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## General Certificate of Education

# Leisure Studies

8641/8643/8646/8649

## LS02 A People Business

# Report on the Examination

*2008 examination - June series*

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## GENERAL

It is important that teachers ensure that candidates understand the need to be able to apply their theoretical knowledge to the organisations studied. This will invariably mean that in every question answered the actual reality of customer service is more important than the theoretical knowledge; so accurate examples of what is real in the organisation studied should become the focus of answers, not theory. The key to good exam marks is the application of knowledge of customer service provision.

### What was particularly good

Candidates are becoming more concise in what they write and keep to issues that the tasks focus upon. When candidates showed a willingness to be more creative in their answers based on their own interpretation of investigations of the organisations they studied, they scored highly compared to those that simply relied on stock information and superficial outcomes.

### What was not so good

The relationship between theory and practice was not developed by some candidates, and this aspect of customer service needs to be applied in every question. Every time a customer service principle is learnt, students need to be able to exemplify it in real terms to properly understand both its application and why business organisations today consider customer service provision to be added value and a means of creating a competitive advantage over other organisations. Also, too many students are not reading into what the question wants when it is in stages: often the first part of the question is answered well whilst the other parts are not dealt with at all or only very superficially.

## *Assignment Task 1*

In part (a), the great majority of candidates were able to describe various features of the training for one position in an organisation; however, in some cases the candidates gave an opinion of what should be done rather than the actual training. Those that related exactly what training was done in some cases then found it difficult to match this with specific customer service situations in which it was shown that the training had contributed significantly to a successful customer service outcome. Finally, how this training served the needs of both the customers and the organisation was often vague and superficial.

Candidates found Part (b) the most challenging question on the paper. The administrative procedures described were in many cases not administrative tasks. Candidates seemed to find the concepts of internal and external customer service procedures very difficult to deal with on a practical level in the organisations studied. It required a job that had administrative duties such as data inputting, recording of financial transactions or dealing with the public or suppliers; then showing how these duties enhanced the customer service which in turn benefited the customers through efficiency, good communication and other relevant points.

## Assignment Task 2

In part (a) the majority of answers were able to show how technology in organisations provided communication with its customers. Only a minority of candidates thought of this question as an **explanation** of technology, which they did in great detail; whilst the majority showed how technology contributed significantly to customers needs and expectations, with relevant examples from the organisations studied.

In part (a) the first part of the question was well answered in that verbal and non-verbal communication was correctly identified and explained. However many candidates found it difficult to relate this to how an image of the organisation is influenced by this communication. The more aware candidates adopted the clearer strategy of firstly outlining the image of the organisation based on such factors as quality/market leaders/value for money, and then showing how the verbal and non-verbal communication of its staff matches or doesn't match that image. This would have made the answer far easier to write but many candidates were unable to communicate the importance of image and its relationship with verbal and non-verbal communication.

## Assignment Task 3

Part (ai) This was answered well in the majority of cases, with a clear detailed reference to the actual timetable of activities and why they would appeal to different customer types.
Part (aii) It was disappointing to see the lack of application of ideas. In many cases a similar answer was employed in which just one type of improvement was discussed by everyone from that centre. Many of the improvements were often either time related or an extension of the day; when actual activities that would appeal to a sector of the public, were done, that scored high marks both for originality of ideas and development of its appeal.
Part (b) This was the best answered question on the entire paper and the majority of candidates offered suggestions that covered all aspects pertaining to safety, security and enjoyment in the summer programme. Answers were in good detail in most cases, gaining appropriate credit.

## Assignment Task 4

Part (ai) a very straightforward question, rarely not gaining full marks.
Part (aii) Candidates often confused an evaluation of the method with the actual detailed explanation of what the method entails. Too many stated what the method does, totally forgetting to actually show how the method reveals information regarding customer service in the organisation and that the method's "success" in this leads to a better customer service provision.
In part (b) Many candidates took this question to mean another detailed explanation of what the two methods entailed, ignoring the suitability of the methods use to develop customer service. The suitability would have required some knowledge of what the organisation was seeking in terms of its customer service provision and then how the method enabled it to discover from its customers whether this provision was being met or not.

## Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates

Teachers need to ensure that all candidates are focused on applying their theoretical customer service knowledge to the actual organisations studied. Real situations in the organisation are needed in answers, rather than the theoretical and frequently superficial answers often provided because candidates have not researched their organisation and applied their findings in the context of customer service knowledge and understanding.

## Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.