Examiners' Report Summer 2008

GCE

GCE Applied Leisure Studies (8761/9761)

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Chief Examiners report

The qualification is now in its third year and this session has again shown an improvement in overall candidate performance. Although the 'application' issues outlined in previous reports were less evident this June, they still remain the single largest reason for candidates failing to achieve the top grades in most units. Obviously for an Applied GCE this is a major omission and further consideration should be given to the following ideas.

In the external assessments at both levels many of the questions require candidates to relate their knowledge of the leisure industry to the specific organisations described in the stimulus material. This will mean that, in order to gain the higher mark levels, candidates will need to use the stimulus information and relate it specifically to the theoretical or learnt idea that forms the basis of the question. Where generic responses are only offered, i.e. they could relate to any organisation, candidates will not be able to score marks above level 1 in the mark scheme, however comprehensive their list of possible benefits, advantages, disadvantages etc.

In the internally assessed units there are still candidates who are producing assessments that are of a theoretical nature. In many cases this consists of a mere précis of one or more textbooks, perhaps mixed in with some downloaded material. This again does not fulfil the requirements of an applied subject. Candidates should be encouraged to seek information from real organisations and then to use this material in an applied way to demonstrate the skills that the assessment criteria demand. In many cases the candidates do have the necessary information in their coursework but have not applied it and therefore are providing descriptions only at best.

This is an applied subject and, in order to allow candidates to access the higher grades, centres should ensure that their approach is practical rather than theoretical. There are a few points from our Principal Moderators' reports below that I would like to add emphasis to.

Annotation of work by assessors is of the utmost importance. It serves as guidance for candidates in seeking to improve, for assessors themselves in carrying out the assessment and to the moderators in understanding how assessors have come to decisions and therefore in feedback to centres. It should be referenced as far as possible to the assessment criteria, particularly where it is designed to help assessment. Use of the specific terms such as 'explanation', 'evaluation' will help to improve accuracy of assessment.

Candidates include leaflets, brochures etc from organisations as evidence in support of work in a number of units. These should always show evidence of being actually used, for example by annotation to show how a list of policies and procedures links to customer types in Unit 3. Their existence without application to the assessment criteria is of no benefit in an applied subject. Similarly, large amounts of theoretical material is rarely required. In Unit 3 again, candidates would be far better employed analysing the use of their actual marketing activities, linking them to their products and services, rather than writing out theoretical explanations as to why marketing techniques are used. Without doubt, the former is more interesting for candidates as a learning experience also.

For Unit 1 every effort should be made to ensure that data used is current. Data that is pre-2000 is unacceptable for a description of the leisure industry and in such a fast changing industry every effort should be made to keep data to the last 5 years.

In Unit 4 the use of ongoing diary sheets to include evaluation (as well as all the usual items) should be the norm. This encourages students to evaluate their, and their peers', roles as they go – this is far more successful for candidates than trying to do it all retrospectively at the end, as many find it difficult to remember what happened in the early stages and simply evaluate the final event. If assessors 'witness statement' these each week it gives a chance for feedback to candidates. They can put this feedback into practice in later diary entries, leading to higher standards and hence higher mark bands achieved.

In some internal units there are occasions where candidates will undertake work as part of a group. This is particularly evident in Unit 4 but occurs elsewhere also. In this case centres should ensure that the evidence produced by each candidate shows their individual contribution. Without this it is difficult to award the higher mark bands to candidates.

Whilst we are keeping our definition of leisure as wide as possible at all times, it is vital that candidates do take their evidence from organisations in the leisure sector and that the basis for Units 4 and 6 is leisure oriented. One particular area of concern is the use of part-time jobs for the customer service (AO2) of Unit 3. It is not acceptable to use non-leisure examples, however well they show the skills required. As a guideline as to whether an organisation/role is acceptable as leisure it is often necessary to consider the context. For example, someone working and advising customers on sportswear or sports equipment in a department of a large store is acceptably defined as carrying out customer service in the leisure industry, but the use of a general department store as an example of a leisure organisation, perhaps in marketing activities for Unit 3, is not acceptable. Similarly, there are many uses of computers in the passive – and increasingly active - leisure sector, but a firm manufacturing computers is not acceptable as a leisure organisation.

Looking to the future, it has become evident that the majority of the work submitted for assessment and moderation in the internal units is presented in the from of a formal assignment or wholly written report. Whilst this is often preferable as a safe option, there are many other possible assessment methods, many of which may actually be more suitable for learners with different capabilities.

Some learners are very strong in certain areas. For example, some learners are very good at talking about a subject but when it comes to writing it down they struggle. The same can be true of those that like to write lengthy essays - ask them to discuss it and they may not be so keen. It will be worthwhile ensuring that learners are aware of the range of possible options open to them – the assessment criteria can be conveyed through many methods, both written and non-written. This is particularly true of a unit such as Leisure in Action, where the key evidence is that which demonstrates that the learners are capable of running an event. In many cases this is hidden amongst a lengthy description of what happened in general terms, not necessarily all of which provides such evidence.

Written evidence/methods of assessment include leaflets, brochures, assignments, check sheets, annotated diagrams, labelled photos, reports, PowerPoint demonstrations. In some cases the simple addition of annotations to pre-printed materials such as leaflets (or even downloads!) can produce a very valid piece of analytical work without the necessity for pages of prose.

Non written evidence/methods of assessment include observations, demonstrations, practical activities, role plays, presentations, discussions, debates and committee meetings. Many of these will have limited written evidence in support of them so this is where the role of detailed, signed witness statements becomes of paramount importance also.

Whilst appreciating that not all of these are practical for all units, and some candidates will still achieve their best results through simple report style projects, it is to be hoped that these suggestions will provide some extra inspiration for helping learners to achieve their full potential at the same time as having the best possible learning experience.

Unit 1 The Leisure Industry

Samples received were generally well organised with the majority of centres submitting the OPTEMS forms correctly and following the administrative instructions for mark submission. Centres did not always include the justification of individual assessment outcome marks and these are important in the facilitation of the moderation process.

Centres are encouraged to annotate candidates evidence identifying where assessment objectives have been met and where higher mark bands have been awarded. Some portfolios had little evidence of marking on the candidates work. In examples of best practice, the front sheets gave reference page numbers indicating the evidence and this was then supported by annotation throughout the candidates work. All portfolio pages should have clear numbering that can be referenced.

Some centres were consistently generous in their application across the mark bands and it may be beneficial for some centres to scrutinise the 'what you need to learn' and assessment guidance sections of the specification for further information on how to meet all the grading criteria and to award marks within the appropriate mark bands.

Centres should also note that a Teacher's Guide is also available at Edexcel Online. This provides examples of annotated candidate evidence to illustrate the depth and breadth of evidence required at mark band 2 and 3.

