemes, and are guided by the advice contained in Reports on the Examination. However, it is important to look very closely at the exact wording of new questions rather than assume that they will require the same content as answers to those previously practised.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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