



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **Leisure Studies**

## **8641/8643/8646/8649**

### **LS04      Leisure Facilities**

# **Report on the Examination**

*2007 examination - January series*

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As with the June series for this paper, it was very gratifying that there were no candidates who were unable to produce reasonable answers to all four of the assignments. Once again, this group had been well prepared and was willing to put a reasonable effort into answering the papers. They all did themselves credit, although the paper differentiated well between candidates of different standards.

Assignments 1 and 3 proved to allow candidates to score more freely than the other two assignments. They scored moderately on Assignment 2 and generally scored least well on Assignment 4.

Generally, on the questions with up to 6 marks available candidates scored the full range of marks. However, on those with 10 marks available (Level 1 = 1 – 4, Level 2 = 4 – 8, Level 3 = 9 – 10) few candidates reached the top level and comparatively few reached the top of Level 2. The high marks obviously required candidates to show higher order skills of evaluation, explanation and so on and these were rarely done well. It was clear that, after just one term of their A level courses, even the better candidates found these questions very difficult. In future, candidates being entered for this paper for the first time in January, and who are aiming to score high marks, need to be trained carefully in answering these longer questions with their more demanding skill requirements.

Centres need to comply with the following instructions:

- Each question must be answered in a separate answer booklet
- When the examination is completed, all 4 booklets should then be fastened together
- Preparatory folders should be retained in the centre under secure conditions until after the Enquiry Upon Results deadline
- Scripts should be posted off to the allocated examiner no later than the final date allowed for the controlled conditions periods.

### **Assignment 1**

**(a)** This was intended to focus candidates' minds on the place they were going to write about in the rest of the assignment, and to introduce it to the examiner. It succeeded in both these aims, and most candidates scored both marks available.

The best answers made a clear distinction between the overall aims of the organisation and the more focused policies that help the organisation to achieve these aims.

**(b)** Most candidates were well prepared for answering this question. It was quite clear that those who were able to draw some kind of plan were generally able to express their ideas more clearly too, especially when they made particular reference to their plan.

Quite a substantial minority were unable to give any realistic indication of the size of their facility. These candidates just wrote in very general, non-specific terms such as 'quite big' or 'medium sized'. The better answers did not always give measurements in feet or metres but described the facility in more practical terms such as 'big enough for 6 indoor tennis courts,' '950 seater auditorium' or 'a full size Olympic swimming pool.'

**(c)** This proved to be more difficult than the first two parts. Many candidates wrote in very general terms and did not plan their answers clearly. The better candidates usually went back to the organisation's aims in (a) and listed some of the main aims. Then they went through each of these in turn, describing what facilities were needed and then explaining how well the facilities matched the needs. They had obviously thought critically about the facilities before they started to write their answers. Some had even had a very honest discussion with someone from the facility they were discussing and were able to answer the question from a very practical, industry-based point of view.

These good candidates were well-able to discuss strengths and weaknesses and reach some sort of conclusion. On the other hand, the weaker candidates appeared to have been told just how wonderful the chosen facility was, and so they were only able to reiterate this in rather bland 'salesman' style.

**(d)** This was the question that differentiated most clearly on this assignment. The best candidates were able to score very well, often by suggesting a simple, practical change and justifying in terms of both its need and its practicality. These answers showed good practical understanding, applied to a realistic suggestion. Good answers suggested re-designs of the reception desk to deal with a problem that had been identified in part (c), or improved signing in a particular part of the chosen facility.

Weaker candidates often chose something far more major, such as an expansion programme or a major re-build, and could only justify it in the simplest terms.

## **Assignment 2**

**(a)** Many candidates had obviously looked at last summer's LS04 and transferred some of the questions from that one to this one. In this case many wrote about the position of the chosen facilities with relation to their surrounding market area, which was not asked for in this question.

Many other candidates seemed to be remembering last summer's question on disabled access and tended to limit their answers to that aspect of the question. What these candidates wrote was not wrong – just rather limited.

The 'Notes for answers' in the mark scheme describe what the Principal Examiner was expecting to find in answers. These notes are not exhaustive and examiners are always instructed to look out for different ways of answering questions correctly, but they might be a useful guide for teachers in this case:

"Answers should consider access into the car park, if applicable, then from the car park, or bus stop, or pavement, into the building itself.

Consideration should be given to distance, slopes, steps, etc. for able bodied and disabled users.

Safety of access routes should be taken into account, including separation of different types of traffic.

Signage might be considered.

The numbers of users entering at any one time might need to be taken into account, as this will affect adequacy of paths, car park control, doors, and so on.

Under the second bullet point they should consider all the main movements inside the building – into, around and out of reception areas – into changing rooms or cloakrooms or toilets – within the main activity areas – and so on.

Movement in normal times and in emergencies could be considered.

Width of corridors, doors, etc. compared with typical flows of people should be considered.

Sight lines along corridors, signage in normal times and emergencies, might be taken into account.

Efficiency of evacuation arrangements might be considered.”

The best answers considered a range of different aspects of access. Poorer ones were usually limited to one or two aspects. The best answers considered how and why particular aspects of the facility had been designed, whilst the weaker answers just described what was there without considering aspects of design as such.

