



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

**Leisure Studies**

**LSPA**

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

**LSPA: Portfolio Units**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **General Comments**

This year's examination series provided a range of portfolio units ranging from excellent to satisfactory. It is apparent from the high standard of work submitted that centres and candidates have benefited from the range and variety of advice offered. It is however important that candidates and centres maintain the depth of evidence required by the specification and not lapse into using bullet points or one or two sentence sections. These do not show the applied knowledge and understanding needed in the subject.

It was good to see the wide range of research taking place at A2 level for Current Issues, Leisure and the Media and of course Leisure in Action. It always is enjoyable to read such individual work.

The sourcing of research was very consistent, with quotations followed by their own analysis and comment.

Internal moderation was evident for most centres and was very useful to assist the external moderation process. It is a practice to be recommended if there is more than one teacher delivering the course. Unfortunately there were some centres which still do not annotate the work to show where AO evidence has been met. If this could be carried out consistently then it should result in accurate application of the assessment evidence grid.

The specification is designed so that candidates can use the knowledge gained from the AS single award to underpin the knowledge and understanding required for the other units in the award. It was apparent that candidates used this as a basis to complete other units by building on the knowledge gained.

Any group work needs to be documented by individual analysis and evaluation by the candidate or it may result in work being referred to malpractice as it is impossible for the moderator to confirm individual contributions.

If teaching staff are in any doubt about how to proceed with a unit or part of a unit, please do not hesitate to contact your portfolio adviser.

## ***LS01 – The Leisure Industry Today***

Most candidates attempted to define the Leisure Industry; however some candidates still just downloaded definitions of leisure without adding their own understanding. There was a lack of examples in enough depth to show the range, scale and importance of the industry, in some cases. It was pleasing to see that the data being used is now both relevant and recent allowing candidates to fully explore the importance and range of the industry. It is essential for candidates to use data to assess the scale and importance of the industry if the moderator is to award the top of mark band 3 and mark band 4.

On the whole sectors were well covered and the inter-relationships covered in greater depth however the range of examples could have been wider. Candidates showed detailed research into Europe and its leisure industry but in many cases the comparison between the European leisure industry and that of the UK was limited. Candidates used data for participation trends and financial importance in their portfolios but failed to make connections. It is still apparent that candidates find it difficult to compare the Leisure industry in the UK with that of Europe. Most candidates still described the European leisure industry.

Current developments within the industry need to be substantiated using facts and figures. It was pleasing to read that many candidates covered all the components of the industry but the predictions made must be more specific and evidence based.

The impact different market segments have on the industry needs to be evaluated in terms of access, participation and barriers rather than treated as two separate sections of the task.

Evaluation is always difficult but candidates had developed different ways in covering this task. It was generally carried out well in this series. Frequently the candidate did not refer to the quality of the predictions and conclusions they had made about the industry and this prevented higher mark bands from being achieved. The predictions also need to be referenced to the reliability of the source. The weakest candidates provided only a description of the source.

### **What was particularly good**

The best candidates provided their own definitions of the leisure industry as well as those from a variety of texts.

It was very pleasing to see the quality of work produced at the higher mark bands. Candidates had used data effectively to show the scale and importance of the industry in order to meet the demands of mark band 4.

Some candidates made detailed comparisons of the UK leisure industry with that of Europe.

### **What was not so good**

Many candidates did not base their predictions for future trends on data and therefore predictions for the industry were simplistic.

The analysis of the key factors and their influence on access, participation and barriers must be based on the effect this has on the industry for the different market segments.

### **Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates**

- Time needs to be spent on developing a definition of the leisure industry.
- Candidates would benefit from practicing effective comparison skills.
- Time is spent analysing the effects of the different market segments on the various components of the leisure industry.
- Evaluation of sources needs to be an on-going process so that candidates have the information rather than trying to provide the evidence for AO4 retrospectively.

### ***LS03 – Getting It Right in the Leisure Industry***

Most centres have ensured that one organisation was studied.

The staff handbook was more detailed this series and presented in a suitable format. However, attention still needs to be paid to the links between laws, acts and codes and the particular sector of the industry being considered. Relevance to the organisation needs to be shown and how these help ensure the health, safety and security of staff and customers. In many cases examples of the risk assessment was included but not all included advice on how to carry out the risk assessment. The examples of best practice linked handbooks to that of the role of a new manager.