AO1: the range, scale, and importance of the leisure industry in the UK and Europe

This task addresses AO1 - *demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

It was very pleasing that more candidates were producing an excellent standard of response for this outcome, without omissions and well supported by accurate and valid UK and European data, achieving mark band 3.

This assessment objective requires learners to be able to describe what the leisure industry is. The assessment guidance requires reference to active, passive and home-based leisure in the description. This part of the assessment objective was again addressed well by all candidates.

There was still some variation in the evidence provided relating to participation rates, employment numbers and consumer spending in the UK and Europe. Some centres were awarding mark band 3 for this outcome, with very little or no reference to Europe. Where there are significant omissions in the information provided, the higher mark bands should not be used. For some candidates, data on employment numbers and trends still tended to be general, and centres are reminded that figures should be leisure specific.

Again, there was some inconsistency in the evidence relating to regional variations, with some candidates identifying variations but not providing accurate reasons for these variations. Some candidates included information on European variations, and centres are reminded that data and information on Regional Variations should just relate to the UK and comparisons with Europe are not required.

Some candidates are still including outdated statistical data, and this does not provide a realistic picture of the current scale and size of the leisure industry. Candidates should be guided in their selection of information sources to ensure use of valid and relevant data.

AO2: Commercial and non-commercial sectors of the industry

This task addresses AO2 – *apply knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of industry vocationally-related issues.*

Learners were required to give an explanation of the differences between the commercial and non-commercial sectors covering the differences in aims, methods of funding, different partnership arrangements and methods of marketing.

The majority of candidates clearly understood the difference between public, private and voluntary sectors and their aims and funding. The difference in approaches to marketing strategies was better covered that previously, but some candidates are still not demonstrating sound understanding of this aspect. However, the more able candidates were able to give clear and accurate explanations of a range of differences which included examples from industry.

Reference to partnership initiatives was generally improved overall but again is an area for continued focus and development by many centres. Candidates must include at least a summary of partnership initiatives and should refer to PPPs and PFIs. There are still only a few candidates achieving mark band 3 for this outcome.

AO3: Current Developments in the leisure industry

This task addresses AO3 – *use appropriate research methods to obtain information from a range of sources to analyse leisure industry vocationally-related issues.*

For this assessment outcome, learners are required to research current developments in the leisure industry. All candidates had made some references to the increasing use of technology and most candidates had also explored the growing influence of the media on the industry. As with the previous session, the number of candidates who had explored potential future developments is still in the minority. It would be encouraging to see more candidates investigating a more diverse range of emerging trends and developments.

There was still a heavy reliance on the core text for this outcome and a few candidates had failed to use any other information sources at all. Websites were still the main source of information used by candidates, but many candidates had again failed to reference their work. It is difficult to assess how wide a range of sources the candidate has drawn on if they are not referenced. Accurate referencing within the text or through a bibliography is essential to award the highest marks.

Centres are again reminded of the importance of candidates clearly and explicitly demonstrating their comprehensive research from a broad range of information sources. Centres could also consider including observation records as an alternative way to authenticate the range of sources used by candidates.

AO4: Customers of the leisure industry

This task addresses AO4 – *evaluate evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement in a range of vocationally-related contexts.*

Learners are required to identify the factors which influence participation and non-participation in the leisure. The factors are clearly identified in the specifications in the section covering assessment guidance as well as in the 'what you need to learn' section.

In order to progress beyond mark band 1, it is essential that explanations are 'sound and supported by data'. Some candidates are still not using data to support explanations of factors influencing participation necessary for the highest marks bands to be awarded.

Candidates are also required to identify barriers to participation and to make recommendations on how to overcome the barriers. Some candidates are still focusing on a limited range of barriers (such as disability) and identifying measures that are already in place. Many candidates are able to describe barriers to participation but failed to include any realistic individual recommendations.
As there are still only a minority of candidates identifying and justifying a range of appropriate, relevant and sometime original recommendations, this continues to be is a key area for focus and development by many centres.

Unit 2 Working Practices in Leisure

General comments

Performance on this paper showed a slight improvement compared to last June. The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates, with only occasional areas of general weakness.

Most candidates were able to respond effectively to questions. There was evidence that most candidates had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set. Though at times without the depth needed to achieve the higher grades at AS level. Almost all candidates answered all questions. There was evidence that candidates are tackling Q2 more capably than in the past, which is a pleasing development.

Candidates were able to use information taken from the WYNTL section of the unit, although the characteristics of quality systems showed weakness as in previous series. They appeared to be familiar with the command verbs as a whole. Candidates appeared to manage their time effectively and did not produce lengthy passages of irrelevant information. The vast majority of candidates appeared to complete the paper in the time available, with little evidence of rushed work towards the end.

Candidates still did not always make full use of the stimulus material. The emphasis in this paper will inevitably be on the application of their knowledge to a variety of practical situations. The higher marks, particularly in levels of response questions, will always be characterised by the ability to demonstrate application rather than theory. It will be important for candidates to have practice in doing this in their preparation for the assessment. This paper contained more stimulus material than the previous two and this will be the pattern for the future. This is an 'Applied' GCE and therefore in the longer explain/analyse questions the mere repetition of generic material, however valid, is unlikely to achieve beyond a Level 1 response.

Many candidates produced very simplistic responses, which limited their success. At AS level candidates must be able to provide some simple evaluation and analysis. However, most candidates were able to offer realistic and appropriate answers, demonstrating their understanding of working practices in leisure.

Exam technique is an aspect that requires improvement, particularly in the longer questions. There will always be a number of longer questions on this paper that have a levels of response mark scheme. This will continue in the future so candidates should be made aware how these work. At the moment most candidates of E grade and above are reaching the top of level 1 (3 marks) in the 8 mark questions but higher ability candidates appear unable to lift this mark much further. Candidates must be able to use the stimulus material (the 'applied' bit) if they are to access the higher grades with ease, rather than repeat pre-learnt generic responses.

Q1
Scenario was of Durlon Swim Centre. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

Q1(a) Compared with similar questions in past series this was not tackled well. Candidates appeared not to know what the European Directives were and there was a substantial number of candidates who made no attempt at the question at all. It is important that all the legislation in the WYNTL section of the specification is covered. The best responses dealt with the Display Screen Regulations or The

Workplace Regulations. It was not necessary for candidates to name the directive correctly to gain the marks for content.

Q1(b) Most candidates managed to identify two acceptable measures although development beyond this was below expectations. Many did take their cue from the presence of the Children Act in the stimulus and question and dealt with CRB checks and the need for adequate numbers of/training for staff. In order to gain all three marks it is necessary for candidates to be able to state the reason why the measure is used – the 'explain'. All too often this was ignored or simply stated as 'to ensure the children are safe' – which is merely repeating the question. The unrealistic use of CCTV in a number of responses was unfortunate – candidates should be encouraged to think in terms of the context before suggesting measures. There are 3 marks available for each measure so candidate should ensure that they identify a possible measure and then either briefly describe it and explain why it is done or give 2 points of explanation.

