



**General Certificate of Education**

**Leisure Studies**

**8641/8643/8646/8647/8649**

**LS04      Leisure Facilities**

**Report on the Examination**

*2010 examination - June series*

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## General Comments

### What was particularly good

1. In general the paper as a whole was well answered by a majority of the candidates.
2. As in the January paper for LS04 a large majority of candidates had prepared their case studies well and were able to provide good examples to support their answers. In particular it is clear that candidates from some centres are now including excellent annotated photos of the leisure facilities visited in their folders. These provide a very good resource from which to develop detailed answers.
3. Most candidates could also apply most of the key ideas of the specification to these case studies.
4. General and specific features of the design and layout of the candidates' case studies were usually described well, as they have generally been in the past. However, there was evidence of a distinct improvement in the evaluation of the designs.
5. The better candidates were able to analyse the data provided on the Touchwood case study and to write good answers on the two sections of the paper which drew on this case study.

### What was not so good

1. Again echoing the experience of January 2010, although knowledge of case studies is good only the very best candidates seem able to move on from their case studies to write about the industry as a whole.
2. This was shown most clearly in answers to Assignment Task C, Question 

0	9
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 where many candidates wrote in very general terms and seemed unable to draw any lessons from their general knowledge of the industry and apply it to illustrate their answers.
3. This meant that, overall, the average marks for Assignment Task C were noticeably lower than the average marks for the other three Assignment Tasks.

### Assignment Task A

The most popular choices for this question were 'eating and vending facilities' and 'spectator and child facilities'. 'Point of sale facilities' were chosen by a small minority of candidates and 'office space' was even less popular. However, the few who chose office space generally wrote good answers, showing that they had obviously studied that area well; those writing about point of sale rarely did well, giving the impression that their choice was not a positive choice!

Answers on eating or vending covered a wide range of different aspects of the topic. It was interesting that many candidates, from a variety of centres, had made a detailed study of fairly technical aspects of the design of these areas. Topics like the durability of floor coverings, the adaptability of seating arrangements, the precise lay-out of serving arrangements, etc. were regularly covered. This showed very good, detailed preparation. The descriptions of these technical aspects then often allowed candidates to move on to write clear and precise evaluations in the second part of the question.

Answers on spectator and child facilities were more mixed in quality. The best answers on this topic often came from candidates who had swimming baths as their case study. These people

were able to go into considerable detail about the depth of water, the temperature at which it was kept, the ease of observation by parents, and so on. Again answers to Question **0 1** which were precisely written on themes like this led on to impressive, analytical answers to Question **0 2**.

There were two potential pitfalls for candidates in Question **0 3** – they might lack detailed knowledge of a second facility and they might not be able to use their knowledge to write clear comparisons. Most candidates avoided the first pitfall. It was good to see that they could usually write as well about their second case study as they could about their first.

Comparing facilities is obviously a more demanding task than simply writing about one and yet there were very few who totally failed at this task and a significant proportion of candidates wrote very good answers.

Good comparisons fell into two groups. Some wrote a first section about one facility without making comparisons and then wrote a second section which referred to the second facility and made comparisons by referring back to the first. The other group of candidates drew comparisons all the way through, describing an aspect of each centre in each sentence that they wrote and building in comparisons right from the start.

The first method is probably the more reliable and moderate candidates still managed to do quite well using this structure. However, the second method probably gave the best candidates a good opportunity to show off just how good they were... although weaker candidates who tried to write like this were in danger of getting confused and failing to score well.

### **Assignment Task B**

Layout is a popular area of the specification for many and marks on Questions **0 5** and **0 6** were generally good. Most candidates provided plans to illustrate their answers but the quality of plans was very variable. The best were excellent but the worst were not much use at all.

Good plans had usually been prepared in advance whilst the poor ones had been sketched from memory... and from rather unreliable memories in many cases.

Good plans usually had some indication of scale, either with a scale line shown as part of the key or with some of the distances marked (approximately) on the body of the map.

When colour was used on the plans and explained in the key it was usually very useful.

Finally, the best way to use plans in an answer like this is by making clear reference to them in the text of the answer. Such references show that the map has been understood and thought about rather than just being copied from the file.

There was a lot of information about the design of Touchwood in the Insert. The key to writing good answers to Question **0 7** was to be selective in quoting from the Insert and to link all quotations to the question, explaining how design is linked to customer needs and expectations. 'Lifting' of quotes from the Insert is a perfectly valid and acceptable part of answering a question like this, but will only ever gain Level 1 marks. In order to move to Level 2 candidates had to use and develop the information explaining how particular design features would enhance the experience of specific groups of customers, drawing them in for a first visit and drawing them back for repeat visits.

