General Certificate of Education

Leisure Studies 8641/8643

Report on the Examination

2006 examination - June series
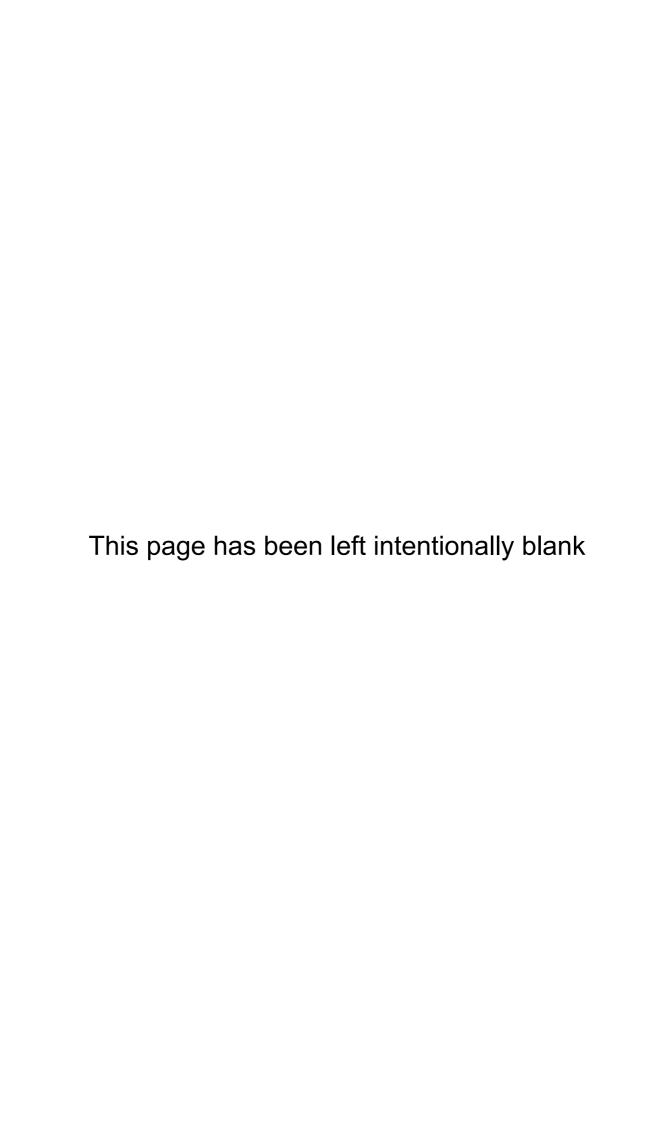
- Advanced Subsidiary Single Award
- Advanced Subsidiary Double Award

Contents

GCE Leisure Studies

This page has been left intentionally blank

Introduction

Both AS written papers are assignments. It is most pleasing to be able to report that the overall quality of work produced by candidates showed that they had been prepared well for the experience of sitting this fairly unusual type of paper. There was a full range of candidates and some produced excellent papers, but the outstanding impression of the candidature as a whole was that there were very few candidates who wrote answers that did not show:

- that good information folders had been collected, which covered the majority of topics in the units

- evidence of good planning and preparation in the period between the start of the exam period and its conclusion

- a reasonable clarity of expression, covering most of the questions reasonably well.

For all the above, the candidates are to be congratulated. So too are their teachers, who have taken on this new specification with a lot of care, hard work and clear thought. Quite obviously it has been a difficult year and many of the people involved have felt considerable insecurity. However, this first set of examinations shows that many of the people involved have made a very good start with the specification.

Before going on to deal with the responses from candidates, there are some administrative matters that need to be mentioned:

(1) The vast majority of candidates had completed the tasks in four separate, 8-page examination booklets. Most of them had filled between four and eight pages and very few needed extra sheets. A few candidates had been given 16-page booklets and this always led to a waste of paper. Very few candidates tried to answer more than one task in the same booklet.

(2) All candidates are supposed to attach a Candidate Record Form to their answers. Many centres failed to attach this declaration to candidates' work. Teachers are asked to stress this point and exam supervisors in future exam sessions.

(3) Some centres sent off their candidates' work in individual files or folders. Whilst it is obviously convenient to store their work in these folders during the exam period, it would be more convenient, and would save postage costs, if these folders were removed before despatch.