The key quality control and management systems were described and assessed as to how these are used effectively to maintain standards within the chosen organisation. Candidates showed how the various quality control and management systems could be used to maintain standards by providing suitable detail for higher marks bands. The weaker candidates still provided the theory of the management systems but did not provide sufficient examples as to how the organisation used these to deal with customer records, booking/reservation systems, membership schemes, ticketing systems and/or customer complaints.

On the whole business systems were covered in more detail with examples being used to meet the range required by the specification. The best candidates covered these aspects to analyse the business systems used and show how effective the impact of technology is in supporting these systems.

The key aspects of marketing were well covered. There were some very detailed examples of analysis of SWOT and PEST for individual organisations and there was some analysis of how these might affect consumer awareness, sales and take-up. This is a section of the specification where primary research can greatly assist the candidate in evaluating the impact of marketing.

### **What was particularly good**

The best candidates produced very detailed handbooks in an appropriately presented and accurate format, showing how the laws could be applied to the organisation. The choice of organisations in general allowed candidates to gain information on all aspects of the procedures used in the leisure industry.

### **What was not so good**

Some candidates still did not apply the risk assessment to the chosen organisation.

- A small number of centres provided the handbook in an A5 format. This seemed to restrict the content of the handbook making the application to staff and customers limited.
- The risk assessment procedures need to be accompanied with appropriate advice as to how to carry it out.
- This is a unit that benefits from primary research that compliments the information supplied by the organisation. Many candidates did not carry out additional research.
- AO4 candidates need to evaluate the key aspects of marketing in terms of sales, take up and consumer awareness. This is the main focus of the section. This would provide an opportunity to carry out primary research.

## ***LS05 – Lifestyles and Life Stages***

Care should be taken when recording AO2 and AO3 on candidate record forms.

The government statistics on the health of the nation proved to be extremely useful in meeting the assessment criteria for AO1 but many candidates covered aspects of sexual health, alcohol, obesity and the use of drugs to the exclusion of other issues. It would be advantageous for candidates to look at the geographical spread of aspects of health rather than just the theoretical causes. There is a significant difference in life expectancy within the UK. Some aspects of technology were looked at in terms of the impact on peoples' health.

A detailed analysis of the implications of the current health status of the population in terms of current lifestyles and age structure on the leisure industry generally lacked depth. The implications for the leisure industry were often vague. Some good practice was shown in linking primary and secondary research but this was not fully expanded to link with the leisure industry as a whole.

Many candidates provided a report on leisure activities in an area rather than a script. Unfortunately it was not always clear the ways in which this was linked to different lifestyles and frequently did not cover the entire range of activities. The benefits of the different activities were not always explained or related to the different aspects of health. If the presentation is given on this task then it would be appropriate to add a witness statement to show further evidence of coverage. Centres could assist candidates by including evidence to support the detail of applied knowledge possibly through including a witness statement. Weaker candidates restricted the report to sporting aspects of leisure rather than exploring the full range of the leisure industry. It must be stated that candidates need to ensure that there is sufficient evidence to confirm the mark awarded.

AO4 required evaluation of the leisure facilities and activities in the chosen locality and how these impact on lifestyles and life stages. Unfortunately this was not always completed in sufficient detail to make appropriate and realistic recommendations for improvement.

### **What was particularly good**

Candidates had researched the locality quite thoroughly and could make judgments about the range of leisure activities and analyse if these were sufficient.

### **What was not so good**

Candidates did not link the leisure activities to the different lifestyles or to the different aspects of health. Candidates with limited research found it difficult to evaluate the access and opportunities for different lifestyles and life stages and as a consequence could only make limited recommendations for the improvement of leisure facilities in the locality. The "improve health" or "of benefit to health" did not show applied understanding and analysis and in some cases was missing entirely from the reports.

Centres are reminded that summer 2012 was the final availability for the double award portfolio units.

## ***LS06 – Leisure Organisations***

This portfolio unit requires a comparison of two leisure facilities throughout all of the AO's. Some candidates restricted this comparison to AO1 and therefore could not be accredited in the upper mark bands for the remainder of the tasks.

Many candidates made a good attempt at comparing two organisations in terms of facilities, funding, location and access. Aspects of the customer base were frequently less detailed.

AO2 required a detailed report on all employment opportunities showing jobs within the organisations and a realistic appraisal of progression. However attention to the detail of entry qualifications and level of employment were not always clearly made. In some cases candidates restricted this investigation to two or three job roles only rather than considering all jobs.

