

# Examiners' Report January 2008

GCE

GCE Leisure Studies (8761/9761)

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## Chief Examiner's report

The qualification is now in its third year and this session has shown a marked improvement in candidate performance in all units. Although the 'application' issues outlined in my June 2007 report were less evident this January, they still remain the single largest reason for candidates failing to achieve the top grades in most units. Obviously for an Applied GCE this is a major omission and further consideration should be given to the following ideas.

In the external assessments at both levels many of the questions require candidates to relate their knowledge of the leisure industry to the specific organisations described in the stimulus material. This will mean that, in order to gain the higher mark levels, candidates will need to use the stimulus information and relate it specifically to the theoretical or learnt idea that forms the basis of the question. Where generic responses only are offered, i.e. they could relate to any organisation, candidates will not be able to score marks above level 1 in the mark scheme, however comprehensive their list of possible benefits, advantages, disadvantages etc.

In the internally assessed units there are still candidates who are producing assessments that are of a theoretical nature. In many cases this consists of a mere précis of one or more textbooks, perhaps mixed in with some downloaded material. This again does not fulfil the requirements of an applied subject. Candidates should be encouraged to seek information from real organisations and then to use this material in an applied way to demonstrate the skills that the assessment criteria demand. In many cases the candidates do have the necessary information in their coursework but have not applied it and therefore are providing descriptions only at best.

This is an applied subject and, in order to allow candidates to access the higher grades, centres should ensure that their approach is practical rather than theoretical. There are two other broad concerns in the internal units.

In some internal units there are occasions where candidates will undertake work as part of a group. This is particularly evident in Unit 4 but occurs elsewhere also. In this case centres should ensure that the evidence produced by each candidate shows their individual contribution. Without this it is difficult to award the higher mark bands to candidates.

Whilst we are keeping our definition of leisure as wide as possible at all times, it is vital that candidates do take their evidence from organisations in the leisure sector and that the basis for Units 4 and 6 is leisure oriented. One particular area of concern is the use of part-time jobs for the customer service (AO2) of Unit 3. It is not acceptable to use non-leisure examples, however well they show the skills required.

Looking to the future, it has become evident that the majority of the work submitted for assessment and moderation in the internal units is presented in the form of a formal assignment or wholly written report. Whilst this is often preferable as a safe option, there are many other possible assessment methods, many of which may actually be more suitable for learners with different capabilities.

Some learners are very strong in certain areas. For example, some learners are very good at talking about a subject but when it comes to writing it down they struggle. The same can be true of those that like to write lengthy essays - ask them to discuss

it and it is their worst nightmare. It will be worthwhile ensuring that learners are aware of the range of possible options open to them - the assessment criteria can be conveyed through many methods, both written and non-written. This is particularly true of a unit such as Leisure in Action, where the key evidence is that which demonstrates that the learners are capable of running an event. In many cases this is hidden amongst a lengthy description of what happened in general terms, not necessarily all of which provides such evidence.

Written evidence/methods of assessment include leaflets, brochures, assignments, check sheets, annotated diagrams, labelled photos, reports, PowerPoint demonstrations. In some cases the simple addition of annotations to pre-printed materials such as leaflets (or even downloads!) can produce a very valid piece of analytical work without the necessity for pages of prose.

Non written evidence/methods of assessment include observations, demonstrations, practical activities, role plays, presentations, discussions, debates and committee meetings. Many of these will have limited written evidence in support of them so this is where the role of detailed, signed witness statements becomes of paramount importance also.

Whilst appreciating that not all of these are practical for all units, and some candidates will still achieve their best results through simple report style projects, it is to be hoped that these suggestions will provide some extra inspiration for helping learners to achieve their full potential at the same time as having the best possible learning experience.

## Unit 1 The Leisure Industry 6966/01

### General Comments

Comments relate to the marking from the January 2008 series. A relatively small number of samples were received for this series.

Samples received were generally well organised with the majority of Centres submitting the OPTEMS forms correctly and following the administrative instructions for mark submission. Centres did not always include the justification of individual assessment outcome marks and these are important in the facilitation of the moderation process.

Centres are encouraged to annotate candidate evidence identifying where assessment objectives have been met and where higher mark bands have been awarded. Some portfolios had little evidence of marking on the student work. In examples of best practice, the front sheets gave reference page numbers indicating the evidence and this was then supported by annotation throughout the student work. All portfolios should clearly have page numbers that can be referenced.

Some centres were consistently generous in their application across the mark bands and it may be beneficial for some centres to scrutinise the 'what you need to learn' and assessment guidance sections of the specification for further information on how to meet all the grading criteria and to award marks within the appropriate mark bands.

Centres should also note that a Teacher's Guide is also available at Edexcel Online which provides examples of annotated candidate evidence to illustrate the depth and breadth of evidence required at mark band 2 and 3.

### **AO1: the range, scale, and importance of the leisure industry in the UK and Europe**

This task addresses AO1 - *demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

This assessment objective requires learners to be able to describe what the leisure industry is. The assessment guidance requires reference to active, passive and home-based leisure in the description. This part of the assessment objective was again addressed well by all candidates.

The evidence provided relating to participation rates, employment numbers and consumer spending in the UK and Europe, was widely variable and some Centres were awarding mark band three for this outcome, with very little or no reference to Europe. Where there are significant omissions in the information provided, the higher mark bands should not be used. Some Centres are reminded that employment figures should be leisure specific and not general employment numbers or trends.

Evidence relating to regional variations was also inconsistent, with some candidates identifying variations but not providing accurate reasons for such variations.

Some statistical data used was rather outdated and does not provide a realistic picture of the current scale and size of the leisure industry. Some candidates should be guided in their selection and used of valid and relevant data.

It was very pleasing however, that many candidates were producing an excellent standard of response for this outcome, without omissions and well supported by accurate and valid UK and European data, achieving mark band three.

### **AO2: Commercial and non-commercial sectors of the industry**

This task addresses AO2 - *apply knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of industry vocationally-related issues.*

Learners were required to give an explanation of the differences between the commercial and non-commercial sectors covering the differences in aims, methods of funding, different partnership arrangements and methods of marketing.

The majority of candidates clearly understood the difference between public, private and voluntary sectors and their aims and funding. The difference in approaches to marketing strategies was less well covered however and is an area of development for many candidates.

It may be helpful for some Centres to guide candidates to directly compare the differences between commercial and non-commercial organisations for each component identified, with the more able candidates offering accurate explanations and justifications for these differences.

Reference to partnership initiatives was generally improved overall but again is an area for continued focus and development by many Centres. Candidates must include at least a summary of partnership initiatives and should refer to PPPs and PFIs. Few Centres had candidates achieving mark band three for this outcome but the vast majority were comfortably achieving MB2.

### **AO3: Current Developments in the leisure industry**

This task addresses AO3 - *use appropriate research methods to obtain information from a range of sources to analyse leisure industry vocationally-related issues.*

For this assessment outcome, learners are required to research current developments in the leisure industry. All candidates had made some references to the increasing use of technology and the vast majority had also explored the growing influence of the media on the industry. Few candidates had explored potential future developments. It would be encouraging to see more candidates investigating a more diverse range of emerging developments.