(4) Most exam supervisors indicated whether candidates had been present or absent for each of the four controlled conditions sessions that were allotted to the paper. A few did not do this. In future it would be useful if all centres indicated presence or absence for each session. This would reduce the occasional worries over possible lost exam booklets.

LS02 – A People Business

General Comments

The evidence provided by candidates in their answers demonstrated that the range of the specifications had been delivered and that students had been suitably prepared for the paper.

Answers showed that candidates in general had been given adequate access to information from their visits and/or investigations into leisure organisations. Some centres, however, presented very similar information in their answers as a result of the information they had gained or in their preparation for the paper by the delivery staff. Use made of the information by the stronger candidates allowed them to attain the higher levels.

Some candidates failed to achieve their potential as they did not read the question carefully or follow the command words, especially the requirement to 'evaluate'.

Overall this assignment proved a reasonable assessment of candidate knowledge and understanding of the unit specification and allowed the best candidates the opportunity to access the higher level marks.

Assignment Task 1

Students generally answered this task well, although some spent a great deal of time and effort on part (a), which only attracted a total of 3 marks.

Part (b) required students to present a balanced explanation of how organisations used both human and physical resources to welcome their customers. In many cases there was a tendency to concentrate on one or the other.

Part (c) saw students lose marks because they described the use of some methods of technology adopted by the organisation, but they made no attempt to evaluate its success.

Assignment Task 2

Part (a) of this task was answered well, although some candidates did not include some of the obvious benefits an organisation might gain from a situation in which a customer makes a complaint.

Stronger candidates scored well on part (b) by offering a detailed answer, which demonstrated close examination and understanding of all issues of complaint in the letter and explained the actions to be taken by the manager of the organisation. To access the higher marks, the actions suggested were appropriate and the compensation offered was realistic.

Part (c) was not answered particularly well. A large number of candidates went into detail as to how organisations sort feedback from customers on their opinions of the facility/organisation. Many simply explained how complaints were dealt with. The better answers described how an organisation they had studied prepared the facility for their customers and how the staff is trained to anticipate and meet the needs of their customers.

Assignment Task 3

Part (a) of this question was interpreted poorly by many centres. In most cases students did not 'produce **a check list** of key criteria to be used by a mystery shopper…' as required in the question. Credit was given to candidates who identified and justified the criteria to be incorporated in a check list, but they were restricted to Level 2 marks.

Due to the poor understanding of part (a), part (b) was not answered very well in many cases. Weaker candidates made little or no reference to any criteria and offered only obvious suggestions for improvement.

To access the higher level marks, candidates needed to comment on the performance of the organisation they had studied in respect of the criteria identified in part (a) and to make recommendations for improvement.

Assignment Task 4

Part (a) was answered well by the stronger candidates, evidencing research into leisure organisations. Well-balanced answers were produced detailing the importance of induction and the benefits for both organisation and staff of on-going training.

The choice of a leisure organisation to refer to in part (b) reflected on the quality of answer produced by the candidate. For example, where a member of staff in an organisation had been observed, or had explained to students how they sold a **product** as part of their duties within the organisation, answers were well structured around the stages of a 'sales procedure'. This also allowed candidates to explain how technology could be used at the various stages.

Weaker answers referred briefly to staff offering services or products to customers with little or no reference to the contribution made by technology in the process.

LS04 – Leisure Facilities

Since this was the first time that this paper had been set for this specification it was pleasing to report that candidates' work was generally reasonable. The comments below make reference to the most common strengths or weaknesses of individual answers. They also include suggestions as to how candidates in general could improve their answers; referring, where relevant, to the final mark scheme and the ways in which answers met, or failed to meet, the needs of the scheme.

Assignment Task 1

Most candidates answered part (a) well and achieved a Level 2 mark. Where this was not the case, the candidate had usually presented a simple list with very little success in classifying the facilities.

The obvious way to tackle this question, adopted by a majority of candidates, was to structure the answer around the seven categories of leisure activity given on pages 47-48 of the specification. This provided a good, basic classification of the industry into seven groups. Candidates who then went on to name a range of facilities in each of (or most of) these categories reached Level 2 in the mark scheme. Some candidates went further than they needed to along this path, listing and describing ten or more different types of facility in each category, but this did not necessarily move their mark up within Level 2.