AO2 and AO3 still relied heavily on theory with weak application of the systems to the chosen organisation.

AO4 key aspects of marketing was generally described in detail; however there was frequently little evaluation as to how this affected consumer awareness, sales and take up. Evaluation was still general and did not rely on data to prove its effectiveness, meaning that candidates could not meet the assessment criteria for mark band 4.

Centres are reminded that summer 2012 was the final availability for the double award portfolio units.



## ***LS07 – Fitness Training for Sport***

In most candidate's work the knowledge, skills and understanding of the components of physical fitness was detailed, but reference was not always made to show how these can improve performance and linked to evidence of understanding of the principles of training. The best candidates linked these fully to examples from different sports.

Research into and analysis of methods of fitness training was clearly carried out by most candidates. It is essential that the candidate describes the observed session and then analyse and evaluate the session in terms of the fitness training methods used. When planning and assisting in a fitness session, most candidates' showed an understanding of the importance of making it time related but many did not consider the needs of the participants. Safety factors were not always related to the session.

Witness statements are a valuable tool for confirming assessment providing they are specific to the candidate and not generic. This also assists in making judgments such as the session had taken place, health and safety were properly assessed, the candidate's skill in communication and that the needs and welfare of all participants were catered for and understood.

The evaluation of an individual using a minimum of two measures of fitness was reasonably well done. The base line for fitness was established but candidates still found it difficult to identify goals and make specific recommendations for improvement.

### **What was particularly good**

The best candidates had a detailed fitness session, which was time related and the supporting witness statements by staff were equally specific. Many candidates had recorded the base line assessment for the evaluation of the individual and then clearly showed that this was a starting point for progression. Goals were identified and results confirmed that fitness could be improved.

### **What was not so good**

There is still a great deal of theory for the components of physical fitness which was not supported by examples to show how these can be used to improve performance.

The analysis of how each activity was chosen for that individual or team is needed for the candidate to meet the requirements of the higher mark bands.

The candidate's own session must be time related together with corroborating evidence that the methods of communication were appropriate and that the session was under control. Without this information it is difficult to confirm centre marks. A witness statement is essential to support the moderation process.

In planning the session candidates must consider the group they are working with in terms of age, level of fitness and any special consideration required for an individual/s taking part. It is essential for the candidates to add specific evidence that they have looked at the group and all the safety aspects possibly through a risk assessment.

Centres are reminded that summer 2012 was the final availability for the double award portfolio units.

## **LS08 – Leisure in Action**

Leisure in Action is a popular unit. Once again candidates have chosen to run a wide variety of projects included fundraising to ensure the project can take place. Teaching staff found a number of different ways to document the work of the candidates and this is extremely valuable for moderators to confirm standards. The summary of event options was interesting and detailed, providing candidates with sufficient information on which to make a choice of final project. It was clear that in most cases a full feasibility study on these event options had been carried out prior to embarking on the chosen project. Business plans for the project frequently needed to be in more detail. Candidates should use the specification as a checklist. Records of the candidate's own contribution varied and the more detailed allowed sound judgments to be made about the issues of deadlines and contribution made. The candidates that had prepared methods of evaluation in advance of the project were able to make realistic recommendations for improvement.

It was disappointing that in a few cases the projects had not run mainly due to external influences; however, in a minority of these this appeared to be through the lack of motivation on the part of the candidates. Although the unit is designed not to disadvantage candidates where circumstances outside their control mean that the project has to be cancelled, cancelling due to lack of motivation will prevent candidates gaining assessment from the higher mark bands.

### **What was particularly good**

The range of events which was undertaken by the candidates.

The variety of research carried out in order to make the final choice of project. The best candidates produced a full business plan.

The manner in which the best candidates linked theory to good practice, such as the roles assigned to team members and SMART targets being set.

Market research into the customers and their needs was effectively carried out.

The use of time lines or Gantt charts to show time scales was very effective.

### **What was not so good**

The business plan was not always presented in sufficient detail to award higher mark bands. The requirements of the business plan as outlined in the specification cannot be addressed in one or two sentences per section.

Health and safety issues need to be considered fully by candidates, including the laws and codes of practice that apply to the event.

The research required for this unit is two-fold. The first section researches the options for a possible event. Small or mini business plans need to be produced for each option. Many candidates still did not provide this depth of detail and therefore justification for the choice of project was limited. Once the choice of project has been made then a full and detailed business plan is researched including contingency options. Evidence of this research can be shown in the candidate's personal diary for the event, minutes of meetings etc.