Q1(c) The majority of candidates had a sound basic knowledge of the requirements of the act but rarely were able to access the higher ranges in the mark bands as they failed to apply it and/or explain it. Analysis in a question such as this should be focussed on how the act could affect the running of the Swim Centre, but most candidates got little further than restating the main requirements of the act, which seemed to be well understood. There were two problem areas.

The first was interpretation of what the question wanted. A considerable minority of candidates merely focused on the possible results of them not applying the requirements of the act. This was of little credit as the stimulus material had already outlined the problems that had existed.

The second problem was the lack of appreciation of the need to 'apply' the act to the given situation. The stimulus material is there to be used in questions such as this. The extremely long times of opening were given and although many candidates stated the correct restrictions on the hours staff can work in a day, few tried to relate it to these long hours. Some managed brief comments about 'need a rota' or 'need to employ more staff' but the linkage between them and the information was left to the imagination of the reader. It is necessary for them to tie the requirements of the act to specifics about the centre to comply with the assessment requirements of 'application of knowledge in an unfamiliar situation'.

Candidates at the E grade boundary were able to gather 2 marks easily, but indications are that the better candidates do not know how to apply the act so only gain an extra 1 or 2 marks.

Q1(d) Few candidates who chose the HSC understood its role and many did not read the question carefully enough to realise it was the HSC and not the HSE, starting their responses with 'The HSE carries out….etc'! A small minority could outline its role in proposing legislation but other roles were few and far between.
The role of Local Authorities was tackled more successfully, with their ability to act in a similar fashion to the HSE producing most of the credit.

Q1(e) As in past June series this question was well answered by the majority of candidates. Almost all of them understood the basic premise on which a risk assessment is carried out and were able to produce simple scales for likelihood and severity, although a little more care was needed in places to ensure that the steps within it are in a logical and consistent sequence. There were very few unrealistic suggestions for measures to minimise risk compared to the previous series and the balance of their severity and likelihood was much better than in the past.

Candidates do need to be a little more careful with their choice of scales, which was perhaps the weakest part of this question this time. Far too many of the likelihood scales contained at least one stage that did not show a logical sequence from the others, restricting them to 1 of the 2 available marks. Typically this might be a sequence such as 'highly unlikely-unlikely-*possible*-likely-highly likely' where the 'possible' is not a logical development – all of them suggest it is possible for it to occur. Similarly the use of 'never' on the likelihood scale and 'no harm' on the severity scale is invalid, as in these cases a risk assessment would not be required.

Most candidates managed to identify 2 or more correct measures to minimise the risk, although some tended to miss out on possible credit by being too brief – a short phrase/sentence is what is really required and although it can be done in less the risks of not making the answer clear are correspondingly greater. It should be emphasised that measures to minimise risks in a risk assessment are those that are set out by the management or similar in advance and do not include such ideas as ' make sure they measure the chemicals correctly'.

The most common suggestions were for central control points, staff trained to look out for lost children, although this was sometimes spoilt by their confusion (obsession?) with security guards, and some sort of identification system, especially for groups.

It is envisaged that the basic format of the risk assessment will appear on the question paper as it has on this one (or in a very similar format) so it would be useful for candidates to be made familiar with this so that they can concentrate on the task of applying the risk assessment correctly in future. To this end candidates need to have scales for both severity and likelihood that can lead to the application of a logical risk rating.

Q2

There was some improvement in responses to this question compared to the past, particularly in knowledge of both the Quest and Chartermark systems.

The knowledge of quality systems is an area of the specification that has caused problems in previous series. It forms a significant part of the requirements for the assessment and candidates must ensure that they know the main quality systems outlined in the specification. If the basics of the systems are poorly known then the questions based on their application will be more difficult to access as well.

Q2(a)(i)-2a(ii) For both questions there was a marked improvement on similar questions for previous series. Most candidates had at least some idea of what Quest is about, with most appreciating that it is a customer focused system. Many also went on to outline how the accreditation process took place, showing a sound understanding of the operation of the system. For part (ii) many candidates did manage to identify at least one piece of concrete evidence such as customer comment cards, cleaning rotas etc although there was still a sizeable minority who vaguely described the results of these being put in place – clean changing rooms etc.

Q2(bi) As stated in previous reports, we have moved towards a paper where there is rather more stimulus material in order to give candidates the chance to apply their knowledge well. This question in particular was one where there was plenty of material and although there was some evidence of candidates using it, many were hampered by an apparent lack of knowledge of what Quest really did for an organisation even if they had been able to describe the characteristics of the system. It is not sufficient for candidates to say that 'having Quest will help to put all these things right – this could be any quality system in a whole variety of ways - or 'people will recognise it and come to the Centre'. It is unlikely that anyone would go to one particular theme park because it had Quest. It is necessary to link the areas that Quest focuses on – staff training, facility management etc– to the problems at the centre. Simple links such as 'the existence of cleaning rotas should ensure that areas are cleaned regularly and therefore the changing rooms should always be clean as they won't get missed' is basic application of Quest. Most candidates could achieve the top of level 1 with generic comment as to the benefits of a quality system but it will be useful in future if they can be more focused on the need to relate to the given situation.

The following is a typical, totally generic, response to the benefits (and disadvantages, in this response) of introducing Quest to the Swim Centre. Its lack of application is indicated by the fact that if we swapped 'Quest' for 'IiP' it would still read the same, as it would if 'centre' were swapped for 'gym'. This, therefore, on an applied paper, is a level 1/level 2 boundary response only.

If they introduced Quest a larger number of customers would come because they know it's a good place to go. This would give them a greater income, more profit which would mean they could improve the centre. The staff would be better trained so it would be a better environment for the customers. It would become well known as a top quality centre. It can give a framework for continuous improvement. The service given to customers would therefore improve. Staff would be more highly motivated in their jobs so more people will want to work there. It would cost a lot of money to get it and it could take a long time. Staff may not like different work patterns and training or the hard work needed in order to achieve Quest. Trying to achieve this could put more pressure on them and they could leave. The centre may take their focus off the customers in trying to achieve this.

A further problem area was those candidates who simply stated how the problem could be rectified 'they need to regulate the boiler', 'they need to clean the changing rooms' etc without any reference to how Quest would help to achieve this.

Q2(bii) There were some thoughtful responses here at times, with some good reasoning as to why IiP might not be better. Most linked this to the fact that IiP concentrates on staff and that many of the Centre's problems were not directly attributable to staff training and that Quest had a wider remit in covering the whole of the facility. This showed good application of knowledge. Weaker candidates tended to automatically assume that it would and merely listed the benefits of IiP to an organisation – again it is the need to **apply** that differentiates and this should be practised in preparing candidates for the examination.