The best answers sub-divided their main categories so that, for instance, sports facilities were sub-divided into facilities for active and passive sports. Other candidates divided all of their main categories into public, private or voluntary sectors. Candidates from one centre even made an interesting classification into land-based, water-based and air-borne sporting activities.

A full range of marks was seen in part (b)(i). Some candidates had obviously prepared well for this question but others were caught unawares. The mark scheme said:

> "Reference should be made to the location…with reference to….e.g. central, peripheral, in a suburb, on an estate, business park….
>
> References should also be made to accessibility by main roads, bus services, metro/tram/tube…Then that should be translated into the way it influences the market area of the facility. Are most users local or do they travel distances? What form of transport do they use? Does transport availability affect the size and shape of the market area or the type of people who might visit? Does it rule out the young, the poor, the old….? And so on."

This list shows some of the ways that candidates could score well. It is not meant to be exhaustive, but nor is it meant to show barriers that stop people attaining marks. Examiners had to use their judgement on the way individuals had dealt with their own facility within its particular location.

When candidates presented a map they usually went on to produce very good answers. Knowledge of specific details such as road numbers, bus routes, distances from town centres and so on also usually led to good marks. On the other hand, low scoring answers were generally characterised by vagueness and generalisation. They also often considered that the main determinant of a facility's accessibility was its visibility from the main road, so that success appeared to depend on passing trade – people who just happened to catch sight of the facility as they were passing by.

If some candidates were not well prepared for part (b)(i), the same cannot be said of part (b)(ii)! It seemed as though all candidates had prepared for the disabled access question, or at least for the wheelchair access question. Most candidates were able to reach good Level 1 marks (1-4 marks) by referring to

ramps, wide doors, automatic doors, lower sections to the reception desk, floors all on one level, specially designed toilets and changing rooms, hoists for the baths, and so on.

However, despite good knowledge, some candidates stayed in Level 1 because they did not develop their knowledge and show clear understanding.

The mark scheme for Level 2 read:

> "Clear explanation is given showing how the nature of people's special needs links with the design features that are provided to meet those needs; or conversely, the absence of the necessary design features is discussed…… More than one type of special need must be discussed to reach the top of the level."

The candidates who did reach the top of Level 2 usually made reference to clear signage and/or Braille and/or the use of colour in the design scheme as aids for the blind or partially sighted, or to hearing loops and other forms of enhanced sound, or to signing in performances, designed to meet the needs of the deaf or hard of hearing.

Assignment Task 2

Almost all candidates showed that they were well prepared for part (a). In the few cases where candidates did not show enough relevant details of two case studies, this usually seemed to be because they had chosen inappropriate areas that did not allow them to develop full answers with reference to *both* facilities. (For instance, one candidate chose to write about reception areas and spectator facilities in a swimming baths and a leisure centre. She was able to write in detail about the two reception areas but had to say that there were no real spectator facilities in the leisure centre. She thus automatically disqualified herself from a proportion of the marks.)

The main problem with this question was over the understanding of the word 'design'. It had been hoped that candidates would make reference to a wide range of design features – layout, decoration, signage, arrangements for movement through the area, sight lines, heating and air-conditioning, seating and other furniture, comfort and general ambience, displays and so on. It was even hoped that some candidates would be able to transfer skills and concepts from design technology to their consideration of facilities. Unfortunately this was not often the case.

The majority of the work from a majority of the candidates concentrated on a consideration of the size and layout of the areas under consideration. A large majority of candidates chose reception areas as one of their topics, and then they mainly wrote about the size and layout of the reception. They referred to the position of the desk, the number of people who could work behind the desk at one time, the number of people who could wait in reception at any one time, whether there were any chairs or not, and then little else. So, these candidates could make very little detailed comparison. They compared size and discussed whether the area was adequate for the normal flow of customers but then had little else to say.

However, even such an answer could reach Level 2 if done well. The mark scheme for Level 2 states:

> "As soon as there is some specific comparison of design the answer will move into this level."

In fact, many answers reached Level 2 but then stayed at 5 marks, the bottom of the level, because they were so limited in scope and did not compare the whole range of design features.

Parts (a) and (b) had separated out description and evaluation because it was felt that this would help candidates to structure their answers. This did not work as well as had been hoped, leading to quite a lot

of repetition as candidates made sure that they had included everything that was needed in both parts of the question.

