



General Certificate of Education

Leisure Studies

8641/8643/8646/8649

LS04 Leisure Facilities

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - January series

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GENERAL

The spread of marks on this examination was greater than has been seen on previous papers and this was mainly due to an improvement in marks at the top of the range. There were some superb performances on the paper overall and these were a considerable improvement on previous performances on this paper. There was a slight improvement in performance at the bottom of the mark range.

What was particularly good

1. It appeared that the candidates in the better centres had produced excellent, thorough folders of material in preparation for the examination. Their preparation seemed to have covered all the possible topics that might appear on the paper. What is more, the candidates from these centres had thought clearly about how this information could be used to answer the Assignment Tasks set.
2. The more able candidates seemed to have thought much more clearly about how to address the higher level command words, particularly "evaluate". These candidates wrote answers that stated what was to be assessed, discussed the criteria for good performance in these areas and then went on to consider how well the criteria had been met. Their answers showed good knowledge that had been clearly applied.
3. Candidates at some centres have obviously been encouraged to think in a vocational way about all aspects of the topic.

What was not so good

1. The less able candidates often failed to adapt their knowledge to the specific demands of the questions. There was evidence of a lot of pre-prepared material being repeated with little careful thought as to how it needed to be adapted to meet the specific demands of the questions.
2. In particular, the less able candidates did poorly on questions that asked for 'evaluation'. Such answers were often just descriptive, sometimes with a statement almost thrown in at the end to say something like "It is quite good" or "It is not up to standard", but without any justification for such a statement.
3. Some candidates still write far too many answers from a customer point of view or from the individual staff member's point of view. They often ignore the vocational, "organisation-specific" point of view.

Assignment Task 1

In part (a), most candidates were able to describe some sort of a range of facilities. However, the range was often limited to leisure clubs with many candidates totally failing to look at sports facilities in a more general way. Less able candidates tended to write too much description of their limited range of facilities when they would have been better advised to try to think more widely and cover a fuller range.

The main attempts at classification usually were based on the public/ private/ voluntary classification but some of the best answers also included references to indoor/outdoor facilities, organised clubs as opposed to informal sports facilities in places such as parks, or even based a classification on the general age of participants at each facility.

In part (b)(i), there were some very good answers, when it was clear that this aspect of the specification had been clearly targeted by the centre. Better candidates were able to consider a lot of aspects of the dual use of their facility; less able candidates tended to limit themselves to timetable solutions.

In part (b)(ii), there was a very wide spread of marks. The best answers considered a range of issues from at least two different points of view. These answers considered increased income for the owner, a broader range of opportunities for the people and organisations in the area, problems of wear and tear, issues occurring at changeover times, and even the problems of stress on the neighbours of the facility with the extended opening times often caused by shared use.

Weaker answers repeated a lot of details about the timetable, often stating the obvious such as that when one organisation was using the facility it was not available to other organisations.

Assignment Task 2

The vast majority of candidates were able to read the plan of Jesmond Pool well and also to describe its features well. Some less able candidates just wrote a long list of features though and did not move out of Level 1. However, most candidates wrote well structured descriptions and gained Level 2 marks.

Part (a)(ii) produced a wider spread of marks. The best candidates structured their answers well by considering and evaluating the layout of the pool from different points of view, e.g. disabled user, adult with two children of different sexes, older user, etc. This led to them evaluating the pool against clear criteria.

There were three very common points raised, each of which was almost always seen as a negative and for which there was a simple answer which was rarely appreciated by candidates. A little more careful thought would have allowed candidates to replace the often angry answers with slightly more temperate, sensible comments. These points were:

- there are only 12 lockers in each changing room which is not enough. In fact the map shows a plan and there are banks of lockers with several one above another
- wheel chair users have to drive their wheel chairs through the foot bath which is not right. In fact they have to do that because their wheels might be dirty and need disinfecting, so the sides of the bath are sloped to allow the chairs to drive out
- there is a door between the ladies' and the gents' toilet area which could cause embarrassment to users. In fact it can be locked when cleaners do not need direct access.

Part (b) was often disappointing, although the best answers were very good. Many candidates failed to reach Level 2 because:

- they chose an inappropriate area – often the car park, even when there was no car park – and then found that there was very little that could be said about the area
- they wrote about layout alone and did not mention any other design features such as lighting, colour schemes, ventilation, seating and working position, etc.
- they did not write from the point of view of staff or.