There was a heavy reliance on the core text for this outcome and a few candidates had failed to use any other information sources at all. Many candidates had relied on website only information sources but had failed to reference their work. It is not enough to quote 'Google'! It is more difficult to assess whether the candidate has a wide range of sources if they are not referenced.

Centres are reminded of the importance of candidates clearly and explicitly demonstrating their comprehensive research from a broad range of information sources. Accurate referencing within the text or through a bibliography is essential to



award the highest marks. Centres could also consider including observation records as an alternative way to authenticate the range of sources used by candidates.

#### **AO4: Customers of the leisure industry**

This task addresses AO4 - *evaluate evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

Learners are required to identify the factors which influence participation and non-participation in the leisure. The factors are clearly identified in the specifications in the section covering assessment guidance as well as in the 'what you need to learn' section.

In order to achieve mark band 2, it is essential that explanations are clear and supported by data. Some candidates are not using data to support explanations of factors influencing participation and the highest marks bands should not be used.

Candidates are also required to identify barriers to participation and to make recommendations on how to overcome the barriers. Many candidates are able to describe barriers to participation but fail to include any recommendations.

Although some candidates were identifying and justifying a range of appropriate, relevant and sometime original recommendations, this is a key area for focus and development by many centres.



## Unit 2 Working practices in Leisure 6967/01

### General comments

Performance on this paper showed a marked improvement compared to last January. The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates, with only occasional areas of general weakness.

Most candidates were able to respond effectively to most questions. There was evidence that most candidates had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set, offering valid answers, though at times without the depth needed to achieve the higher grades at AS level. Almost all candidates answered all questions. As in all series so far, Question 2 tended to produce the weakest responses overall, both in the simpler descriptive and more advanced analytical questions.

Candidates were able to use information taken from the WYNTL section of the unit, although the characteristics of quality systems showed weakness as in previous series. They appeared to be familiar with the command verbs as a whole. Candidates appeared to manage their time effectively and did not produce lengthy passages of irrelevant information. The vast majority of candidates appeared to complete the paper in the time available, with little evidence of rushed work towards the end.

Candidates did not always make full use of the stimulus material. The emphasis in this paper will inevitably be on the application of their knowledge to a variety of practical situations and the higher marks, particularly in levels of response questions, will always be characterised by the ability to demonstrate application rather than theory. It will be important for candidates to have practice in doing this in their preparation for the assessment. This paper contained more stimulus material than the previous two and this will be the pattern for the future. This is an 'Applied' GCE and therefore in the longer explain/analyse questions the mere repetition of generic material, however valid, is unlikely to achieve beyond a Level 1 response.

At times many candidates produced very simplistic responses, which limited their success. At AS level candidates must be able to provide some simple evaluation and analysis. However, most candidates were able to offer realistic and appropriate answers, demonstrating their understanding of working practices in leisure.

Exam technique is an aspect that requires improvement, particularly in the longer questions. There will always be a number of longer questions on this paper that have a 'level of response' mark scheme. This will continue in the future so candidates should be made aware how these work. At the moment, most candidates of E grade and above are reaching the top of level 1 (3 marks) in the 8 mark questions, but higher ability candidates appear unable to lift this mark much further. Candidates must be able to use the stimulus material (the 'applied' bit) if they are to access the higher grades with ease, rather than repeat pre-learnt generic responses. For an example of this, see question 2b.

## Question 1

Scenario was of Althor land theme park. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

- 1 (a) Most candidates were able to outline at least two of the requirements of the act, with the main focus being on the need to produce food fit to eat and for it to be labelled (both for content and GM origin) and still in date. The need for staff to be trained was also regularly stated, although occasionally coming out as 'people working with food should be certified'! The main area of weakness was in the tendency for some candidates, ironically probably those who had worked in a kitchen, to become bogged down with the minutiae of how the act translated into specifics within a kitchen - what can be stored with what, what you can and cannot wear etc. Although these help to show some overall understanding of the 'storage and preparation' areas of the act, it would be useful for candidates to be reminded that it is the 'key requirements' of the acts that will always be required in questions of this sort.
- 1 (b) Most candidates managed to identify two acceptable measures although development beyond this was below expectations. Measures were often described and explained in vague terms 'make checks to see whether it is working all right' which showed little vocational application as to the processes that are carried out. There are 3 marks available for each measure so candidate should ensure that they identify a possible measure and then either briefly describe it and explain why it is done or give 2 points of explanation.
- 1 (c) The majority of candidates had a sound basic knowledge of the requirements of the act but rarely were able to access the higher ranges in the mark bands as they failed to apply it and/or explain it. Analysis in a question such as this should be focused on how the act affects the running on the park, but most candidates got little further than restating the main requirements of the act, which seemed to be well understood. This is an 'applied' question, however, and merely saying that 'the park would have to ensure that data was kept confidential' is a low level response. There were occasional developments in to how this could be achieved, but this rarely got beyond 'they would need a password' type responses. The stimulus material is there to be used in questions such as this. A low level use of the terms of selling data on was typically 'the park would not be able to share data with other attractions' whereas better candidates showed application by saying 'on the comment cards they will need to put a box that customers can tick to say they are happy for their details to be shared'.

Candidates at the E grade boundary were able to gather 2 marks easily, but indications are that the better candidates do not know how to use it so only gain an extra 1 or 2 marks.

- 1 (d) Most candidates could give at least one reason why the HSE might visit the park, although relatively few seemed aware that this was the norm. Although a good proportion of the candidates did articulate that they made 'checks' many of these seemed to equate them with the maintenance team, doing checks to ensure the rides were safe rather than perhaps the more general ensuring that legislation was being upheld. There were many responses that suggested that they reacted to complaints. For this to be developed into a 2 mark response it was necessary for the candidates to understand that these would have to be serious or in large numbers for the HSE to be involved .
- 1 (e) As in past June series, this question was well answered by the majority of candidates. Almost all of them understood the basic premise on which a risk assessment is carried out and were able to produce simple scales for likelihood and severity, although a little more care was needed in places to ensure that the steps within it are in a logical and consistent sequence. There were very few unrealistic suggestions for measures to minimise risk compared to the previous series and the balance of their severity and likelihood was much better than in the past.

Candidates do need to be a little more careful with their choice of scales, which was perhaps the weakest part of this question this time. Far too many of the likelihood scales contained at least one stage that did not show a logical sequence from the others, restricting them to 1 of the 2 available marks. Typically this might be a sequence such as 'highly unlikely-unlikely-possible-likely-highly likely' where the 'possible' is not a logical development - all of them suggest it is possible for it to occur. Similarly the use of 'never' on the likelihood scale and 'no harm' on the severity scale is invalid, as in these cases a risk assessment would not be required.

Most candidates managed to identify 2 or more correct measures to minimise the risk, although some tended to miss out on possible credit by being too brief - a short phrase/sentence is what is really required and although it can be done in less the risks of not making the answer clear are correspondingly greater. Only a few candidates produced unrealistic measures to minimise the risks - even this was surprising as the vast majority must have been to similar organisations and should therefore realise the impracticality of organising everyone into groups!

