



**General Certificate of Education**

**Leisure Studies**

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

**LS09          Working in the People Business**

**Report on the Examination**

*2010 examination - June series*

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## General Comments

### What was particularly good

1. There were excellent answers from some candidates which suggested that they have been guided by studying past mark schemes and examiner's reports, so that they understand the thinking behind LS09's approach to management of human resources.
2. Leisure is a business and, whether in the private, public, or voluntary sector, it needs to satisfy its customers' needs and make a commercial return. More and more, candidates are focussing their answers on the viewpoint of the leisure facility and its customers, as required, rather than on the employees' needs.

### What was not so good

1. The level of specific knowledge about named jobs in the leisure industry remains relatively poor. As last year, centres are urged to ensure that their candidates are informed about two appropriate leisure jobs, so that they become familiar with *details* of the duties and requirements of that job.
2. Teachers have no doubt done their best to encourage candidates to read the questions carefully. Nevertheless, there were a number of instances in this paper where candidates failed to do so, by not following instructions to answer from the company's point of view rather than the employee's, or by ignoring a phrase such as 'other than...'

### Question 1

Recruitment advertising is effective if it attracts good candidates and if it helps smooth the recruitment process. Candidates therefore needed to find features of the advert that would support these two aims. A few candidates wrote solely about the use of font and typeface, perhaps caused by hurried or careless reading of the instruction '*other than* fonts and typeface'. In recommending a suitable place for the advert, neither 'on the internet' nor 'in a newspaper' were accepted as specific enough to gain the mark.

Some candidates confused a letter of application with an application form, which earned little credit. The best marks were gained by candidates whose answers read as if they were guiding job applicants in what to include in a letter of application and why. Those who wrote about CVs instead did not earn marks at all.

### Question 2

Candidates were well acquainted with adjustments to physical features of facilities that employers make for people with disabilities. However, they needed to come up with at least *two* examples. Writing at length about ramps and door frames meant they still needed to describe a further example of entitlement from the legislation, such as flexible hours of working or a personal care worker being allowed to assist.

### Question 3

A significant number of candidates had shaky understanding of 'perks' as an additional non-monetary benefit to supplement the basic salary. The commonest examples given of perks were free membership of leisure clubs, discounted use of facilities and the use of a company phone or car. The key part of the question lay in relating the perks to the seniority of the employee. Candidates then needed to describe one further method of motivating staff and evaluate its likely success. This was done well. Many of the misunderstandings seen in

previous years had been put right. For example, fewer candidates spoke of bonuses as a heavy cost on the organisation, realising that they are a reward for greater productivity, while many more candidates than usual recognised the difficulties for managers of measuring performance in a service industry such as leisure.

#### **Question 4**

The stem of this question made clear that only *part of* the staffing rota for a fitness centre was shown. Too many candidates based their answer around the preferences of the staff - that they should not be bored, inconvenienced or overworked. However, the question had asked for factors that the leisure centre should take into account. Its priority would surely be the smooth running of the fitness centre in order to meet customer needs. Thus, employing enough suitably-qualified staff and coping with demand at busy times are the key factors. Candidates were right to say there should be a fair allocation of unsocial hours and that the Working Time regulations should be met. However, the frequency with which candidates would write that the staff should not become tired suggests they were perceived as participating in the fitness activities rather than supervising them.

#### **Question 5**

Candidates had little trouble suggesting advantages of a trainee scheme, but too many missed the opportunity to gain marks by failing to spot that the question asked for advantages for the National Trust rather than for the trainee. Some assessment was expected, which meant judging whether running the careership scheme would be of more help than hindrance to the National Trust. Most concluded that this trainee programme was worthwhile and assured the organisation's future staffing.

#### **Question 6**

Most candidates were clear about the purpose of a contract and understood what a period of notice was for. However, they needed to go beyond simply saying that notice periods let the organisation find another employee. Giving notice ensures that work is not disrupted through coming to an immediate halt whenever someone wants to leave. Similarly, the employee would be given a period of time not just to find another job but so that his/her income does not abruptly cease. It is also necessary because the recruitment and selection procedure is lengthy so that a fair amount of time is needed by both sides.

#### **Question 7**

Examinations in other years have frequently asked a question about one named leisure job. This was varied by asking for a comparison between the two leisure jobs which the specification says must be studied. The skill of comparison shown was often impressive and many candidates gained credit for that, but to score the highest marks candidates needed to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the requirements for their two jobs and the duties for which they are needed. Centres are reminded that candidates should demonstrate *specific* knowledge of qualifications, experience, skills and qualities rather than make general statements (such as "a chef should have plenty of experience...").

#### **Question 8**

Many candidates answered this question very well. They knew that recruitment agencies are in the business of reliably providing suitably vetted workers for an event and, for a fee, will liberate the event organisers from the time and trouble taken to arrange staffing themselves. The success of the whole event depends to some extent on the work of the recruitment agency and

most of them do what they are supposed to do competently. Unfortunately, some candidates got sidetracked into speculating about all the ways in which workers might create problems - by being late or lazy or dishonest, sometimes unjustifiably suggesting this would be likely since they were only temporary staff.

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

1. Candidates may use their own experience of real workplaces where appropriate, but should be wary of doing so if their part-time job is in a supermarket or other retailer which is not connected with the leisure industry. Each question in the examination is set in a leisure context and examples taken from the *leisure* industry are expected.
2. Centres should continue to exhort candidates to take their time and read each question carefully. Rushing into a question could mean losing all the marks. It is fairly common for candidates, when they are asked about, for example, the advantages for a leisure organisation, to write about the advantages for an employee.

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

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