Q2(c) Most candidates had some idea of what Charter Mark is, although there were still some centres where this subject did not appear to have been dealt with adequately. The most common mark was for the fact that it was for public sector organisations. Unlike in previous series a substantial minority could give some detail on the system and scored 3-4 marks

Q3(a) Most candidates had some idea as to what might be included in a feasibility study, mainly involving comments about costs and levels of staff needed. They found it more difficult to put into words the overall purpose of it, often merely saying that it decides whether the project is feasible. In order to gain a mark it is necessary for the word to be 'translated' even if it is very loose, for example 'whether it could be done'.

Q3(b)(i)-3b(ii) Most candidates were able to tackle these successfully although a considerable minority did not take into account the effects of the grant to the centre in Q3b(ii).

Q3b(iii) Most candidates had some idea that it was to cover unforeseen circumstances such as accidents or the need to hire more equipment than first thought. As in Q3(a) they were better at suggesting what it would be used for than stating why it was necessary. Rather too many seemed to think that it was simply a type of 'cheating' with accounts and it would mean they made a bigger profit!

Q3(b)(iv) Most candidates did score at least one mark here, either for suggesting a criterion that could be used or by suggesting a method by which it could be collected – customer comment cards were the most popular method and profit the most usual criteria. Many candidates did not explain how the information would be used to evaluate the event – the need for a target was seldom set out. Many candidates outlined two or three different methods when the question had specifically asked for one. This an area of exam technique that should be emphasised to candidates.

Q3(c)(i) Most had some idea that it was a system for keeping customer details and that these could then be used by an organisation to cater for their customer in a more personal/directed way.

Q3(c)(ii) As with the other extended response questions, there was a disappointing tendency for candidates not to apply their knowledge to the specific scenario in this question. Without doing this candidates are not able to access the higher levels of the mark scheme. There were some sound attempts to link the use of the membership system to marketing for events in general – it is only a small step to try to get candidates to look for events in the stimulus that they have been given in order to get some real application into their responses. Many candidates contented themselves with simply listing the possible benefits of an electronic system – analysing data quickly etc – so responses lacked both application and analysis. These will not get beyond Level 1, at AS level analysis does not have to be high level, merely an ability to link the characteristics of the scheme with the actual characteristics of the club in an explanatory fashion. A level 3 response could be:

It may prevent customers from trying the new leisure centre as, if they are paying a membership at Durlon, they are not going to spend more visiting somewhere else. As they have had a recent growth in popularity it may speed up registration as it will be computer based so more members can be added at a faster rate. This may improve customer satisfaction, possibly prompting more to join. Through the electronic membership they will have contact details so they can produce promotions and advertise social events like the wine tasting evenings – they could offer discounts to members, so increasing attendance, with secondary spend increasing profits as a result.

Q3(d)(i)-3(d)(ii) For both questions a disappointingly large number of candidates focused on the benefit to the customers rather than the Centre. Initial statements for (d)(i) tended to be on the lines of making entry quicker and this was sometimes developed well to outline how this could save staff time which would reduce costs or allow them to spend more time on focusing on the customers elsewhere. More often than not, however, the focus was kept on how it made it easier for the customer. Similarly in part (ii) many responses focused on how customers might not have access to the internet, with many based on the false assumption that that was the only place they could be bought and that it was compulsory rather than an extra service. This tended to show a lack of understanding of real life organisations, which should be the focus for candidates in studying for this course.

Unit 3 The Leisure Customer

General Comments
The tasks for the unit are set within the specification. There are four tasks for the unit and shown on page 30 of the specification.

- AO1 (a) an understanding of how the leisure industry views the customer
- AO4 (b) an evaluation of customer service, in the leisure industry, through acting as a 'mystery customer'
- AO3 (c) an investigation into marketing activities used within the leisure industry
- AO2 (d) the provision of customer service, dealing with a range of customers in different situations.

Each task is linked to a specific learning outcome, which details the knowledge, skills and understanding that learners are required to demonstrate.

- AO1: Knowledge, skills and understanding
- AO2: Application of knowledge, skills and understanding
- AO3: Research and analysis
- AO4: Evaluation

Marks should be awarded within three mark bands, according to assessment outcome criteria, level of independence and depth and breadth of understanding.

Key Issues

A- AO1
Marks awarded for this outcome are sometimes limited by the choice of appropriate leisure organisation. Only leisure organisations should be chosen and candidates should be guided to select three suitably contrasting organisations, in order to gain the highest marks. For example, a candidate focusing on three leisure centres would not be able to gain all the marks available. They could instead, explore the customer service policies and procedures at a leisure centre, a football club and a cinema.

B - AO4
In order to award the highest marks, candidates should be guided to ensure they include detailed descriptions of the **products and services** offered by the chosen leisure organisation and a range of examples of the **information available** to customers.

C - AO3
Candidates can often include a large amount of theoretical information relating to marketing theory in general. This can limit the marks awarded and candidates should be guided to ensure they apply their marketing knowledge to specific examples of marketing activity used in the industry by appropriate organisations.

D - AO2
This evidence is very reliant on observation records and witness testimonies and as such, centres need to ensure that evidence documentation is clear, detailed and explicit in the assessment judgements made for each individual candidate's performance in dealing with leisure customers. Work placement evidence from a non-leisure organisation should not be used.

Assessment Evidence

AO1: The leisure customer.

This task addresses AO1 - demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of vocationally-related contexts.

This assessment outcome requires candidates to explore how the leisure customer is viewed by leisure organisations and to understand the importance of the customer and customer service to the industry, supported through the review of appropriate policies and procedures.

Some candidates were simply including copies of relevant policies and procedures with no or very little interpretation of how they impact on the quality of customer care. As well as identifying and describing the various policies and procedures, candidates awarded the highest marks need to provide a comprehensive explanation on how specific issues are managed or monitored and how this impacts on customer satisfaction.

As in the previous series, some candidates were still choosing three very similar organisations, for example three visitor attractions or three leisure centres. In order to award marks in mark band three, evidence must relate to a contrasting range of leisure organisations. Candidates could be encouraged to examine how leisure centres, gymnasiums, cinemas, theme parks, visitor attractions, sports clubs etc. view customers, supported and illustrated by a review of their customer service policies and procedures and how these contribute to customer care.

There were very few examples of candidates selecting unsuitable organisations this series, which is a welcome improvement.

AO4: Operational aspects related to the leisure customer.

This task addresses AO4 – evaluate evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement in a range of vocationally-related contexts.

The marking criteria require candidates to present information related to customer service provided by a leisure organisation, gained through a 'mystery visit'.

Candidates need to undertake a mystery visit for ONE appropriate leisure organisation and record the details of their findings. Candidates should then provide examples of customer service gained from the visit undertaken, together with details of the range of information available to customers and a description of the products or services provided by the leisure organisation.

Centres should note that to achieve the highest marks in this band, candidates should be evaluating the success of the provider in satisfying customer needs and be able to comment on the tangible methods the provider has in place to measure standards, for example customer comment cards or surveys etc.