The most common suggestions were for central control points, staff trained to look out for lost children, although this was sometimes spoilt by their confusion with security guards, and some sort of identification system, especially for groups.

It is envisaged that the basic format of the risk assessment will appear on the question paper as it has on this one (or in a very similar format) so it would be useful for candidates to be made familiar with this so that they can concentrate on the task of applying the risk assessment correctly in future. To this end candidates need to have scales for both severity and likelihood that can lead to the application of a logical risk rating.

## Question 2

As in previous series this whole question was the weakest for the majority of candidates.

- 2 (a) Although there was some improvement in the level of knowledge of quality systems in this series, there was still a large number of candidates who did not have any more than a vague idea how one of the two major quality systems in the specification was achieved. The weakest attempts knew that it involved some element of staff development and training, but why or how that fitted into the overall course of events of achieving it was poorly understood. In others the sole positive indication was that an external assessment would take place. There were many candidates who could outline more than one of the basic stages, although the order in which organisations had to carry these processes out was less well-known. It was pleasing to note, however, that a significant proportion of the candidates could achieve 3-4 marks in this question, indicating a better understanding than in the past.

The knowledge of quality systems is an area of the specification that has caused problems in all 4 series so far. It forms a significant part of the requirements for the assessment and candidates must ensure that they know the main quality systems outlined in the specification. If the basics of the systems are poorly known then the questions based on their application will be more difficult to access as well.

- 2 (b) As stated in previous reports, we have moved towards a paper where there is rather more stimulus material in order to give candidates the chance to apply their knowledge well. This question in particular was one where there was plenty of material and although there was some evidence of candidates using it, many were hampered by an apparent lack of knowledge of what liP really did for an organisation. It is not sufficient for candidates to say that 'having liP will help to reduce mistakes' - this could be any quality system in a whole variety of ways - or 'people will recognise it and come to the park'. It is unlikely that anyone would go to one particular theme park because it had liP. It is necessary to link the purpose of liP - improved staff procedures, communication and training - to the characteristics of the park that were given. These involved a number of problems that were related to staff development and communication and to which the introduction of liP could be applied. Simple links such as 'better trained staff at the entrance will mean less mistakes are made and allow crowd entry to be less problematical. Therefore they will enjoy their experience more and return' is basic application of liP. This could be followed by 'as they make less mistakes they are likely to gain more confidence and can concentrate on helping customers get in as quickly as possible, so improving the customer experience' to produce a sound level 2 focused approach. Most candidates could achieve the top of level 1 with generic comment as to the benefits of a quality system but it will be useful in future if they can be more focused on the need to relate to the given situation.

The following is a typical, totally generic, response to the benefits (and disadvantages, in this response) of introducing liP to the theme park. Its lack of application is indicated by the fact that if we swapped 'liP' for 'Quest' it would still read the same, as it would if 'park' were swapped for 'gym'. This, therefore, on an applied paper, is a level 1/level 2 boundary response only.

*If they introduced liP a larger number of customers would come because they know it's a good place to go. This would give them a greater income, more profit which would mean they could improve the park. The staff would be better trained so it would be a better environment for the customers. It would become well known as a top quality park. It can give a framework for continuous improvement. The service given to customers would therefore improve. Staff would be more highly motivated in their jobs so more people will want to work there. It would cost a lot of money to get it and it could take a long time. Staff may not like different work patterns and training or the hard work needed in order to achieve liP. Trying to achieve this could put more pressure on them and they could leave. The park may take their focus off the customers in trying to achieve this.*

- 2 (c) Most candidates were able to identify a couple of staff related problems similar to the ones given, or as development to the ones given. Unfortunately some candidates ignored the general tenor of the question and simply described any problems of the introduction of quality systems, which often boiled down to simply they cost money and time to introduce. Candidates must be encouraged to read the whole question and not just respond to one or two key words within it.
- 2 (d) (i) Most candidates were able to score at least 1 mark here by identifying one of the characteristics - for sport, young people, a club - of Clubmark that would cause the canoe club to be included or a theme park to be excluded from it. The most common error was to be under the impression that Clubmark was only for public sector organisations and that therefore the theme park would not qualify.
- 2 (d) (ii) This was perhaps the most disappointing question on the paper in terms of response as few candidates could give two or more characteristics of the Clubmark system. It is set by name as one of the quality systems for which 'it is important...that you understand the fundamentals' in the specification. As one of the minor ones it does not need to be known in detail but there is evidence that many centres are scarcely touching it at all.

### Question 3

3 (a) Most candidates had some idea that an invoice exchanged hands when goods or services were sold, although many considered it as a type of receipt handed over afterwards, which limited credit for it. Credit notes were often described in terms that suggested they had been experienced through personal use in returning goods to shops, which was acceptable.

3 (b) (i) Most candidates understood the terms well enough to complete the table and score 2 or 3 marks. The key to this question is often logical selection and working through of financial figures rather than mathematical skills and candidates should be given a chance to practise this in preparation for the assessment. Candidates must also be reminded that they should have a calculator for the examination.

3 (b) (ii), (b)(iii) and b (iv)

Although many candidates completed the table correctly, there was evidence from the rest of the questions that their understanding of the terms was limited. Only a small number of them managed to suggest a reason why liabilities might have increased and in the last part assets, liabilities and capital were often confused for income, expenditure and profit. A good proportion of candidates managed 1-2 marks in part (iv) by simple description of the relevant statistics but could show little comprehension of how they were really linked.

3 (c) (i) Most candidates were able to give some basic benefit for Althor Land of the use of credit cards, mainly being that of the lack of need for security and time taken in cashing up and transferring the money to a safe at the end of the day. Others suggested that there was less chance of customers being given the wrong change. There was one widespread misconception that the queues would move faster with a credit card but although that may happen at some time in the future it is not here yet. A few managed to relate to the scenario in that the shop stocked expensive items for which customers would not have enough cash.

3 (c) (ii) Most candidates concentrated on the fact that cash was less safe to carry around as it could be stolen or it could drop out on one of the rides. Most scored 1-2 marks on this.

3 (c) (iii) There were fewer really valid attempts at this part than the previous two. Most valid answers centred on the possible increase in queuing time, although there was disappointingly little application to the given information that there were only two tills here. Explanation therefore tended to be rather weak and generic. Other responses concentrated on the possible problems caused when the technology failed and the subsequent possible loss of custom.



- 3 (d) There were pleasingly more attempts by candidates to apply their responses to the information given on the theme park than in the two previous analysis questions on the paper. It is now important for candidates to follow through with the analysis as many are leaving the examiners to imagine many of the connections themselves! Simply to state that an electronic ticketing system will reduce queues at the gate is not enough to push a response to the higher levels of the marks scheme without giving some idea of how the characteristics of the system enable this. Some candidates did make the point that there would be less involvement of staff so less possibility for mistakes to be made, hence shortening the queues. Others concentrated on the possibility of tickets being bought online meaning they could just swipe the ticket through a machine. The secondary effects of possible advertising on the site ( as well as the tickets) were sometimes considered also. There were still some generic responses that could have applied to any organisation and at times there was some confusion with membership systems. Although there are some features that will produce similar benefits, all too often a ticketing system was confused with a swipe card membership system. Candidates should be made very clear of the differences - some indication to them to read the question carefully, together with attempting to apply it to the given scenario, would help in preventing largely generic responses that could be either!