**(b)** This question asked about ‘refurbishment’. Some candidates seemed to have a very different understanding of the meaning of ‘refurbishment’ than the Principal Examiner had expected. In fact all the dictionary definitions are along the lines of: ‘being restored to its former good condition’/ ‘being made fit for purpose again’.

The examiners therefore accepted any aspect of work to make an old building fit for a new purpose, or any work to renovate part of a building to make it more up-to-date. They did not accept any new-build schemes for credit in (b)(i). However, not wanting to ‘double penalise’ candidates, it was decided to allow credit in (b)(ii) for candidates who evaluated how well a problem had been tackled, even when it was not a building refurbishment, such as a theme park.

In part (i) candidates had to answer in two distinct stages – identifying a problem and then describing how it was tackled. The first part was usually done better than the second.

In part (ii) they had to evaluate the solution. The best answers went through the stages that have been suggested in previous ‘evaluation’ answers:

- setting criteria by which to judge success
- discussing the extent to which those criteria have been met
- drawing an overall conclusion.

Candidates who followed this plan generally reached Level 2 fairly easily. Other candidates merely wrote in very general terms and their answers lacked a clear structure. They generally remained in Level 1.

### Assignment 3

**(a)** In the specification there is a list of the type of areas that are designed for staff use only. Some candidates clearly referred to this list for the planning of their answers and so had plenty to write about. Others limited their answers, usually to write just about staff rooms or about reception areas. It was difficult for this latter group to write enough to gain high marks.

Other candidates concentrated on describing the facilities and did very little to evaluate. These candidates were able to reach Level 2 purely on description, but then did not progress far within the level.

Candidates who did set criteria included things such as:

- in the facility there are 'x' members of staff and up to 'y' can be on break at any one time so the staff room should have at least 'z' number of chairs
- the manager's office needs to be secure because staff records are kept there, but it also needs to be central so that the manager can keep an eye on everything that is going on
- the store cupboards have to be big enough for..... and they must have enough shelf space to store....and there must be room for staff to get things in and out without breaking safety regulations about lifting....
- dangerous chemicals for cleaning must be kept in conditions that meet the needs of the legislation

**(b)** Most candidates wrote about arrangements for cleaning either toilets, changing rooms and showers or reception areas or, less frequently, restaurants.

Those who wrote about changing room areas often had a lot of interesting information about wet and dry areas, flooring and wall covering design, efficiency of design for sweeping and mopping into corners, and so on. This type of answer offered a great deal of scope for writing about design.

Those who wrote about reception areas usually had less to write about, although sockets for vacuum cleaners often figured large in these answers. Unfortunately, these answers often strayed on to procedures rather than staying with design.

People who wrote about restaurants seemed to be writing, in many cases, from their own experiences. Some managed to write in a lot of detail and showed real understanding of the practical applications of the design. The work of these candidates was written with real feeling about the problems involved in cleaning up a restaurant late at night after the customers had left. These experiences gave them a very good understanding of both good and bad design points, which came through strongly in the best of the answers.

## Assignment 4

The part of the Specification that deals with financing of leisure facilities seems to be one of the more difficult parts for finding good case study material. It was with that in mind that this assignment was set. It was hoped that the material on the Leigh Sports Village would provide teachers and their students with very useful case study material for future teaching. A lot of further information about the Village, including updates on financing and construction can be found at the website <http://www.leighsportsvillage.co.uk/index1.htm>

**(a)** A majority of candidates gained reasonable level 1 marks by selecting and listing elements of financing from Section 3 and Section 4 of the insert. Some went on to Level 2 by attempting to sort and classify the information that they had selected. Very few moved up through level 2 by picking out the less obvious sources of finance for the development – the mixed use and commercial use developments mentioned towards the end of section 2. It is hoped that, once the key developments are in place, mainly financed from public money, private developers will see the commercial potential and finance restaurants, music venues, ten-pin bowling, a cinema and conference facilities. It is also hoped that fitness and health clubs, youth and crèche facilities, sports bars, etc. will be developed, perhaps with mixed financing.

With material like this, provided for future exams, candidates who are aiming for higher grades must make a very detailed study and be prepared to go below the surface of what they can see to find the deeper, underlying ideas where they can.

**(b)** Here too candidates needed to look at the material in depth and think their answers through very carefully. Most candidates wrote about the benefits of having a range of sources of finance in terms of having fall-back available if one source was withdrawn. However, the answers to this section were generally lacking in ambition. Very few wrote about the ideas of:

- the cumulative effect of having a lot of different facilities available, each helping to publicise the Village and bring in more users and more investment
- the fact that the mixture of public, private and voluntary sector funding would bring a wider range of facilities and activities which would appeal to a wider range of income groups, leisure user groups, ages and so on.

This was a difficult question – quite deliberately included to stretch the most able. However, few candidates appeared to have effectively used the time which could have been available to review this task before starting the 4<sup>th</sup> period under controlled conditions, thus very few could access higher marks.

**(c)** In their answers to this question it was hoped that candidates would be able to distinguish between different income streams – particularly differentiating money put aside from regular income to cover basic repairs and renewals and the special sums that have to come from the bodies that run the facilities. When this distinction was made candidates were often able to score full marks. However, the weaker candidates did not have any structure to their answers and seemed to be guessing or relying on a ‘common sense only’ approach to their answers.

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

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