This series saw many candidates designing their own mystery visit forms and devising a scoring or scale system to record their judgements. Most then went on to explain their judgement decisions, using the examples gained from the visit.

Some candidates were limiting marks available by not providing a description of the products and services the organisation provides. This could be provided explicitly in an introduction to the mystery visit report or throughout the report narrative.

A03: Marketing activities and the leisure customer.

This task addresses AO3 – use appropriate research methods to obtain information from a range of sources to analyse leisure industry vocationally-related issues.

In providing evidence for this outcome, candidates are required to research a range of marketing activities used in the leisure industry, applied to specific products and services from a single leisure organisation or many. In order to award the highest marks, centres should ensure that at least three different marketing activities have been explored.

This series saw an improvement in the evidence presented, with less theoretical evidence with little application to activities used within the leisure industry. These responses are limited to the lower mark band. Candidates should always ensure that underpinning knowledge evidence is applied to relevant leisure industry examples and linked to specific products and services, not just general, theoretical descriptions.

For example, candidates should not simply provide a general description of sponsorship as a promotional activity but apply this underpinning knowledge in researching a sponsorship activity in the leisure industry, providing detailed information regarding the products and services the specific example relates to.

Where candidates are producing a high standard of response for this outcome, evidence relates to a range of contrasting marketing activities, clearly applied to specific products and services provided by a leisure organisation or a range of contrasting leisure organisations.

A02: Dealing with leisure customers.

This task addresses AO2 – apply knowledge, skills and understanding of the specified content of leisure studies in a range of industry vocationally-related issues.

This assessment outcome should demonstrate candidate's ability to provide effective customer service to leisure customers. The outcome lends itself to practical activities such as customer service role-plays; face-to-face, over the telephone, responding to customer letters and emails, or through technological or visual means; giving presentations, creating displays etc.

There was a marked improvement this series in the quality of observation records and witness statements being provided, although centres are again reminded of the importance of detailed, candidate specific and targeted observation records and witness statements used to provide evidence of competency for this outcome.

Individual observation records, for each scenario, should reflect the range of customer types and situations dealt with, the different methods used in dealing with leisure customers and the level of independence demonstrated. Detailed assessor comments should clearly reflect the candidate's ability to work independently and to reflect the different customer types and situations dealt with. Each record should be completed, signed and dated by the assessor.

There were very few candidates using inappropriate work placement experiences as evidence for this outcome, this series. This is a welcome improvement. Evidence should reflect the candidate's ability to deal with leisure customers and therefore organisations not considered part of the leisure industry, should not be used.

A range of example scenarios and documentation templates are available in the Teacher's Guide available to all centres at Edexcel Online www.edexcel.org.uk

Marking
This series found marking to be variable; some centres were being too lenient in awarding marks where the evidence did not meet the specification requirements. Other centres had been too severe in their marking and had not credited candidates who had met the necessary requirements for mark band three.

Candidate evidence should be assessed against the assessment criteria in the specification. For each task there are three mark bands. Assessors should first determine the mark band statement that 'best fits' the evidence submitted. A note should be taken of command verbs and discriminators for each statement. For example, for A (AO1) where candidates have produced a lengthy **description** of how the leisure industry views the customer, marks would generally be limited to mark band 1. Mark band 2 requires an **explanation** and mark band 3 a **comprehensive explanation**.

D (AO2) is an outcome where assessors most frequently award marks too generously. Care should be taken to ensure the candidate has independently demonstrated skill and expertise in the provision of customer service to a **range** of customers in a **range** of **contrasting** situations.

Administration
OPTEMS forms and Candidate Mark Record Sheets were generally completed correctly. Samples received were also accurate, with all centres submitting work for the highest and lowest scoring candidate. Many forms however, did not include page number references signposting the moderator to the relevant sections. This is always useful and should be included wherever possible.

Most centres submitted Candidate Authentication Records. This is a JCGQ requirement. Copies of all the forms required are available on the Edexcel website.

Annotation on coursework was again very limited or not present for some centres. Annotation should highlight where key evidence could be found, e.g. specifically where explanation, analysis and evaluation can be found. Annotation is most helpful to the internal and external moderation process.

In B (AO2) for example, annotation could be made where the candidate has included a description of the organisation's products and services and details of the information available for customers.

General Comments
Only evidence used to determine the mark awarded need be submitted in a portfolio. Multiple copies of brochures, leaflets, completed questionnaires etc. are not always necessary.

Unit 4 Leisure in Action

General Comments
It does appear that centres are beginning to understand the requirements of the assessment objectives, but not necessarily the amount of evidence required. Candidates still find it difficult to transfer their evidence of the knowledge gained from the AS units to the breath and depth required for A2. Simplistic statements without the depth of analysis cannot attract the higher mark bands.

The portfolios clearly identified the event that was organised, and this window showed that there was clear evidence of a comprehensive approach to feasibility studies to arrive at the event. Care should be taken when the event has been "tried and tested" before, as it does prevent originality by the current group as they repeat the plan already prepared for them.

Choices of events were, in nearly every case, appropriate to the qualification with the organisation of a sports event to a lower year group, or a visit to a visitor attraction being the most popular choices. Centres should be very careful when the event requires candidates to raise money for the activity or event. In many instances, fund raising methods such as car boot sales, cake stalls or sponsorship became integrated into the event, resulting in what effectively became two events. The raising of finance for the main activity should not overshadow or become more than one component of the main event.

Concern is also raised where the centre cohort was very small. Some smaller centres only had one or two candidates entered for this unit. These candidates are allowed to enlist the help of other students, but should avoid staff assistance as this seemed to favour candidates by using staff that are in a position to guide more professionally. The specification clearly states that the event should be with peers. When an event has used a limited number of learners or has had to rely on staff in the organisation then this clearly limits the learner from accessing the higher mark bands.
A few smaller centres had combined with Travel and Tourism students or even with another centre for the event. This appeared to work very well and is to be recommended. It is important however that candidates clearly indicate individual roles and contributions, and not use "common" material.

The learners must organise and carry out an event where each team member has a distinctive role. The event must have a leisure style focus. Thought should be given to job roles for a day visit, for example, to a theme park. Often, the reality of organising such a trip is for the students to ask the teacher to "drive the mini-bus" and one phone call to book the tickets. It is therefore not appropriate for learners to support an already organised teacher led event where all responsibility is taken by the teacher and the learners are not responsible for such areas as finance, physical resources, health and safety/risk assessments, marketing and administration systems.

If there does not appear to be sufficient job roles for a whole group then the centre would be advised to consider more than one event taking place. However, it is not appropriate for the event to be a trip for the rest of the class or residential for their own group as learners would be unable to demonstrate successful marketing of the event.