## Unit 3 The Leisure Customer 6968/01

### General Comments

Comments relate to the marking from the January 2008 series. A relatively small number of samples were received for this series.

The choice of leisure organisations for candidates to apply their skills and knowledge was almost always appropriate, with candidates researching and applying knowledge to a range of explicitly leisure orientated organisations. This is an improvement on previous years. Some candidates did limit the possible marks available however, by focusing on organisations with very similar provision. Centres are advised to guide and encourage candidates to choose and research a suitably contrasting range of leisure providers for AO1, in order to demonstrate an understanding of the breadth of the leisure industry and its customers.

The majority of Centres were correctly utilising the appropriate paperwork in terms of candidate mark record sheets and OPTEMS forms, with a high level of accuracy in their completion. Detailed summary comments relating to each overall assessment outcome were not always present however and this is seen as essential feedback for candidates and to assist the internal and external moderation process.

Appropriate annotation by assessors is also very useful in assisting the moderation process, although some centres are continuing to submit evidence with no annotations at all. Candidates and assessors who paginate portfolios and identify where they judge individual grading criteria to be covered, greatly assist the moderation process, particularly when evidence covering assessment outcomes is not presented as discrete tasks.

The amount of unreferenced work downloaded from the internet was seen less this series which is a welcome improvement. Many candidates are still omitting to reference their work, even in a basic way. Candidates should be encouraged to clearly demonstrate their varied sources of research.

Some centres were also applying the mark bands inconsistently and it may be beneficial for some centres to scrutinise the 'what you need to learn' and assessment guidance sections of the specification for further information on how to meet all the grading criteria and to award marks within the appropriate mark bands. Centres should also note that a Teacher's Guide is also available at Edexcel Online which provides examples of annotated candidate evidence to illustrate the depth and breadth of evidence required at mark band 2 and 3.

## AO1: The leisure customer.

This task addresses AO1 - *demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

This assessment outcome requires candidates to explore how the leisure customer is viewed by leisure organisations and to understand the importance of the customer and customer service to the industry, supported through the review of appropriate policies and procedures.

Marks awarded were often a little generous in some cases for this outcome, particularly where centres has awarded mark band 3 but where evidence demonstrated little interpretation of an organisation's policies and procedures and the impact these have on customer care. As well as identifying and describing the various policies and procedures, candidates awarded the highest marks need to provide a comprehensive explanation on how specific issues are managed or monitored and how this impacts on customer satisfaction.

Some candidates had chosen three very similar organisations, for example three visitor attractions. In order to award marks in mark band 3, evidence must relate to a contrasting range of leisure organisations. Candidates could be encouraged to examine how leisure centres, gymnasiums, cinemas, theme parks, visitor attractions, sports clubs etc. view customers, supported and illustrated by a review of their customer service policies and procedures and how these contribute to customer care.

Encouragingly, more candidates were including examples of actual policies and customer care procedures from appropriate leisure organisations, with clear and accurate annotations to their purpose and impact on the level of customer care provided to different customer types.

While the vast majority of candidates were exploring three different leisure organisations, the quality of evidence relating to each one was variable. Centres should ensure that when awarding the highest marks available for this outcome, that evidence is consistently comprehensive in its reference and application to each organisation.

## A02: Dealing with leisure customers.

This task addresses A02 – *apply knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of industry vocationally-related issues.*

This assessment outcome should demonstrate candidates' ability to provide effective customer service to leisure customers. The outcome lends itself to practical activities such as customer service role-plays; face-to-face, over the telephone, responding to customer letters and emails, or through technological or visual means; giving presentations, creating displays etc.

Most centres are generally awarding appropriately for this outcome, where candidates have demonstrated their practical customer service skills in a variety of ways, dealing with a variety of different customers, in a variety of different situations.

Evidence provided for some candidates related to customer complaint situations only and this can limit the marks available. Candidates should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their wider skill and expertise in dealing with a range of situations and different types of leisure customer: answering customer enquiries, sales interactions, issues arising from a leisure event, giving directions and information etc.

The quality of observation records had slightly improved on the previous series. Centres are reminded of the importance of detailed, candidate specific and targeted observation records and witness statements used to provide evidence of competency for this outcome.

Individual observation records, for each scenario, should reflect the range of customer types and situations dealt with, the different methods used in dealing with leisure customers and the level of independence demonstrated. Detailed assessor comments should clearly reflect the candidates' ability to work independently and to reflect the different customer types and situations dealt with. Each record should be completed, signed and dated by the assessor.

Centres are again reminded of the requirement for candidates to deal with leisure customers, in leisure situations. Some candidates had included evidence which did not relate to dealing with leisure customers.

A range of example scenarios and documentation templates are available in the Teacher's Guide available to all centres at [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk).

### **A03: Marketing activities and the leisure customer.**

This task addresses A03 - *use appropriate research methods to obtain information from a range of sources to analyse leisure industry vocationally-related issues.*

In providing evidence for this outcome, candidates are required to research a range of marketing activities used in the leisure industry, applied to specific products and services from a single leisure organisation or many. In order to award the highest marks, Centres should ensure that at least three different marketing activities have been explored.

Much evidence seen for this outcome was still theoretical with little application to activities used within the leisure industry or by specific leisure organisations. These responses are limited to the lower mark band. Candidates should ensure that underpinning knowledge evidence is applied to relevant leisure industry examples and linked to specific products and services, not just general, theoretical descriptions.

For example, candidates should not simply provide a general description of sponsorship as a promotional activity but apply this underpinning knowledge in researching a sponsorship activity in the leisure industry, providing detailed information regarding the products and services the specific example relates to.

Where candidates are producing a high standard of response for this outcome, evidence relates to a range of contrasting marketing activities, clearly applied to specific products and services provided by a leisure organisation or a range of contrasting leisure organisations.

#### **AO4: Operational aspects related to the leisure customer.**

This task addresses AO4 - *evaluate evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

The marking criteria require candidates to present information related to customer service provided by a leisure organisation, gained through a 'mystery visit'. Marking was found to be generally accurate for this outcome, with only a small minority of centres awarding in the wrong mark band.

Candidates need to undertake a mystery visit at an appropriate leisure organisation and record the details of their findings. Candidates should then provide examples of customer service gained from the visit undertaken, together with details of the range of information available to customers and a description of the products or services provided by the leisure organisation.

Centres should note that to achieve the highest marks in this band, candidates should be evaluating the success of the provider in satisfying customer needs and be able to comment on the tangible methods the provider has in place to measure standards, for example customer comment cards or surveys etc.

To access the highest marks in band 3, candidates are required to be able to "...comprehensively review a series of operational documents such as policies, statements, forms, training manuals and make detailed comment on their effectiveness and suitability. This should include comments on language, layout, fitness for purpose etc." Again, few candidates presented evidence to this standard.