The examiner had hoped that good answers to part (b) would start by describing the needs of the customers and developing the criteria by which the design of each of the areas could be evaluated, then going on to discuss to what extent those criteria had been met by the design features. When this was done properly and systematically, the answers usually went into Level 3 (9–12 marks) and then quite often to the top of the level.

Extracts from each of the three levels in the mark scheme are included here to show how examiners assessed the answers:

> "Level 1: There is some basic evaluation of the quality of design in one of the areas. The evaluation is basic when it asserts that a feature is suitable…without justification.
>
> Level 2: There is clear evaluation, based on evidence, of the quality of the design and its fitness for purpose in at least one area… Specific strengths and weaknesses might both be discussed.
>
> Level 3: A detailed evaluation of needs and how well those needs are met… The answer is balanced and shows good insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the two areas in each of the two facilities… May show awareness of how the facilities can learn from each other."

Assignment Task 3

For part (a), there was a considerable difference between candidates, both in terms of how well they had prepared for this part of the exam, and in how well they were able to plan and organise their answers.

Well-prepared candidates demonstrated a broad knowledge of different sources of finance, which they could elaborate on with reference to their case study examples. Other candidates knew how their own case study facilities had been financed but were unable to move on from that knowledge to a general discussion of the industry as a whole.

The good organisers were able to sort out clearly how the three distinct 'finance streams' mentioned in the question operated, whilst the poor organisers were unable to sort out start-up costs, development costs and day-to-day running costs.

As a result of this, the question turned out to be a very good discriminator. The best candidates gained very good marks, whilst the weaker candidates struggled to gain more than one or two. In fact, the weakest candidates often missed the point on the last two bullet points and wrote about what day-to-day running costs were spent on rather than where the money came from.

Part (b) was also a good discriminator, although there were fewer Level 3 answers compared with part 3(a).

The mark scheme states:

> "Private funding is dependent on market forces. It must make a profit or meet other needs of the individuals or companies that are providing the funds.
>
> Public funding is less tied to the needs of the market or to market fluctuations, but it may lead to interference from political appointees who may try to influence the running of the facility.

> …private sector funding may mean that the user has to pay more for the facility so
> that the owner or shareholder can make a profit…
>
> …providing a service is more important in the public sector but this may also mean
> that the facility becomes less responsive to customer needs because the feedback
> provided by profitability figures is less obvious and direct…
>
> ….political control can be exercised through the ballot box but this can be a remote
> and cumbersome process."

The examiner feels that it is important that this basic distinction between aspects of public and private funding is clearly understood by candidates who are asked to deal with this topic in future examinations.

In fact, most candidates did not make a contrast between the profit-driven nature of private facilities and the public service nature of those controlled by local authorities or voluntary bodies. Many candidates made useful comments about different levels of control exercised by different funding bodies. Quite a significant number also referred to a contrast between easy access to funds as against more limited access to funds. Oddly, some candidates saw public control as offering easy access to funding whilst others saw private control as more benevolent.

Some candidates answered this question from the point of view of the customer of the leisure organisation; others answered from the point of view of the worker in the industry. Either style of answer was acceptable, but an answer which referred to both was probably ideal as it allowed for greater depth and balance.

Assignment Task 4

There is often a falling off in the standard of exam answers towards the end of a paper. This was not the case here. Many candidates wrote their best answer to part (a). This was partly because it was a straightforward question with a 'describe' command. However, it is to the credit of candidates that they still managed to write coherently and in detail towards the end of what must have been a hard few days for them.

The best answers reached top marks for the question quite easily, and then continued.

There was some discussion amongst the examining team about the interpretation of the word 'procedures'. Was it to be interpreted literally and narrowly or could credit be given to candidates' references to signage, fire extinguishers, fire doors, building materials, etc. It was decided that these fitting and fixtures were all linked to the procedures of staff training, inspection, certification and so on. Moreover they were all put in place as a result of the planning and building procedures. Therefore candidates could be given credit for references to such things. However, to reach Level 2, a candidate had to produce an answer that:

> "clearly describes some of the procedures for staff training, carrying out fire drills,
> checking exits and equipment…and…how these procedures are influenced by fire
> safety regulations.
>
> …at the top of the level…shows clear knowledge of inspection and enforcement
> procedures…"

Once again, the 12-mark question for part (b) proved to be a very good discriminator, producing a very wide range of marks. Only a few candidates reached the top of Level 3, but quite a number gained good Level 2 marks.

