



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

Leisure Studies

LS04

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

Unit 4: Leisure Facilities

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

All candidates managed to complete all parts of the paper. There were no problems with time and no candidates appeared to have any problems understanding any of the questions.

What was particularly good

- Questions were read carefully and generally candidates addressed them well, responding sensibly to the command words.
- Case studies had been chosen well and were used in a relevant way to answer the questions.
- There was very little evidence of groups of students having over-prepared their answers together before going in to the examination. Instead there was some good evidence of individual students showing initiative in developing material in an individual way that suited their own abilities.

What was not so good

- Several candidates did not seem to have studied the information about Ironbridge Museums as carefully as would have been wished. Their understanding of the map on page 3 of the Insert was not good and they had not developed a 'feel' for the nature of the leisure activities provided in the area.
- When asked to compare two facilities most candidates produced rather formulaic answers which went through two lists of points. They were not able to draw clear, overall conclusions which got to the heart of the differences between their two choices.

Assignment Task A

For question **01** most candidates chose to write about the reception area or the area where the facility's main leisure activity takes place. Most then managed to write competent answers. The best answers were produced by candidates who really understood the concept of 'design'. The weaker candidates limited their descriptions to what was there, without developing the idea that this could be affected by conscious attempts to design features to meet customer requirements.

There were no rubric infringements in question **02**. All candidates successfully followed the instruction to choose a **different** area. Weaker candidates concentrated on the needs of staff when they were off duty – at breaks and before and after work. The better answers wrote about how the needs of staff were met whilst they were actually working; in other words the answers were applied to the vocational aspects of the subject.

Assignment Task B

All answers for question **03** were reasonable but none really understood how the map could be used to work out how distance and time of travel were related, so as to allow the family to travel to the area and back in a single day and still allow ample time for leisure activities.

Question **04** answers showed the same problems as question **03**. Candidates tended to list road and motorway numbers but not to link distance and time. The better answers were aware that visits from the more distant parts of the country would probably have to involve overnight stays.

Similar questions to question **05** have been asked on past papers. The answers this time were generally better. Candidates and their teachers appeared to have learnt from past experiences and from previous Reports on the Examination. Most answers discussed both the nature of the area in which the facility was located *and* the nature of the transport links. The best answers also discussed possible sources of competition for the chosen facility.

Assignment Task C

Questions on fire safety and provision for customers with special needs have usually produced good answers in the past and this paper was no different. In answering question **06** most candidates gave a very good account of the availability of things like fire doors, fire extinguishers, alarms and so on. Better answers also discussed the training provided for staff to cope with fires. However, to gain the best marks there needed to be some knowledge and understanding of fire regulations, as mentioned in the question. Only the most able and well-prepared candidates seemed able to make relevant references to the regulations.

For question **07**, again, all candidates had good knowledge about this topic. Reasonable marks could be gained by answers which were limited to a single type of disability, but the better answers usually referred to a range of special needs. However, the aspect of the question that really differentiated was the need to *compare* two facilities. Although all candidates followed the instruction to write about two facilities only the best were able to write meaningful comparisons. A majority of answers simply provided two lists of the provisions in the facilities without developing the comparisons in any depth or detail.

Assignment Task D

Question **08** was generally done well. Candidates realised that they needed to explain what was there *before* refurbishment as well as what was done *during* the refurbishment process.

‘Evaluate’ is generally regarded, by examiners, as being a high level command word. However, in this case the majority of candidates understood it well and wrote reasonable or good answers for question **09**. They generally followed the advice of, first establishing the criteria by which to judge the success or otherwise of the refurbishment, and then going on to discuss how well each criterion had been met. Obviously it is difficult for students to gain access to quantitative data about aspects such as costs and visitor numbers before and after refurbishment, but most had managed to work out how well the changes were working from the point of view of customers, or staff, or both.

Whereas question **09** showed good research and understanding by the candidates, the final question **10** produced rather disappointing results. In the time available for preparation very few of the candidates had developed much sympathetic understanding of the nature of the Ironbridge renovation project. There were very few references to the creation of an educational facility and almost none to the conservation aspect of the work or to the economic renewal aspect of the redevelopment. This meant that the benefits of the refurbishment were not considered in any detail. Problems were discussed in slightly more depth but even this discussion tended to look at the generic problems of converting old buildings and not at the specific problems of restoring old industrial buildings and transport infrastructure. This seemed to be a missed opportunity.

General conclusion

Over the years that this specification has been running there has been a steady improvement in the general quality of the examination answers. It is clear that candidates have planned and produced good folders of work on the leisure facilities that they have studied. Over time the vocational nature of this material has shown clear development. Supervising teachers and the managers of the facilities with whom they have worked are to be congratulated on this – as of course are the candidates.

The other area of marked improvement has been on candidates’ ability to focus their answers clearly on the precise demands of the questions. The planning and writing of answers have both shown clear development, and this has meant that the marking of answers has become a more satisfying experience over the years. The candidates for this exam have always taken their tasks very seriously and done their very best, but their answers have become better focused as time has gone by.

The examiners involved in this paper feel sure that those candidates who have moved on to work in the leisure industry have taken with them a critical understanding of many aspects of that industry which have been very valuable to their employers and to the young people themselves. The diligence and application shown by many of the candidates for this paper must surely be very valuable when applied in a vocational context.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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