It is clear that many centres are not briefing candidates on the importance of keeping a log/diary of their role. It should be stressed how vital to the unit these are. It is advised that centres regularly check the completion of these as many are appearing to be completed retrospectively, often preventing higher mark bands to be achieved as omissions and errors become apparent. It is equally essential that there is clear evidence of individual work by each team member. The reflective log style approach is important to follow and centres should take a more creative approach to the logging and recording of the event.
Learners can then demonstrate how they have taken part in the event. When a group approach has been taken this not only produces duplicate evidence but is also difficult to see how individual performance has been captured.

Where minutes are included they must be of a professional and business standard and reflect the A2 level of this unit. They should also include individual contributions and ensure that they cover all aspects of planning including marketing, administrative systems, health and safety and risk assessments. It is evident that minutes on the whole are very simplistic and often do not cover the overall planning cycle of the event.

This unit requires the support of witness testimonies. The testimonies should be clearly linked to the assessment objectives and the mark bands but should indicate clearly the individual contribution. Many witness testimonies were similar for all learners and did not identify individual contributions particularly to the event itself. In some instances the learner has written their own testimony, which has then been signed by the assessor. Whilst this can be acceptable in some circumstances it is not applicable to this unit where one assessment objective refers to evaluation. There should be self, peer and customer evaluations as well as assessor evaluations.

Centres are encouraged to annotate throughout the portfolios clearly identifying where assessment objectives/mark bands are being applied. Written comments in addition to the identification of the assessment objectives and mark bands would be helpful to the moderation process. Centres tended to be generous in awarding higher mark bands where the written evidence did not warrant the application of the higher mark bands. This may be due to assessor involvement and knowledge of the event and therefore reflects the importance of annotation and witness testimonies.

Where centres sent in work which was identical in evidence i.e. the same minutes / risk assessments / letters etc this not only was difficult to make a considered judgment but also becomes invalid. If there is evidence that it is jointly arrived at then one set of evidence can be sent in for moderation to support the unit. However each member of the team must be able to make a comment on the impact of this evidence on their role and in relation to the event as a whole. Centres must be more creative in how they develop, use and assess this evidence without there being so much repetition. Professional discussion may be an assessment method that centres may like to develop.

There are still a few, minimal, examples of centres not submitting the correct front sheets and authenticity sheets for all the learners. Mark sheets should have clear reference to evidence location or justification of mark bands awarded. There was confusion in many cases where the work had been internally moderated and marks had been changed which did not reflect the front sheets or the OPTEMS. It is essential that centres clearly reconcile these so that the mark sheets show final marks awarded. The nature of this unit results in bulky work with many pages of relevant material sandwiched between unnecessary evidence. Consequently, it is easier for the moderator to confirm where evidence has been met if pages are numbered and reference made to these numbers on the front sheet. Clear annotation to indicate where evidence has been met, or where the centre adjudges higher mark bands to be achieved assists the moderation process greatly.

AO1: The Plan of the Event.

Some of the plans submitted lacked detail and learners need clear guidance to ensure that the expected range of information (aims, objectives, plans, dates etc.) is provided. Most candidates provided sound feasibility plans and timescales that were realistic. Most had minor omissions but showed that the candidates understood the plan. However too many were similar in presentation with their colleagues and gave a view that the plans were undertaken as a group with minor alterations. Candidates need to identify and submit their own variation of the plan in order for the work to be of an individual nature.
Aims and objectives need to be clearly shown as this assists the learner when looking back at the plan in AO4, making a comprehensive evaluation more likely to be achieved. Most events provided the candidates with the opportunities to gain good marks. Risk assessments were often provided by centre staff rather than researched. Risk assessments were covered in AS units and therefore learners should be confident in carrying them out.
A plan achieving mark band 3 will be comprehensive and include all aspects included in the specification and is clearly the work of the individual learner. Again, not all aspects of the planning process had been covered in depth for mark band 3. Financial aspects are important to any project and need to be clearly shown. In general, event timescales were realistic. This unit benefits from a relatively short timescale of approximately twelve weeks.

AO2: Individual contributions.

Most candidates provided well-written logbooks and were supported in their evidence by the tutor either signing the logbook or providing a witness statement showing the candidates involvement. Minutes of meetings however were usually very brief and did not convey enough evidence on the candidates' involvement. There were only limited amounts of witness testimony provided by centres to support the assessment of learner contribution. In some cases this has been supplemented by an assessor commentary but in some cases there is little to support the award of higher mark bands. Where group work has been submitted centres need to be more clearly guided to ensure that they explicitly demonstrate which work is credited to which learner. Higher mark bands could have been achieved with comprehensive logs/diary of an individual nature that have obviously been updated regularly and not completed retrospectively. Documentation should include details on how problems were overcome and evidence of deadlines being met

AO3: Research and Feasibility of the Event.

Most candidates showed that research had been undertaken but few provided the evidence of the source of the research or provided a bibliography. Others however did not provide evidence as to what research had been undertaken, nor what had been previously written. There were a few who copied copious pages from other text and used this as their evidence and did not use the information themselves. Research was limited, particularly in terms of supporting the rejection of alternative events before making a final choice. Where research was evident it was rarely made clear how it was linked to the final decision making process.

The feasibility study should address all the main aspects of the plan and for the higher marks each aspect will be supported by referenced research. The feasibility studies can be presentations by the learners. If presentations are used there must be clear identification of individual contribution to the presentation. When power point presentations are used these must be supported by a witness statement. It is essential that the presentations however are individual.

A04: Evaluation of the Event.

Many candidates attempted to evaluate their event with some undertaking sound evaluation of their own and the teams' involvement. However some evaluated the event and the team but failed to evaluate their involvement except by describing what they had undertaken. Most provided recommendations with a few providing very good evidence. Learners need more guidance with regard to the evaluation required. Too many candidates went beyond basic evaluation and tended to describe the event, thus keeping marks within band 1. Much of the information related to whether or not the event was a success, but there was no evidence of greater levels of reflection upon the contributions made by the various members.
For mark band 3 the evaluations must be comprehensive and detailed for both themselves and members of the team. The evaluations will include analysis of strengths and weaknesses and the consequences of these. The best evaluations seen included critical evaluation of individual candidates and their colleagues, both leading up to the event and on the day(s); sound recommendations for improvement that were realistic and workable; how aims and objectives were met. It is important to study the process as well as the product!

Unit 5 Employment in Leisure

General comments

The paper appeared to be accessible to candidates although there was a slight decrease in performance compared to last June.

Most candidates were able to respond effectively to most questions. There was evidence that candidates had been effectively prepared, with the majority responding positively to the tasks set. Many candidates did struggle to achieve the higher levels in extended responses. Almost all candidates answered all questions.