All candidates had focused on the customer service provided by one leisure organisation and consequently, evidence for this outcome was slightly more detailed than in previous series.





## Unit 4 Leisure in action 6969/01

### General Comments

There was a relatively small sample put forward for the January 2008 moderation this window. The portfolios submitted were well organised and contained material clearly linked to the assessment objectives.

The portfolios clearly identified the event that was organised and this window showed that there was clear evidence of a comprehensive approach to feasibility studies to arrive at the event. Swot style analysis had been used and this approach was clearly very successful. It is absolutely essential that the learners choose an appropriate event that enables them to make decisions and to take roles of responsibility.

Event titles were appropriate and consisted of more than the day trip this window - educational visits / game shows and tournaments were generally chosen. The development of the event showed comprehensive planning perhaps sometimes **heavily guided by the centre**. It was evident that most events had not been pre planned by the centre. The concern that arose was when small numbers came together for the event. The other team members appear to be the staff in the organisation which disadvantages other students as they are heavily supported by staff that are in a position to guide more professionally. The specifications clearly state that the event should be with peers. When an event has used a limited number of learners or has had to rely on staff in the organisation then this clearly limits the learner from accessing the higher mark bands. The centre may need to consider joining another centre for the event.

The learners must organise and carry out an event where each team member has a distinctive role. The event must have a leisure style focus. It is therefore not appropriate for learners to support an already organised teacher led event where all responsibility is taken by the teacher and the learners are not responsible for such areas as finance, physical resources, health and safety / risk assessments, marketing and administration systems. Equally it is not appropriate for the event to be a trip for their own group or residential for their own group. In these cases the learners are unable to demonstrate successful marketing of the event.

Centres are reminded that this is an A2 unit and that there should be evidence of the knowledge gained from the AS units in addition to the breadth and depth required for A2. Simplistic statements without the depth of analysis cannot attract the higher mark bands.

It is equally essential that there is clear evidence of individual work by each team member. Learners are encouraged to keep diaries/logs of their contributions but these should clearly be kept throughout the event and be presented in an appropriate written format. The reflective log style approach is important to follow and centres should take a more creative approach to the logging and recording of the event.

Learners can then demonstrate how they have taken part in the event. When a group approach has been taken this not only produces duplicate evidence but is also difficult to see how individual performance has been captured.

Where minutes are included they must be of a professional and business standard and reflect the A2 level of this unit. They should also include individual contributions and ensure that they cover all aspects of planning including marketing , administrative systems , health and safety and risk assessments .It is evident that minutes on the whole are very simplistic and often do not cover the overall planning cycle of the event.

This unit requires the support of witness testimonies. The testimonies should be clearly linked to the assessment objectives and the mark bands but should indicate clearly the individual contribution. Many witness testimonies were similar for all learners and did not identify individual contributions particularly to the event itself. In some instances the learner has written their own testimony which has then been signed by the assessor. Whilst this can be acceptable in some circumstances it is not applicable to this unit where one assessment objective refers to evaluation. There should be self, peer and customer evaluations as well as assessor evaluations.

Centres are encouraged to annotate throughout the portfolios clearly identifying where assessment objectives/mark bands are being applied. Written comments in addition to the identification of the assessment objectives and mark bands would be helpful to the moderation process. Centres tended to be generous in awarding higher mark bands where the written evidence did not warrant the application of the higher mark bands. This may be due to assessor involvement and knowledge of the event and therefore reflects the importance of annotation and witness testimonies.

Where centres sent in work which was identical in evidence i.e. the same minutes / risk assessments / letters etc this not only was difficult to make a considered judgment but also become invalid. If there is evidence that is jointly arrived at then one set of evidence can be sent in for moderation to support the unit. However each member of the team must be able to make a comment on the impact of this evidence on their role and in relation to the event as a whole. Centres must be more creative in how they develop, use and assess this evidence without there being so much repetition. Professional discussion may be an assessment method that centres may like to develop.

All centres submitted OPTEMS forms accurately and authenticity sheets were included for all learners. The mark sheets did not always have clear reference to evidence location or justification of mark bands awarded. There was confusion in many cases where the work had been internally moderated and marks had been changed which did not reflect the front sheets or the OPTEMS. It is essential that centres clearly reconcile these so that the mark sheets show final marks awarded.

## **AO1: The Plan of the Event.**

Most of the plans submitted were realistic and in all cases the event did happen, although in some cases the original event planned was changed. The events chosen had more scope and therefore the aims and objectives had been developed. The major challenge was that learners from the same centre produced identical plans and it was not possible therefore to clearly identify individual work. Learners should be encouraged to submit their own interpretation of the plan. Learners should include all aspects of the plan as identified on page 40 of the specification. Particular weaknesses were in customer needs, staffing for the event clearly identifying strengths and weaknesses of each member of team and how this relates to role allocation. Risk assessments were often provided rather than researched. Risk assessments were covered in AS units and therefore learners should be confident in carrying them out.

Financial aspects of the event must include budgeting. This was often absent and income projected and handling payments was often quite weak. Contingency plans were usually mentioned and in the case of some events used. The plan often lacked detail of evaluation and review of the event. This is clearly important in order to enable an in depth evaluation.

In general, event timescales were realistic and it was particularly interesting to see learners use a variety of diagrammatic planning tools. This is to be encouraged. This unit benefits from a relatively short timescale of approximately twelve weeks.

A plan achieving mark band 3 will be comprehensive and include all aspects included in the specification and is clearly the work of the individual learner. The aims and objectives will be clear and this enables a comprehensive evaluation needed in AO4.

## **AO2: Individual contributions.**

This outcome was generously assessed by nearly all centres and assessors. The marks awarded were based on witness testimonies and observation records but these lacked the detail needed to reflect the demands of an A2 unit.

The learners must provide evidence/records of their contribution to the event. It is suggested that learners have diaries or individual logs that reflect this individual contribution. It is not acceptable to provide a group log/diary and they must be written at the time rather than reflectively after the event. In too many cases the teams provided identical evidence and it was not possible to determine individual contribution.

A basic log/diary will be awarded mark band 1. For higher mark bands, there must be evidence of consistent involvement throughout the event. To achieve the higher mark bands, learners must demonstrate that they have solved problems. In many cases minutes of meetings demonstrated that attendance by learners was erratic. Therefore the higher mark bands cannot be accessed.

Minutes are also a useful tool to provide evidence of contribution but if included assessors must ensure that the minutes meet a business standard. Witness testimonies and tutor observations are particularly useful in the assessment of this assessment objective. These could reflect learner contributions to meetings, attendance and consistency throughout the project as well as contribution to the running of the event itself.

### **AO3: Research and Feasibility of the Event.**

Research and feasibility studies showed a marked improvement and the swot style approach is to be applauded. This gave the learners the opportunity to move clearly up the mark bands in terms of the evidence that was generated. There was little evidence of primary and secondary sources accessed. The most successful research was where there was clear market research on target markets or the learners were able to use previous events that learners had held for other assessment purposes. Analytical learners did provide a clear analysis but the majority needed much clearer guidance from their assessors both on the meaning of feasibility studies and how to carry them out using research.

