



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

What was done well

1. Most candidates paid good attention to the wording of the question and carried out the task set. An exception to this commonly occurred when the question asked them to “assess”, so centres should give candidates guidance in how to write answers that assess (for example) advantages and disadvantages.
2. Candidates used their time well, with very few questions not being attempted and they earned marks straight away by getting to the point of the question. However, where additional pages were used, this seldom resulted in many more marks.

What was not done so well

1. Candidates become confused about the content and purpose of contracts, job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements. The difference between each of these documents needs to be carefully distinguished.
2. Some candidates ignored instructions to choose a job which was part of the leisure industry. Candidates should choose a suitable leisure job in advance of the examination and prepare carefully by studying the duties and requirements of the job.
3. Similarly, some candidates didn't follow instructions when the question asks for one item.

Question 1

While many candidates needed to be more specific about the difficulties faced by managers, they did focus their answers on the theme park manager, with only a very small number writing about difficulties for the employee. There were a large number of factors that could be taken into account and those who scored highest wrote about finding enough staff of the right calibre to offer a safe and efficient service to customers. Some candidates got bogged down in describing the theme park's pattern of opening without saying much about the difficulties it would cause.

Question 2

Nearly all candidates had general understanding of the requirements of equal opportunities legislation but they needed to show some specialist knowledge such as correctly named legislation and how it applied.

A sizeable minority of candidates misunderstood application forms, apparently thinking that organisations would appoint after looking at an application form rather than using it to shortlist the job applicant to be interviewed in person. As with question 8, very few candidates made an *assessment* of using application forms (for example, “this is an important advantage because...”).

Candidates knew reasons why the job of pool assistant was a platform for a career in leisure but general reasons were not accepted; credit was given only for stating that the job taught specific skills or gave experience of a particular aspect of work.

Question 3

Candidates did not often answer well on the strengths and weaknesses of staff appraisal. A significant number of candidates simply did not understand the phrase and took it to mean 'giving praise'. It was probably easiest to give a balanced answer about the strengths and weaknesses of financial incentives where there were a number of clear points to be made on both sides. Very few candidates evaluated the importance of those strengths and weaknesses to reach the highest marks.

In both parts of question 3 answers should not have been general but should have borne the characteristics of the leisure industry in mind. It is, for example, important to motivate staff to ensure that people's recreational activities are not spoiled by unhelpful or miserable employees. Another example would be that it is often difficult to measure the work of a leisure job in a way that tallies with targets and an appropriate incentive.

Question 4

Candidates seem to be well-informed about the Working Time Regulations and the majority scored well on this question. They were not penalised for getting numbers (like 48 hours) slightly wrong and were rewarded for demonstrating the principles of the regulations.

Question 5

Candidates needed, firstly, to choose a suitable job, yet some candidates continue to choose jobs which are arguably not part of the leisure industry. They also needed to choose a personal quality, not an acquired skill.

Candidates needed to show why the personal quality was important in that job. Too often candidates seemed to forget that leisure is for customers to enjoy, and so the aim of the job is to promote enjoyment. Some answers could have been true of any job. They explained in general terms why the quality was important in a workplace without relating their answer to the duties of the particular job in the leisure industry.

Question 6

A wide range of grievances were offered, including health and safety and discrimination, although these would be complicated by being subject to law. Candidates answered best on promotion, working conditions, work relations, bullying, new working practices and organisational change.

Surprisingly, a few candidates had no idea about a grievance procedure and guessed that it was connected with time off work for employees who had been bereaved. It is disappointing that some candidates are seemingly entering an A2 level examination without even covering basic terms in the specification.

Answers to 6(b) needed to include *some* explanation. Candidates sometimes expressed the consequences for an organisation of not dealing with a grievance properly in over-dramatic ways. They were going off the point, and perhaps being unrealistic, by extending the situation to a company going out of business. On the other hand they described well the tense feeling that might exist among fellow workers as an undercurrent of discontent. Answers from the best candidates were expected to include terms such as 'tribunal', 'constructive dismissal', 'compensation', and use them correctly.

Question 7

Most candidates chose jobs which were part of the leisure industry.

Candidates were mostly able to state what a job description would include, but sometimes confused it with a contract or with recruitment advertisement. Candidates scored well when filling out the person specification in question 7(b). However, the names of specific qualifications were required, as was a description of what an employee would be doing and for how long as part of their previous experience.

Question 8

On self-employment, candidates were mostly able to get beyond the obvious advantages of being your own boss and making your own decisions. Answers needed to achieve a balance, for example by comparing being able to making your own choices about when you work with the need to chase business and therefore work when the customer demanded it. The best answers reflected on the job satisfaction of being self-employed in a preferred leisure area, using a named job to illustrate it.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates

1. Centres should check that their candidates understand the difference between documents like job descriptions, person specifications, contracts and job advertisements.
2. Candidates should be encouraged not to submit additional pages for plans and small amounts of work which are unlikely to achieve them any additional marks.
3. Centres should advise candidates to choose and study two suitable jobs which are unarguably within the leisure industry. Similarly, explaining through examples from industry or retail is not relevant.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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