Candidates wrote about a wide range of legislation that had affected the facilities under consideration. They showed just how thorough their research had often been.

The best answers made brief references to particular laws or by-laws and then provided detailed knowledge and understanding of how that law had affected the facility in practice. Poorer answers often gave some details about aspects of a facility that had been affected by some sort of law but without making any reference to the law itself. In future, when questions on this part of the specification are set, all candidates need to be aware of the need to support their applied knowledge clearly by making concise, clear reference to the law and its intentions.

In addition to referring to local planning regulations, candidates achieved success by discussing the effect of Health and Safety at Work legislation, Disability Discrimination legislation, tree preservation orders, traffic management regulations, regulations for the control of hazardous substances, food safety standards, Green Belt legislation, local land-use zoning, and so on. As with all the best examinations, marking these papers was often a learning experience for the examiners. The range of knowledge shown by candidates shows that teachers and their partners in the leisure industry have done an excellent job of providing candidates with a varied and positive learning experience, whatever the innate ability of the young people involved.

Principal Moderator's Report

LS01 – The Leisure Industry Today

A wide range of ability and depth of work was submitted.

The leisure industry needs to be defined rather than implied. Some candidates did not provide examples in enough depth to show the range, scale and importance of the industry. Data needs to be included to allow candidates to explore fully the importance and range of the industry. The section on components to show aspects of the range and scale was generally well done. On the whole, sectors were well covered but the interrelationships needed greater development with candidates referring only to joint usage. It was also pleasing how much information candidates had researched about the European industry and how attempts had been made to compare the UK with some countries in Europe.

Current developments within the industry were in most cases illustrated but not always substantiated using facts and figures. Participation trends frequently used data that was not sufficiently up to date, and in most cases this data was not used to interpret future trends, which meant the full scope of the task could not be completed.

In many cases, candidates failed to understand the impact that different market segments can have on the industry, especially in terms of access, participation and barriers. It is recommended that time is spent on teaching market segments and analysing the effects that this can have on different sectors of the industry.

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

LS03 – Getting it Right in the Leisure Industry

Centres should make sure when choosing an organisation that the systems and marketing used by that organisation will provide sufficient detail to address AOs 2, 3 and 4. Poor choices will prevent candidates from accessing the full range of marks available.

On the whole the staff handbook was reasonably well done, but attention needs to be paid to the link 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 laws, etc, help to ensure the health, safety and security of staff and customers. In many cases, examples of the risk assessment were included but not advice on how to carry out the risk assessment.

The key quality control and management systems were described, but more detailed attention needs to be given to how these are used effectively to maintain standards. If Quest is used, the various strands need to be applied to show how they can be applied to maintain standards. In this task, theory of the management systems is not sufficient.

On the whole, business systems were restricted to aspects of customer accounts, billing, etc, and not related to the full range of issues such as budgeting, cash flow, recruitment, stock records (see full list on pages 42-43 of the specification). The best candidates covered these aspects to analyse the business systems used and the effectiveness of the impact of technology to support these systems.

The key aspects of marketing were well covered but the range lacked application in most cases when it came to evaluating their effect on consumer awareness, sales or take-up. There were some excellent examples of analysis of SWOT and PEST.

LS05 – Lifestyles and Life Stages

Care should be taken when recording AO2 and AO3 on candidate record forms, as these appear in reverse order in the grid of assessment criteria.

The first task was covered quite factually by using data in the form of graphs and tables. A few enterprising candidates tried to create the picture of the health of the nation by using a UK map with data added. In most cases the links to show the whole picture of the health of the nation was not fully covered. Regional differences were not always evident. Some aspects of technology were looked at in terms of the impact on people's lifestyles.

A detailed analysis of the implications of the current health status of the population on the leisure industry was often lacking in depth, especially at the lower end of the ability range. The implications for the industry were often vague. Some good practice was shown in linking primary and secondary research and what this meant to specific areas, but then this was not fully expanded to link with the leisure industry as a whole.

Good candidates clearly provided evidence of a script and had indeed presented this as evidence by PowerPoint presentation notes. However, the ways in which this was linked to different lifestyles was not always made clear. The benefits of the different activities were not always explained or related to the different aspects of health. If the presentation is actually given, it would be good practice to add a witness statement to show further evidence of coverage.