Candidates were able to use information taken from the WYNTL section of the unit. The requirements of some of the command words were generally known by candidates, although many did not manage to access the higher marks in the longer questions as a consideration of terms such as ‘analysis’ did not show enough depth in response. Far fewer than last year responded to the longer questions with simple explanatory points or, worse still, with a series of (bullet) points. Candidates appeared to manage their time effectively. Most did not produce lengthy passages of irrelevant information, although the discursive nature of this paper does mean that candidates should focus carefully on what the question is really asking for before starting to write. The vast majority of candidates appeared to complete the paper in the time available, with little evidence of rushed work towards the end.
Candidates did not always make full use of the stimulus material, although this was one area in which performance has improved noticeably. Two of the longer questions, Q1c and Q2e showed much more use of the stimulus, although Q4b and Q4c were largely answered in a theoretical way. The emphasis in this paper will inevitably be on the application of their knowledge to a variety of practical situations. The higher marks, particularly in levels of response questions, will always be characterised by the ability to demonstrate application rather than theory. It will be important for candidates to have practice in doing this in their preparation for the assessment. This paper had more stimulus material than last year’s so there was more chance for candidates to do this, but it was still an omission by many. This is an ‘Applied’ GCE and candidates must be prepared for this!

Exam technique is an aspect that requires improvement, particularly in the longer questions. There will always be a considerable number of questions on this paper that have a levels of response mark scheme. This will continue in the future so candidates should be made aware of how these work.

Q1

Scenario for the whole paper was of Sinton Railway Museum and its sister museum, Sinton History Museum. This appeared accessible to the candidates.

Q1(a) Most candidates had a basic idea that it involved staff being able to choose when they worked, even if it was expressed in an exaggerated way at times. Those who scored best were able to indicate that it involved flexible use of a set number of hours. A number mistakenly went on from the initial idea to suggest that they were flexible because they could be called in at any time rather than the pattern being set in advance, hence confusing it with casual workers.

Q1(b) The relative benefits of self-employed and full time staff were understood by the majority of candidates, although there was a tendency merely to state the pros and cons of each one rather than develop this into any sort of explanation. This limited the responses a little especially as the second often consisted of a negative of the first – 'Full timers have a set pattern of hours. Self employed workers can choose when they work'. Some good responses did explain further to show how the characteristics would suit people with different requirements, but this was the exception rather than the rule.

Q1(c) This question showed some good use of the stimulus by the candidates, although many often did not analyse the benefits and so were limited in what they could achieve. Most candidates effectively showed how each type of worker could be used within the organisation, matching full time to weekdays, part-time more to twilight and weekends and casual staff to the large twice a year events. How this actually benefited the museum was often left to the imagination unfortunately. There were references to saving the museum money but the links to this were often not clear and the responses tended to be of the 'describe how they could be used' variety rather than an analysis.

Q2

Q2(a) There was a better understanding of what a job analysis was than has been the case in past series. Many candidates appreciated that it was the necessary first step before the job description was written. A number of responses spoilt the effect by suggesting that it could also decide what personal characteristics the applicant should have. There is some confusion about the order of the initial stages and the role of each step, as was further indicated in part (b). A few candidates did manage to link it to the scenario where the high turnover could have left management unsure of what they were missing.

Q2(b) This was one of the more disappointing question for level of response. There were two problems areas.
The first of these was that candidates showed lack of knowledge as to what a job description should contain. Many criticised it on the grounds that it did not tell the potential applicant what personal characteristics would be needed or by the fact that there was no closing date for applications or details of where to send it. The former problem emphasised the need for them to be able to clearly distinguish between the job description and the person specification, as indicated in part (a).
The second problem I suspect was a result of candidates having perhaps done January's paper for their 'mock' where the similar question for an advert did indeed lack those things. In preparation for exams, past papers should be used for what they are 'past papers' and candidates should be made clearly aware of this.
The second overall problem was the lack of attempt to evaluate in many responses. Many pointed out what was in there, but without suggesting why it might be there. Simply listing what is given in a question like this does not gain credit. Even at Level 1 some idea 'it shows the salary so they can compare it with what they already earn' of evaluation is necessary. The better responses were able to indicate the poor quality of the document, particularly in the lack of precision on hours and duties. These candidates then went on to say that this might put off good candidates or fail to help select any as it was so vague and therefore everyone would apply anyway.

Q2(c) Most candidates managed to identify at least one realistic method of advertising the post. The use of the vague 'internet' is not acceptable, although most candidates are now ensuring that they reference a type of website that could be used, particularly the Museum's own website. There were some good explanations of their choices in many responses, with those who linked it to job level being the most successful. At times good application was shown here, with the use of national media linking it to the 'senior' level of the job, whilst other candidates pointed out that £15, 450 was not a very large salary and therefore it would be more appropriate to advertise locally. Both of these were acceptable.

Q2(d)(i) The term 'criteria' is essential to this part of the selection process and candidates should be aware of its meaning and context. A considerable number of candidates did not understand the term. Those who did scored well, identifying two criteria and managing some explanation as to why they might be used. There were some good links to the stimulus 'experience, as the candidate will be in charge of others so they will need to have done the job to help their team know what they have to do'. Some weak responses tended to do no more than repeat the criteria 'qualities – so they know what qualities they will have to help the museum'. Again it should be emphasised that this is an applied paper and that this vague type of response will not gain credit.

Q2(d)(ii) Many candidates answered this very well, explaining that there were large numbers and that it would be too costly/time-consuming to interview them all, or indicating that if they interviewed them all it would be more difficult to pick the right candidate. There was some confusion amongst candidates in that some seemed to think that it was the end of the process, i.e. that only one candidate would be chosen as a result of short listing.

Q2(e) There were many examples of good use of the stimulus material here, some real applied work, although marks tended to be limited by the lack of any real analysis of the situation. Most were aware that the candidate should be given the job, although this was often not actually articulated in the response, and launched into lists of what could be done to the building. At the lower levels these were not related to the stimulus but many did use the fact that it was a 3 storey building to link to the need for lifts. A number of able candidates discussed the potential problems of altering a listed building to great effect. Other responses showed good awareness by suggesting that it should have disabled access for visitors anyway so the changes might only have to be minor. The possibilities of adapting the job were less well known. A significant minority unfortunately seemed to assume that the physically impaired candidate would not be given the job and launched into the familiar 'they would be sued, shut down etc' without any justification. A positive approach should be encouraged!

Q2(f) Most candidates had sound knowledge as to what might be included in an induction. Explanation did tend to be rather vague at times, however, for example 'given a tour of the building so that they would know their way around'. There were a few good attempts to apply the induction process to the actual role, particularly in having to know the emergency procedures as he would be in charge of customers who he would have to take charge of in an emergency. Often candidates gave a list of procedures that might be carried out and then gave an 'overall' reason at the end. This explanation was inevitably rather bland and these candidates struggled to get into level 2.

Q3(a)(i) The general concept of redundancy was well understood with pleasingly few candidates really equating it to being sacked! Most were aware that it was the loss of the post that was the key and that the loss of an employee was the inevitable result of that.

