



## **General Certificate of Education**

### **Leisure Studies**

**8641/8643/8646/8649**

**LS09          Working in the People Business**

## **Report on the Examination**

*2008 examination - January series*

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## **GENERAL**

### **What was particularly good**

1. Candidates are beginning to learn much of the content from the specification.
2. Candidates are choosing jobs from the leisure industry about which they have learned the qualifications, qualities, skills and experience required. However, some candidates have chosen a job which does not lend itself to analysis as well as an alternative job might have done.

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

1. There was a tendency for candidates to write as if the leisure organisation exists for the benefit of its employees, and of sometimes overstating the need for motivational devices to keep the workforce enthused.

### ***Question 1***

Some candidates looked at the staffing rota entirely from the employees' point of view, citing the motivational effect of giving them convenient hours. However, a leisure organisation must also make its rota serve the needs of customers and take commercial considerations into account. The Working Time Regulations and equal opportunities are essential, and managers will want to ensure that the rota is fair. However, candidates needed also to show that the workforce is deployed in a way that provides customers with a reliable service, before looking at which hours might then suit the staff's personal circumstances.

### ***Question 2***

A number of candidates gave as a disadvantage that using recruitment websites meant organisations could not ask to meet the employee in an interview first. It is possible to post a CV on a website so that prospective employers can find it but it would be very unlikely that organisations would hire staff without making careful checks about the reliability of the information provided. A more obvious disadvantage is that, whereas it is relatively easy to bring a particular job advertisement to prospective applicants' attention using a local newspaper, there are millions of pages on the internet, and so many people hunting for a job would fail to find the exact advert they want.

### ***Question 3***

Candidates continue to write in very general terms about the standard procedure that a leisure organisation would be expected to use for recruitment and selection. For example, they need to include proper use of the job description and person specification and know how an interview panel might use a scoring system to select candidates impartially.

### **Question 4**

Unfortunately a sizeable proportion of candidates had little idea of what appraisal was confusing it with bonus or performance related pay or other means of motivating the workforce. Appraisal is a potentially valuable motivational tool but in this case the question focused upon the formal steps that would be followed by a typical leisure organisation in its annual appraisal procedure, perhaps starting with a questionnaire for the employee or fixing a date for the discussion with a manager. While there was no single procedure required for a correct answer, it was felt that certain key steps could be expected in almost all organisations and candidates were expected to include the majority of them.

### **Question 5**

Candidates had a generally good understanding of what a chain of command and span of control are. This question is indicative that the term 'hierarchy' in the LS09 specification prompts centres to ensure a basic understanding of how an organisation structure works and what it is for, rather than solely knowing one from an organisation that the candidate has studied.

Answers to part (c) showed good understanding of how a Gala employee's career should benefit from working in a number of different clubs. Particularly important was being able to see the various ways in which different managers work when encountering problems in a range of settings.

### **Question 6**

Candidates showed sound knowledge of the Working Time Regulations (the precise number of hours or days that could be worked were not required to gain the marks on this occasion). They did not score so highly when discussing a job that they had chosen.

It is suggested that centres should ensure that candidates are prepared to answer questions on the requirements and conditions of at least two contrasting jobs in the leisure industry. The choice should be made carefully as some jobs lend themselves to analysis much more clearly than others.

### **Question 7**

Centres should prepare candidates to show basic understanding of the key requirements of the main employment legislation. In this case, candidates were expected to interpret unfair treatment on grounds of gender, and some went on to write about interesting exceptions to the Act.

### **Question 8**

This was the first occasion on which this examination had asked a question about volunteers as a type of employment in the leisure industry. While there was a fair general understanding of the benefits of using volunteers, very few candidates had in mind the steam railway company itself, where the technical and mechanical skills of former railwaymen would make them highly valued members of staff. While it is true that volunteers 'might not turn up' or 'could walk out at any time', it is also true that the vast majority of volunteers with, say, the National Trust and preserved railways are very dedicated to the organisation they serve.

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

1. Candidates should be shown how to answer questions from the point of view of the organisation's needs as much as from the point of view of the employee, which understandably candidates may find more familiar because of their own job experiences.
2. Centres should aim to study the whole specification because questions in any exam series will over time cover the full range of the specification.
3. Candidates need to know about normal employment procedures such as discipline, grievance, appraisal, recruitment and selection, etc. in enough detail to explain why the steps are used and why they are important.

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

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