Detailed recommendations must be made in order to achieve the higher mark bands. Learners should be encouraged to attend and research local leisure events. Learner visits and case studies would support this assessment objective.

The feasibility study should address all the main aspects of the plan and for the higher marks each aspect will be supported by referenced research. The feasibility studies can be presentations by the learners. If presentations are used there must be clear identification of individual contribution to the presentation. When power point presentations are used these must be supported by a witness statement. A successful approach was when each student presented an in-depth feasibility study as a presentation and the presentations were discussed in a minuted meeting. There was also support in the form of detailed observation records from assessors that followed the mark band statements. It is essential that the presentations however are individual. There were examples of group approaches on presentations and this then cannot be attributed to one learner and for moderation purposes is not accredited with any marks.

### **AO4: Evaluation of the Event.**

A starting point for the evaluations should be a consideration of the extent to which the aims and objectives of the team have been met. In addition all learners should evaluate the extent to which they and individual team members have met deadlines. The planning process should be analysed to assess the extent to which the planning enabled a successful event to be developed. All learners assessed whether the event had been successful but most judged that holding the event was a success in itself and there was a lack of evaluation of the success of marketing/attracting customers which in most cases was not a success.

All learners provided evaluations of their performance but as part of the event, team and individuality were often absent. All learners were required to assess not only their own performance but also that of their team. The learners appeared to find peer evaluation difficult and it is recommended that assessors give clear guidance on this aspect.

The evaluation must include both during the planning and the running of the event for both themselves and the team. For mark band 3 the evaluations must be comprehensive and detailed for both themselves and members of the team. The evaluations will include analysis of strengths and weaknesses and the consequences of these. The strengths and weaknesses will be accurate and this will be confirmed by witness testimonies or observations. Customer evaluation is also an important part of the evaluation of the event.

It is important that learners can identify how working as part of a team was a positive or negative experience. It would be useful for learners to give feedback to each of their team members and also to receive it and use it as part of their evaluation.

It is essential that there are clear recommendations for improvement. These were rarely in depth. In some cases recommendations were lacking. The recommendations are an essential part even of mark band 1. Weaker learners require guidance on this aspect.

Assessors must ensure that marks are based on all aspects of the mark bands. There is a tendency to give teams' similar marks regardless of the evidence provided.



## Unit 5 Current issues in Leisure 6970/01

### General comments

The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates and there was a marked improvement in candidate performance in comparison to last year.

Most candidates were able to respond effectively to most questions. There was evidence that most candidates had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set, offering valid answers, although many candidates did struggle to achieve the higher levels in extended responses. Almost all candidates answered all questions.

Candidates were able to use information taken from the WYNTL section of the unit, although understanding of the term 'remuneration' were noticeably weak. The requirements of some of the command words were generally known by candidates, although many did not manage to access the higher marks in the longer questions as a consideration of terms such as 'analysis' did not show enough depth in response. Far fewer than last year responded to the longer questions with simple explanatory points or, worse still, with a series of (bullet) points. Candidates appeared to manage their time effectively. Most did not produce lengthy passages of irrelevant information, although the discursive nature of this paper does mean that candidates should focus carefully on what the question is really asking for before starting to write. The vast majority of candidates appeared to complete the paper in the time available, with little evidence of rushed work towards the end. A significant number did not attempt Question 3 (c) (ii) but, judging from the response of other candidates, this appears to have been more a function of lack of knowledge than of lack of time.

Candidates did not always make full use of the stimulus material. The emphasis in this paper will inevitably be on the application of their knowledge to a variety of practical situations and the higher marks, particularly in levels of response questions, will always be characterised by the ability to demonstrate application rather than theory. It will be important for candidates to have practice in doing this in their preparation for the assessment. This paper had more stimulus material than last year's so there was more chance for candidates to do this, but it was still an omission by many. This is an 'Applied' GCE and candidates must be prepared for this!

At times many candidates produced very simplistic responses, which limited their success. At A2 level candidates must be able to provide evaluation and analysis. However, most candidates were able to offer realistic and appropriate answers, demonstrating their understanding of employment in leisure.

Exam technique is an aspect that requires improvement, particularly in the longer questions. There will always be a considerable number of questions on this paper that have a 'level of response' mark scheme. This will continue in the future so candidates should be made aware of how these work.

### Question 1

Scenario for the whole paper was of Lester Borough Leisure Centre, a rapidly expanding leisure centre wishing to recruit new staff. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

- 1 (a) (i) Most candidates had a sound basic idea of the term, indicating that it involved 'training on the job'. Some candidates were very clear about it involving both work and training, with many indicating that they could well be going to college for a day or more per week. Care is needed in responding to questions even at this level as a number of candidates stated that it was a type of training scheme but failed to mention at all that it was workplace based. Most gained 2 marks at least.
- 1 (a) (ii) The benefits of apprenticeships to the apprentices were generally better known than those to the organisation where the concept of them being 'cheap labour' was predominant, without any consideration of what they might be able to contribute to the company. There were some good responses linking the centre's ability to train staff as they wanted with the information provided that it was an expanding centre - good use of the stimulus materials - but these were still the exception rather than the rule. Responses centred on the apprentices tended to concentrate on the benefits of being able to work and gain qualifications, in addition to getting real practical experience of both the workplace and the requirements of their specific posts rather than 'just doing the theory' of the work at college.
- 1 (b) This was answered well overall, with most candidate being able to suggest 2 simple reasons why people volunteered. The most common responses were those of wishing to gain some experience, perhaps with a view to improving their CV for a job later on, and that of wanting to 'do their bit' for the community. Many also focused on the personal fulfilment aspect and perhaps even the development of the volunteer's personal characteristics in meeting and working with other people. It should be noted, however that in a question that requires candidates to explain, a list of 3 or 4 separate ideas will not fulfil this requirement. Some development of the initial ideas is needed in order to explain rather than just 'stating' or 'outlining' reasons.



## Question 2

- 2 (a) (i) Most of the candidates were able to identify three pieces of information found in a person specification, with qualifications, experience and qualities being the most common. Questions that require candidates to 'outline' require only an outline (1) of this rather than full scale explanations as to why they would be there as some candidates propounded.
- 2 (a) (ii) There was a tendency for candidates to give explanations of what the job description and person specification are rather than getting on with answering the question as to how they are used. Once into the question, there was an unfortunate tendency to put the two terms together, implying that they are used in the same way. This produced some weak, somewhat generic responses of 'shortening the selection processes, ie focusing on 'why' rather than 'how' they are used. The best responses tended to focus more on the role of the person specification in selecting the criteria for shortlisting or the questions at the interview. The role of the job description in drawing up the person specification seemed to be poorly known, however there was less tendency for candidates to believe that the person specification was written by the applicant than in previous series.
- 2 (b) Candidates were rather generous overall to what was a rather weak attempt at an advert! Indeed, many candidates only saw positives with it, even turning some of the negative points round - for example, suggesting that the short time period between the advert going in the paper and the application deadline would mean that they only got the candidates who were really keen. Those who did use the information in the realistic way focused mainly on the lack of website/contact details, the use of national press for posts that were low level and the problems of having only 5 days to apply. True evaluation, however, was rarely achieved. Many of these candidates simply stated that 'the time is too short' or 'they do not know where to apply' or 'they should put it in the local press instead' without considering what effects these mistakes would have. An advert is for the organisation's use in recruitment and selection and therefore the evaluation should really be considering it as a tool in this process. Simple development of the above types of points makes a considerable difference in a question such as this. 'The time is too short, so therefore they may not get many applicants' adds some comment as to why/how it will not be effective. Similarly the problem of where to advertise it was at times developed by 'people won't want to move house just to go to work as receptionist so it is a waste of money advertising there'.