## Assignment Task C

Question **0 8** differentiated well between candidates. Two main aspects distinguished good from average answers. These were 1) the realism of the better candidates thoughts about transport compared with some rather unrealistic and impractical suggestions from the weaker ones and 2) the ability of the better candidates to interpret the maps and to link it to their experiences to show an understanding of catchment areas.

The realistic answers showed clear thought about such aspects of their answers as the need for links between the station and Touchwood whereas the unrealistic just assumed anyone and everyone could walk the 'short' distance. Actually it is more than 1km, which would be too far for many old or infirm people and for many younger and able bodied who had spent a day shopping.

The realistic answers noted the airport but recognised that its influence would be marginal at best. The unrealistic assumed that the presence of the airport would draw in shoppers from all over the world.

Linked to this, the better candidates analysed the effect of the different transport modes on different parts of the catchment and the market. They saw that buses would probably bring in people from the town of Solihull or from close neighbouring towns and that people from these areas would probably make frequent visits. Trains would bring people from some towns further away, but that their visits might well be less frequent. Then they realised that cars would offer the most flexible means of transport for the majority of customers and that they could extend the catchment area to many of the towns and cities marked on the map, but that there would be competition between Touchwood and centres like Birmingham and that Touchwood's ease of access to the motorways and proximity to car parks might draw customers from the bigger competitors.

Question **0 9** proved to be the most difficult question for most candidates. This was obviously because they did not have a ready source of information available to help them – neither their folders that were available to use for most of the rest of the exam, nor the Insert that could be used for Questions **0 7** and **0 8**. Instead they need to think about places that they had either studied or visited in person – and then apply their understanding of a topic in the specification to that knowledge.

In order to explain some of the things that candidates might have written about the following extract from the mark scheme is presented:

### *Mark Scheme – Page 11*

Discuss how an out-of-town location might influence the design and potential use of leisure facilities.

Out of town sites usually have:

- cheaper land
- more easily available land
- easy access to ring roads/motorway etc with less likelihood of traffic congestion than town centre site.
- fewer planning restriction (unless limited by green belt etc)

This can influence design because:

- more space can lead to larger single-storey buildings and space to extend them
- more cheaper land for car parking etc
- possibility to be free with design.

- not limited by need to fit in to existing use
- less need to refurbish.
- need to advertise clearly and boldly to attract passing trade etc.

Any of the points listed above can be discussed in general terms and then linked to specific examples.

References can be made to features of Touchwood or to the candidate's own local facilities. Comparisons can be drawn between town centre and peripheral locations to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of each.

There were some very good answers by candidates who showed detailed knowledge of local out-of-town leisure facilities, such as shopping centres, multiplex cinemas, theme parks, sports grounds, etc, and then considered how and why these were different from town centre facilities.

Unfortunately most answers lacked detailed reference to examples. They showed little ability to apply what had been learnt in an unfamiliar situation which they were not expecting.

### **Assignment Task D**

The examiners had expected that Question **1 0** would prove challenging to some candidates. This was unfounded and most candidates showed at least reasonably good knowledge of at least one piece of legislation. It was more predictable that the piece of legislation that was most used was the Disability Discrimination Act. Candidates are often grateful for this Act; it has proved to be a rich source of good answers for Leisure Studies candidates.

However, the DDA was not the only piece of legislation that was well used. There were some very good answers based on Town And Country Planning legislation, Building Regulations, Tree Preservation Orders and so on. These produced interesting, less predictable answers!

Question **1 1** showed how well the average answer has improved over the last few years. Three of four years ago most candidates would have struggled to plan and structure an answer that asked for evaluation. Most managed to produce clear and logical work this time. The most common approach was to:

- identify particular groups of users who had been affected by the change
- define their needs, setting criteria for evaluation
- describe ways in which their needs had been met
- describe, where relevant, how their needs had not been met
- draw a conclusion on the extent to which needs had been met.

Of course the high-ability candidates did this well and the lower-ability candidates did it less well, but very few of the latter group were totally unable to address the question.

Great credit is due to the candidates who have shown such an improvement over this period; even greater credit is due to the teachers who have guided them to this improvement.

### **Suggestions for teachers to prepare future LS04 candidates**

The advance in the quality and consistency of examination performance on this paper was commented on in the January 2010 report. That improvement has continued. Quite clearly the area that needs improvement is the response to questions such as **0 9** – the question that looks for knowledge beyond that contained in the candidates' prepared folders. These

questions are obviously less predictable and are designed to make candidates think quickly, adapt their own broad knowledge of the leisure industry and apply their understanding of the industry in a new context. Questions like this can be expected on future papers and candidates and their teachers should be prepared for them.

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

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