In this task, most aspects of the leisure industry were covered but there needed to be greater depth on access and opportunities in the local area and how these impact on lifestyles or life stages. Many candidates did not explore this aspect fully. This therefore made it more difficult when making a range of appropriate and realistic recommendations for improvement.

LS06 – Leisure Organisations

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

A detailed report on employment opportunities showed 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. This, therefore, did not allow candidates to understand the paths for progression even if that may be something that would need to be considered outside the organisation being reviewed.

Research into the marketing mix of the organisation was carried out reasonably well and some links made to the market segments and therefore the target markets of the organisations. Primary research was not always apparent in the detail of candidates' work and many appear to have relied on talks with one person within the organisation. A range of primary research would have given a wider base on which to base relevant and detailed analysis.

The evaluation relied on the depth of research carried out by the candidate, as did the recommendations for future events/expansion of the organisation. At the higher mark bands, the candidates needed to have made these recommendations by looking at how they could increase market share at minimal cost/time expense. This was not always considered by even the best candidates.

LS07 – Fitness Training for Sport

Care should be taken when recording AO2 and AO3 on candidate record forms, as these appear in reverse order in the grid of assessment criteria.

In most candidates' work, the knowledge, skills and understanding of the components of physical fitness was detailed but reference was not always made to how these can improve performance. Examples were not always included.

Research into, and analysis of methods of, fitness training was clearly carried out by most candidates, but the observation of a fitness training session was not always included or was poorly carried out by some. This meant that when planning and assisting in their own sessions, aims were frequently not stated or not applied to the needs of the participants. In the poorest examples of work in this task, candidates coached a skill rather than fitness. This showed a lack of understanding of the whole unit. The fitness session needs to be timed to show the elements of warm up, fitness training and cool down. A witness statement will assist in showing that the candidate has good communication skills and that the session is controlled. Safety factors were not always related to the session. The evaluation of an individual using a minimum of two measures of fitness range from well done to lacking in sufficient detail. Starting points for fitness were not always documented and therefore candidates found it difficult to identify goals and make recommendations linked to areas for improvement.

On the whole, candidates used good written expression in all units at the higher mark bands, conveying the appropriate meaning for the subject matter.

Mark Range and Award of Grades

Unit	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
LS01	60	60	30.6	12.0
LS02	80	80	39.3	9.8
LS03	60	60	28.7	11.9
LS04	80	80	36.8	12.3
LS05	60	60	28.5	11.8
LS06	60	60	25.9	12.2
LS07	60	60	33.2	11.1

For units which contain only one component, scaled marks are the same as raw marks.

LS01 (1203 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

LS02 (857 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	80	53	48	43	38	33
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

LS03 (1158 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	60	47	41	35	29	23
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

LS04 (393 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	80	56	50	44	38	33
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

LS05 (382 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	60	45	40	35	30	25
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

LS06 (70 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	60	45	39	34	29	24
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

LS07 (312 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	60	48	42	36	30	25
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Advanced Subsidiary Single Award

Provisional statistics for the award (725 candidates)

	A	B	C	D	E
Cumulative %	2.9	12.7	32.8	55.7	76.0

Advanced Subsidiary Double Award

Provisional statistics for the award (253 candidates)

	AA	AB	BB	BC	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE
Cumulative %	2.0	5.9	8.7	16.2	25.3	39.1	51.4	66.8	77.9

Definitions

Boundary Mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

Mean Mark: is the sum of all candidates' marks divided by the number of candidates. In order to compare mean marks for different components, the mean mark (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).

Standard Deviation: a measure of the spread of candidates' marks. In most components, approximately two-thirds of all candidates lie in a range of plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean, and approximately 95% of all candidates lie in a range of plus or minus two standard deviations from the mean. In order to compare the standard deviations for different components, the standard deviation (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).

Uniform Mark: a score on a standard scale which indicates a candidate's performance. The lowest uniform mark for grade A is always 80% of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, similarly grade B is 70%, grade C is 60%, grade D is 50% and grade E is 40%. A candidate's total scaled mark for each unit is converted to a uniform mark and the uniform marks for the units which count towards the AS or A-level qualification are added in order to determine the candidate's overall grade.