All work submitted must be easily accredited to the individual candidate and detailed in order for the moderator to confirm witness statement evidence from the tutor. All work should be in the individual candidate's portfolio and it is not appropriate to submit a group folder of evidence to cover AO3. The moderator will not be able to confirm centre assessment and may result in work being awarded a lower mark band.

### **Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates**

- Candidates need to research a range of project options in detail to be able to discuss and justify their choice. This should be in the form of a mini-business plan for each project option.
- Ensure that candidates present their business plan in a professional manner.

- Ensure that candidates keep detailed records of their involvement in the project rather than a narrative of what the team has undertaken.
- Evaluation of their and the team's role could take place at the same time as the team meetings, in order to assist with the requirements for evaluation in AO4 and to make recommendations for improvement.
- Witness statements must not be generic to the event but specific to the candidate and their role.

## **LS10 – Current Issues**

It was again a pleasure and a privilege to read the range of topics for current issues covered by candidates. The investigation was frequently very detailed and showed that the candidates had developed their research skills to a high standard.

The style and the quality of the presentation are not required to be tested by the unit and therefore teachers should not base their assessment on these. The assessment should be based on the quality and depth of the current issue being researched and how it meets the assessment evidence grid. It is regrettable that some candidates did not supply additional evidence to support the power-point presentation. This limited the mark that could be awarded.

The unit is designed to allow individual candidates to investigate a current issue of choice. It is more difficult to assess individuality when it has been taught as a class exercise.

It is essential that teaching staff advise candidates on the breadth of the topic in order for this to be realistic in terms of content, time and depth of research available. Many candidates chose broad topics and found it difficult to meet the requirements of the assessment evidence grid, for example, drugs in sport, where all sports must be considered as opposed to the effect of drug taking on athletics in the UK. It may be appropriate for candidates to pose a hypothesis to prove or disprove.

When researching the topic, candidates need to keep an on-going record of the sources used and rejected for the different AOs. Candidates need to consider the validity of such information and how it allows them to present balanced points of view.

It is not sufficient for AO4 to restate the positive and negative issues but to evaluate the effect of the issue in both the short and the long term.

## **What was particularly good**

The range of topic covered both national and local concerns. The best candidates used a wide range of research from both primary and secondary sources. This provided them with a wider perspective on the issue and allowed consideration of the stances taken by the various stakeholders.

Most candidates could discuss the possible consequences of the issue and consider these in terms of short and long term effects. The best candidates considered any conflicting factions and commented on possible effects.

## **What was not so good**

Many candidates found it difficult to link their current issue with the leisure industry today. Many of the links made were tenuous at best and in some cases just ignored. This meant that candidates could not be awarded mark band 4 which requires this being considered in some detail.

Many candidates did not look at opposing viewpoints, this could have been achieved by primary research from a cross section of the population and then comparing the results with the views expressed in the different sources being used.

The identification of sources and their reasons for use and/or rejection was not always detailed and precise.

The justification of choice of resources and the reasons for the use and or rejection caused some candidates issues as they had failed to consider issues of validity or presentation of a balanced viewpoint. A bibliography is not sufficient evidence.

### **Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates**

- As facilitators teachers should review the candidate's action plan carefully to avoid any candidates looking at an issue that does not relate to the leisure industry. Tourism topics are not relevant in this context.
- Discussions may help candidates understand the links between the different aspects of the leisure industry. The use of the range from LS01 may be an appropriate starting point for what is appropriate to the topic.
- Assist candidates to develop a log of resources acquired and why some have been used and others rejected.

### ***LS11 – Leisure and the Media***

There was an interesting variety of large scale events investigated in this unit again ranging from local to national. This unit is in two distinct sections with AO1 and AO2 comprising of the investigation into the role of the media in the chosen event and AO3 and AO4 the wider influence of the media on the leisure industry and our use of leisure time.

It is helpful if candidates complete the task AO by AO in order to meet the requirements of the assessment evidence grid. In cases where this suggestion had not been followed, candidates failed to understand the effect of the media on either the leisure industry as a whole or on how leisure time is spent.

AO3 and AO4 showed both primary and secondary research in order to meet the evidence required by the higher mark bands. In order to provide a comprehensive evaluation of a full range of impacts of the media on people's leisure time, it would be desirable to test national statistics against a spread of population in the local area. This would assist candidates by making judgements as to whether the impacts are realistic and appropriate. Some candidates restricted their research to aspects of sport only rather than the whole leisure industry as expected by the assessment evidence grid.