- if they did write from a staff point of view they *only* wrote about the convenience of the individual member of staff and not from the point of view of the staff as a member of an organisation with a job to do. Again this was particularly the case with car parks where the car parks were seen as a convenience for staff where they should be able to park their cars and not as part of the work place where they might have to supervise and provide a service for customers. The “applied” or “vocational” aspect was left out of too many answers.

Assignment Task 3

Part (a)(i) was generally answered well. It appeared that candidates had usually thought carefully about the photographs before they went in to their examination. Part (a)(ii) was also done well. Many comments were made about how the Pool tried to meet the needs of the Disability Discrimination Act. However, candidates then went on to discuss a range of other aspects of legislation including Town Planning regulations on building materials and style, Health and Safety legislation on double glazing and glass roofs and so on. Some candidates wrote in great technical detail although, just occasionally, they failed to include information that they had learnt at their own case studies relevant to the Jesmond Pool.

In Part (b), an overwhelming majority of candidates was able to write well when they were describing the refurbishments of their own case studies. However, the evaluation of the success of the projects proved more difficult.

Many candidates were able to explain why the refurbishment had been undertaken. In other words they started to provide some criteria by which the success could be judged. When this was done the answers usually went into Level 2. If both the description and the establishing of criteria were done well the answer could reach the top of Level 2.

Only a small minority reached Level 3. A small number of candidates were able to provide precise figures about the increase in membership or in usage of the facility since refurbishment and these were clear Level 3 answers. Others could not provide such precision but did manage to provide anecdotal evidence to support their evaluations and they too reached Level 3. However, many candidates ended their answers with a statement like “They set out to redevelop.....and now it has been done.....and it looks really good so it was a great success”.

Centres should be aware that the best candidates should be looking to provide really sound evidence for the evaluations in future if they hope to reach the very top marks.

Assignment Task 4

The descriptions in part (a)(i) were generally good. However, candidates should be aware that when asked to describe one aspect of a topic they should limit themselves to describing one aspect. Many candidates lost marks by straying off the point and mixing descriptions of the permanent structures and the moveable equipment.

There was a large range of marks for (a)(ii). The more able candidates were very well prepared for this question and knew a lot of detail about *both* cleaning and maintenance. Unfortunately some candidates appeared not to have studied this area in any depth and so wrote in very general terms about cleaning rotas and picking up litter. Others wrote a lot about the constant checking that had to be done by all staff but seemed to have little knowledge about what happened when the checking revealed a problem.

The range of marks was even greater for part (b). This is obviously a difficult area to gain detailed figures for. Nevertheless, some candidates were able to provide very detailed figures for all the different sources of income in their chosen organisation. The details about the income sources for one particular Premier Football Club were quite outstanding in that respect. However, candidates should have been able to make some references to income streams in some general terms. They should have been aware, at least, of sources such as membership fees, ticket income, profits from sales of food, drinks, souvenirs and so on, income from the council or sponsors or donations, etc. They should also have been aware of the differences between expenditure meeting day-to-day costs and that on capital projects or contingency funds. In quite a number of cases such information had either not been collected or had not been understood.

On the other hand, it was interesting that some candidates interpreted the question in terms of meeting day-to-day costs by keeping those costs as low as possible. Rather than writing about income they wrote about reducing out-goings. This was seen as a perfectly valid interpretation of the question so such answers were able to gain high Level 2 marks.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates

1. Evidence suggests that some centres are producing superb, detailed, well organised folders of information on their chosen facilities. In other cases candidate work suggests that the folders are less detailed and/or less well organised. It is **essential** that the Instructions on page 2 of the assignments regarding preparation and collection of the preparatory folders are adhered to. It is to be hoped that centres will have built up some good contacts with leisure facilities now and that the quality of candidates' folders will continue to show the steady improvement that is already being demonstrated in some centres now.
2. Some candidates appear to need more practice at writing answers that are clearly targeted to meet the particular demands of the questions set rather than providing a rewrite of material that has been collected in the folders.
3. Candidates need to think more clearly and broadly about the meaning of "design" as related to leisure facilities. Too many answers still write about "design" purely in terms of "layout".
4. All candidates must be encouraged to remember that they are taking an applied subject. They must consider work-related aspects of topics from the organisations view point and not fall into the trap of writing purely from the point of view of the customer or the individual junior member of staff.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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