- 2 (c) Many candidates tended to focus solely on the benefits of online advertising rather than 'recruitment for applications' as indicated in the stimulus. Although this approach was still within the remit of the mark scheme, it did tend to be slightly limiting and reinforces the need for candidates to read the stimulus material carefully. Those who did deal with applications often pointed out that it would be quicker and easier, although without the necessary development of saying how/why this was the case. There was also a tendency to consider it from the candidate's point of view rather than from the leisure centre's.
- 2 (d) Two areas of this question seemed to provide difficulty for candidates. A checklist only requires simple, (even bullet) points where the final mark is an indication of simply how many are required in a simple point-marked response. A considerable number of candidates gave only two or three points but in great detail as to how they would operate. This is self-limiting for candidates who otherwise might have been able to give more and should be considered carefully in preparation of candidates' exam technique. The other problem seemed to be the lack of comprehension as to what 'pre-interview' meant and many candidates gave a list of what went on in the interview or sometimes just a list of possible questions. The recruitment and selection part of the specification lends itself to a very practical, applied, approach in teaching candidates, from the writing of person specifications and job descriptions to the final phone calls. Candidates who had done mock interviews would, I feel sure, be aware that they do not take place without some preparation and perhaps be more ready for a question such as this.
- 2 (e) Most candidates were aware of what a contract of employment was and many could give some generalise explanation as to why it might be necessary. Most of these centred on the idea that it was a reference point for any disagreement in terms of what employees are paid or how they behave. At the lower end there was a tendency simply to list the items that might be found in the contract - some candidates did then go on to state simplistically how these might be important 'hours of work would be given so they employees and employers know how long they have to work in the week' but this approach only achieved the level 1 criteria.

### Question 3

- 3 (a) (i) Most candidates showed that they understood that there were problems with each of the given situations, although their attempts to link the specific legislation involved and the scenarios - the real applied part - were variable. A considerable number of candidates stated which act was being broken in each case and then went on to outline all the key requirements of the act. The explanation in this case is only implicit as it is left to the examiner to decide which parts of the response are those that are really relevant and therefore this type of response is limited. Many candidates did respond to this question well, however, with good knowledge of the acts and linkage. Typically the second scenario was met with 'under the Working Time Regulations children cannot work later than 7pm and these children are working up to 9pm' which shows knowledge of which legislation is involved, knowledge of its relevant parts and application to the correct part of the scenario.
- 3 (a) (ii) Some candidates did attempt to analyse here but many responses were rather simplistic and somewhat extreme. There were considerable proportion of responses that only considered what might be termed the 'punishment' effects - taken to court/ tribunal, fined, sued and finally the management imprisoned! It is still necessary to remind candidates to remain realistic when dealing with topics of this type and that it is only a small proportion of problems in workplaces that end up down these avenues - although these are the ones that they see in the press. It is the broader effects on staff and attitudes in the workplace that need to be considered. Very few candidates linked it to the leisure centre specifically, despite its proximity to the previous question which they had understood well. Some candidates did manage some analysis on staff motivation and possible future recruitment, together with the possibility that they might not employ the right people.
- 3 (b) (i) Most candidates had a basic idea of what *scheduled break* were, although a significant minority merely considered that they were breaks that were timetabled into the working day without any consideration that they were governed by law. At the other end, a pleasing number of candidates were well aware of the way in which they worked, with breaks being determined by the number of hours worked and that there were different rules for young workers.
- 3 (b) (ii) This question elicited some of the weakest responses overall. Very few candidates seemed to appreciate that workplaces had a series of disciplinary events that would make up the total procedure. Even the single items 'give him a warning', 'have a meeting with him' were often couched in these vague terms. Many candidates seemed to confuse the term with that of punishment and were all for reducing his wages. Even those candidate who did manage to produce two or three steps of a disciplinary procedure - most commonly, meeting with him, verbal warning, written warning - saw them only in terms of threatening him rather than as attempts to help him. A significant number of candidates considered appraisals to be part of the disciplinary process.

- 3 (a) Most candidates had a basic understanding of what an appraisal is, a pleasing improvement on its last appearance as there were very few suggesting that they were there to 'praise him'. There was better use of the stimulus material here than elsewhere in the paper, with many making the link between discussing his work and the problem of him not knowing what to do leading to possible better direction and/or training for him. Other suggested that appraisals could be used to set targets, with the level 2 responses linking these targets to his timekeeping
- 3 (c) (ii) As in last January's paper, remuneration was term that was poorly known. There was more unanswered question here than elsewhere and a significant number that tried a generic 'cover all types of motivation techniques' response with little reward. Candidates do need to know the basic terms from the specification! Even those who did understand the term seemed largely to have a very simplistic view of how it works, with many considering that merely giving him a pay rise would mean he would work better. Some candidates talked about giving a bonus for good work or other financial incentives, for example free membership/free mobile phone/even a company car but they did not link back to the stimulus material. Some suggested performance related pay which could be reduced if he did not meet his targets, although these were not stated. At the top end there was some limited analysis, mostly showing that it might not be a good idea as other staff would be upset as he was getting extra money for having worked poorly. Some also pointed out that it might not change his attitude anyway if he wasn't motivated by money, especially as he knew he was difficult to replace.
- 3 (d) Most candidates showed a sound understanding of the basic reasons why the workforce should be kept motivated, with explanations linked to the quality of work and the ability of the leisure centre to keep and recruit staff. These ideas were then developed generically to indicate that this would improve service for the customer and hence in the long term would produce greater profits. In keeping with the rest of the paper though, application to the specifics of Lester Borough Leisure Centre was in short supply. Some did explain how this was important as they were expanding and would therefore need to retain as well as recruit staff. A few used the example of Len as to what might happen to the service if motivation was poor, but these tended to be the exception rather than the rule. Once again it is important to emphasise that this is an applied paper and that simple generic explanations that could apply to any organisation are going to be restricted in the credit that they can obtain.

## Unit 6 Current issues in Leisure 6971/01

### General Comments

There was a relatively small sample put forward for the January 2008 moderation window.

The preparation by centres followed the Edexcel guidelines - OPTEMS and front sheets were accurately presented. Declaration sheets had been completed by the learner and the centre assessor. There were minor errors relating to the front sheets and OPTEMS point scores. Coursework was generally received within the required window.

All centres correctly utilised the mark record sheets providing centre name and candidate name and number. It was clear to see where the assessor had made the assessment decision and where the internal verifier had verified the work. Only one set of front sheets is required to be sent in for moderation. Multiple sheets tend to be confusing. Comments made by assessors varied considerably in depth. Comments must relate to the mark band as well as the assessment criteria. Reference to page numbers greatly assisted the moderation process.