### **What was particularly good**

The candidates who met the assessment evidence in mark bands 3 and 4 looked at the ways in which the media had influenced aspects of the chosen event such as audience size and hours or column inches covered, providing detailed data. This enabled them to make the complex links between the media to the chosen event and its influence on the wider leisure industry.

The best candidates' related the income earned by personalities from sponsorship to the specific event and showed the increase in advertising and sponsorship over the time the event had been running.

### **What was not so good**

Legislation was considered but acts and codes of practice quoted but in most cases not applied to the ways in which they could be applied to the chosen event.

Many candidates used the theory of advertising and sponsorship and applied that to their chosen event but did not provide data as to how income can be generated and increased.

The choice of large scale event also influenced the depth of study that candidates could produce. The 2012 Olympic Games is a very difficult event as it has not yet been staged although media coverage is increasing. Candidates can only speculate on the role of the media and cannot show audience size, column inches etc. Therefore links can only be speculative at this point of time.

Centres are reminded that summer 2012 was the final availability for the double award portfolio units.

## ***LS13 – Leisure in the Community***

Leisure in the community is a wide topic which candidates interpreted in various ways. The specification requires specific information as to what is there at the present time. A map of the locality showing the location of leisure facilities is extremely useful. Many candidates failed to consider the wide nature of the leisure industry and restricted their portfolio to sport related leisure. The full range as previously studied in LS01 should be considered. Candidates who studied a large area such as a county were at a distinct disadvantage. It is better to restrict the study to a locality such as a town.

The developmental process to its current pattern of provision requires candidates to investigate the growth of the area and planning that has taken place. The investigation as to whether these are adequate or not needs to rely on the use of local planning data, demographic, social and economic profiles, as well as primary research and/or a needs analysis.

The local and national initiatives need to be related to the specific locality as not all are relevant in this context. This will provide candidates with specific information to analyse as to its effects on the local community.

An evaluation of any proposals should be based on both primary and secondary research.

### **What was particularly good**

Candidates considered the effect of any proposals in depth by considering local views.

The localities were defined and the best units included maps to show detail of the provision of leisure.

Candidates were able to make an assessment as to whether the facilities in the locality were adequate or not. Data was frequently used that reflected population statistics and local development plan information.

### **What was not so good**

Leisure was still restricted in large number of cases to sports facilities. The wider leisure industry was not always considered. Candidates should use the range from LS01 when considering leisure in the community.

Many candidates still tried to assess whether the provision was adequate without considering aspects of demography, employment data, financial contribution or the changing needs of the market.

The lack of primary research clearly hindered candidates' analysis and evaluation of the effects of any proposals for future developments.

Centres are reminded that summer 2012 was the final availability for the double award portfolio units.

## **LS14 – Outdoor Leisure**

This unit was generally approached well by candidates. Candidates were able to describe the attractions of the area and the main stages in evolution; however, the ways in which the main agencies had influenced outdoor leisure was less detailed. The agencies were frequently described without reference to their influence.

Candidates did not always consider the full range of outdoor leisure activities and facilities, concentrating on natural rather than both natural and man-made as required in the specification.

The impact of outdoor leisure was well described but frequently lacked knowledge of management techniques. It was evident that many candidates had studied this in theory only. There were varying depths of analysis of the local plan.

It is a concern that some candidates are still trying to complete this unit as a purely theoretical exercise rather than by using first hand research and knowledge.

### **What was particularly good**

Maps of the chosen area were included but specific sites for man-made and natural attractions were not always depicted.

Candidates who had experienced the effects on both the natural and man-made environment in the chosen area could make detailed assessment as to the success of the management techniques.

### **What was not so good**

The management techniques were frequently poorly explained and therefore little or no assessment of their impact could be made. Candidates did not always consider the natural and man-made environment. Lack of first-hand experience meant that conclusions were not always backed up with facts and the understanding of impacts on man-made and natural environments was not covered in full.

The inter-relationship of the different agencies and organisations were not considered as a pivotal force in the management of the area.

Candidates tried to consider more than one plan for the area. This meant they could not make a comprehensive analysis as to the range of research required, as this proved too large a task. The evidence required for AO4 requires that **one** plan be considered. It would benefit candidates to clearly state the aims of the plan. Many portfolio units were rather general for AO4.

Centres are reminded that summer 2012 was the final availability for the double award portfolio units.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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

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