Centres submitted portfolios in an acceptable format - in one plastic wallet. Centres are advised that surplus material taken from internet sites must be removed but must be sourced where used within the research project.

This may also require an endorsement from the assessor. Work did show a **marked improvement** in terms of sourcing and referencing evidence. The use of websites was noted throughout the work and not just at the end. This is a far better way of acknowledging evidence. Centres had allowed learners to use a range of appropriate evidence - the use of dates is important in ensuring the authenticity and validity of this evidence and more importantly its relevance to the scope of the research project.

Annotation was evident and assisted the moderation process. Annotation by assessors showed improvement. This was clear and transparent, signposting clearly where the assessment opportunities had been provided in the evidence provided. Assessors must not be afraid to annotate fully throughout the work. Some centres may be of the opinion that the work should remain unmarked throughout - this shows that there has not been any judgement made through assessment. If annotation of the work is completed throughout the stages of the research project then this should not become a burdensome task.

The general performance for this window showed a **marked improvement** with research projects accessing the higher mark bands. Work showed that learners had been well prepared for this unit and work was consistently of a higher standard. There were few adjustments made and these were within the accepted tolerances. Sub - sampling did show that learners were able to access mark band 2/3.

Appropriate topic titles were chosen which clearly focused on the identification of a current issue in leisure. The topic titles allowed learners to develop the research project. Where proposals moved away from the topic title learners were not able to access full marks throughout. Topic titles do tend to concentrate on health related issues ie obesity or sporting events - football. There were some excellent titles - game consoles, smoking, fast food, clubbing for young people and salary capping in football. Learners were able to identify the scope of the issue chosen.

Learners must be guided by assessors on how to process information taken from secondary sources. Downloaded pages from websites if used in an applied way and linked to the project title are acceptable. These require referencing to show authentication. Some information presented by learners was clearly not their own work and could be seen as plagiarised if not sourced and referenced appropriately.

There was some evidence to show that learners had accessed other research projects and used these as their own. This is not acceptable and falls into plagiarism. If used as part of their own research and used in an appropriate way, then this is acceptable.

There was a marked improvement in the standard of work produced from the last series. There was clear evidence that learners had been guided, given clear parameters for the unit and had been well supported throughout the research project. It is very pleasing to see that centres are now developing the concept of research projects with learners at the A2 level required.

### **Context of the unit**

Centres are reminded that this is an A2 unit and requires the learner to reflect on the knowledge that they have gained from the AS examination and portfolio units. Learners are required to choose an issue that is leisure related - this can extend into the area of the sport and recreation industry. It is essential that all research meets appropriate ethical guidelines, including permission being granted before 'real life' examples are included. It is suggested that between two and four thousand words would be appropriate for a written research project.

### **A01 - A research proposal that identifies the research topic together with the project aims and methodology**

Very clear research proposals were evident with the scope identified more clearly. The use of literary reviews had been developed well by centres and showed relevance to the topic title.

Plans varied and did sometimes feel as if they had been retrospectively developed. Where these were realistic they matched good research projects allowing learners to move throughout the mark bands. Aims and objectives were used with accuracy.

Some learners had difficulty in demonstrating organisational skills that are involved in research, to produce and submit their project to meet deadlines. When a checklist approach was developed by centres this guided the learners well. Proposals took the format of a series of intended questions to be answered. Some learners included feasibility studies - these showed a marked improvement. Plans were highlighted against timescales with some more detailed than others. It was apparent that plans were rarely focused on in the evaluation section and were not applied within the unit. It is important that centres see this as an important part of the development of the research project.

### **A02 - Research that includes references related to the sport.**

Research was good throughout the research projects with most learners including both primary and secondary research. The internet had been used widely with some other sources also used. Data collection, data presentation and analysis showed marked improvement with good analysis and conclusions being drawn. On the whole this section is completed well.

Learners are required to research the chosen subject area and possible methods of data collection. Learners should be able to reference the text and include quotations. When learners were able to compare findings from previous research in order to establish the relevance of current information, this was acceptable within the research and was rewarded. Some learners had difficulty in extracting the relevant information from other sources for their own projects. There was a tendency to download substantial information with very little processing and application.

### **A03 - A completed research project**

Research still tends to rely on the internet and this limits some learners who only use this information source and more importantly only use a few websites. It is evident to see that these learners find it difficult to move up the mark bands. Learners are required to organise the collection and analysis of data and to complete the research project. Most projects were completed however some proposals had not been addressed and information had not been in a format to make considered judgements. Some conclusions were presented in a statement format and in bullet points. Learners must include explanations of intended aims, methodology, analysis and conclusions that acknowledge formal structures. The aspect of the leisure industry discussed in the research project must clearly reflect the project aims and objectives. Results must be presented in a variety of formats where findings and conclusions can be drawn from. It was evident that centres did not provide appropriate guidance here. Some learners had included all the raw questionnaires carried out. These must be processed and removed with one copy being placed in the appendix as evidence. It is the processing of the questionnaires that is more important. This should also be placed in context with the sample size used highlighting any limitations here.

### **A04 - An evaluation of the research project**

There was a marked improvement demonstrated here. Evaluations were detailed and showed clear evidence that the learner had reviewed each stage of the research project.

Learners are required to review their completed project and identify areas where improvements can be made. These suggestions must be relevant and realistic. Learners had attempted to evaluate the research project in relation to their proposals. Evaluations were still sometimes brief statements and descriptive accounts. Evaluations must consider the intended research proposal as well as the methodology that has been used. Learners should be able to put forward other recommendations on how the proposal could have been improved if research had been focused in a completely different way. Some conclusions given did not demonstrate that the learner had understood the chosen issue.





## GCE Leisure studies Grade Boundaries - January 2008

### Unit 1: The Leisure Industry (6966)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	N
Raw mark	47	40	33	27	21	15
UMS	80	70	60	50	40	30
Cum %	6.4	10.6	38.3	63.8	95.7	100

### Unit 2: Working Practices in Leisure (6967)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	N
Raw mark	60	52	44	37	30	23
UMS	80	70	60	50	40	30
Cum %	0.2	5.9	25.9	56.3	80.4	95.0

### Unit 3: The Leisure Customer (6968)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	N
Raw mark	47	41	35	29	23	17
UMS	80	70	60	50	40	30
Cum %	10.9	29.7	50.0	67.2	93.8	100

### Unit 4: Leisure in Action (6969)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	N
Raw mark	48	42	36	30	24	18
UMS	80	70	60	50	40	30
Cum %	19.0	50.0	69.0	78.6	95.2	95.2

### Unit 5: Employment in Leisure (6970)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	N
Raw mark	60	53	46	39	33	27
UMS	80	70	60	50	40	30
Cum %	0.0	6.4	25.9	53.4	77.1	92.5

### Unit 6: Current Issues in Leisure (6971)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	N
Raw mark	47	41	35	29	24	19
UMS	80	70	60	50	40	30
Cum %	10.9	27.3	47.3	58.2	85.5	92.7

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