Q3(a)(ii) This was the weakest question in terms of candidate scores on the whole paper. It is important that candidates appreciate that companies do have set guidelines to follow for procedures such as redundancy (and grievance) as well as for the recruitment process. Few candidates were able to give any logical sequence of steps to form a process. Some were aware of a step or two that would be included, such as the request for volunteers for redundancy and the offering of a redundancy package, but an overall procedure was rarely attempted.

Q3(a)(iii) A majority of candidates were able to give a basic reason why it was necessary to have a procedure, although relatively few were able to develop this into an explanation as to its importance. The most common reason was to ensure the procedure was carried out in a 'fair' way, although why this should be important was often left to the imagination. Some did manage to connect it with the potential problems with unions or even individuals seeking redress in the courts if it hadn't been fair. A few could see the problem for the museum if staff were kept in the dark, and that this could affect motivation.

Q3(b) The term 'redeployment' was evidently known only by about 60% of candidates, although it sits alongside 'redundancy' – evidently known by almost all – in the specification. It re-emphasises the need to ensure that everything in the specification is covered by candidates. Those who knew it produced some responses that were applied well. Many linked the fact that this museum was declining but the History museum was growing, so would need more staff. They also linked the idea of staff trained to work on the railway exhibits moving with them. Disappointingly only few carried these arguments to logical conclusions, pointing out the savings to be made in terms of recruiting and training new staff and in not having to pay out redundancy to staff.

Q4

Q4(a) Although most candidates were able to logically interpret the two words to score one mark, the relevance to employment in leisure – and thus a full explanation of the term – was rarely touched upon. It is important that candidates are aware of the outline as to how these terms affect or link to organisations in the leisure industry in order to fully explain them in the context of this paper.

Q4(b) There was a considerable degree of uncertainty in candidates' understanding of what is involved in the improvement in the working environment of organisations. Even some who evidently did know, however, got sucked into highly generic responses. These seem to be typical of this section on motivational techniques overall, as part (c) also suffered from this, with limited attempts to link it to the actual scenario, hence minimal application occurred. Better candidates did pick up on the problems with working conditions outlined in the text, suggesting that more space/return of the games table would make staff happier, although this was not always conclusively linked to improvement in motivation as asked for in the question. A few even linked in the cramped conditions to increased chance of catching someone else's germs and hence the high sickness rate, suggesting that improvement in this would give everyone more space and be more motivated to work effectively.

Q4(c) As with the previous question, the pleasing application seen in the earlier parts of the paper was all too often absent here. The majority of candidates could write at length about staff training and development but often with minimal specific reference to the question. Two problems emerged. One was that many pointed out their benefits to the organisation and even sometimes to the individual members of staff in their work but with no mention of how it improved their motivation. The other problem was the generic approach. A few candidates did manage to apply more successfully, pointing out that part of the problem was that the new staff were in new job roles and that training would enable them to do these correctly. This would give them confidence and thus increase motivation as they saw better results. Others suggested that staff bonding days would enable the new and the old to mix socially and this would create better teamwork, leading to better motivation as it is easier to work with people you get on with.

Unit 6 Current issues in Leisure

General Comments
There was evidence of an increase in entries for the June 2008 moderation window.

The guidance and preparation by centres followed the Edexcel guidelines – OPTEMS and front sheets were accurately presented. Declaration sheets had been completed by the learner and the centre assessor. There was accuracy in the recording of marks. Coursework was received within the required window.

All centres correctly utilised the mark record sheets providing centre name /candidate name / number.
It was clear to see where the assessor had made the assessment decisions. In most cases it was not clear where the internal verifier had verified the work.
It was also unclear if standardisation activities had taken place throughout the stages of the unit. Centres will need to consider the most suitable way of presenting this information for moderation.

Only one set of front sheets is required to be sent in for moderation. Multiple sheets tend to be confusing. Comments made by assessors varied considerably in depth. Assessment feedback must relate to the mark band as well as the assessment criteria. Reference to page numbers greatly assisted the moderation process.

Centres submitted portfolios in an acceptable format (in one plastic wallet). Centres are advised that surplus material taken from internet sites must be removed but must be sourced at the stage that it is used within the research project. This may also require an endorsement from the assessor. Centres are following the guidance on 'word count' for this unit which considerably guides learners and prevents them from deviating from the title chosen. The use of a time line is important to keep the learner on track.

Work submitted showed a good understanding of the importance and relevance of sourcing and referencing. The use of websites was more frequently referred to throughout the work. This is an acceptable way of acknowledging evidence at A2 level. Centres had allowed learners to use a range of appropriate evidence – the inclusion of dates is important in ensuring the authenticity and validity of evidence and more importantly its relevance to the scope of the research project.

Annotation was evident and assisted the moderation process. Annotation by assessors showed improvement. Detailed annotation further guides the learners. In most cases this was clear and transparent. Signposting clearly where the assessment opportunities had been provided in the evidence further guides the moderation process. Assessors must fully annotate the work throughout including appendices. Some centres are of the opinion that the work should remain unmarked- this shows that there has not been any judgement made throughout the stages / milestones set in the project.

The general performance for this window showed improvement with research projects accessing the higher mark bands. Work showed that learners had been well prepared for this unit and work was consistently of a higher standard. There were few adjustments made and these were within the accepted tolerances. Sub – sampling did show that learners were able to access mark band 2/3 more frequently.

Appropriate topic titles were chosen which clearly focused on the identification of a current issue in leisure. The topic titles allowed learners to develop the research project. Where proposals moved away from the topic title learners were not able to access full marks throughout. Topic titles do tend to concentrate on health related issues i.e. obesity or sporting events – football. There were some excellent titles – game consoles, smoking, fast food, clubbing for young people and salary capping in football. Learners were able to identify the scope of the issue chosen.

Learners must be guided by assessors on how to process information taken from secondary sources. Downloaded pages from websites if used in an applied way and linked to the project title are acceptable. These require referencing to show authentication. Some information presented by learners was clearly not their own work and could be seen as plagiarism if not sourced and referenced appropriately.

There was some evidence to show that learners had accessed other research projects and used these as their own. This is not acceptable and is plagiarism. If used as part of their own research and used in an applied way to support or refute their proposals then this is acceptable.

There was a marked improvement in the standard of work produced from last series. There was clear evidence that learners had been guided, given clear parameters for the unit and had been well supported throughout the research project. It is very pleasing to see that centres are now developing the concept of research projects with learners at the A2 level required.

Context of the unit.
Centres are reminded that this is an A2 unit and requires the learner to reflect on the knowledge that they have gained from the AS examination and portfolio units. Learners are required to choose an issue that is leisure related - this can extend into the area of the sport and recreation industry. It is essential that all research meets appropriate ethical guidelines, including permission being granted before 'real life' examples are included. It is suggested that between two and four thousand words would be appropriate for a written research project.

A01 – A research proposal that identifies the research topic together with the project aims and methodology.
Very clear research proposals were evident with the scope identified more clearly. The use of literary reviews had been developed well by centres and showed relevance to the topic title.

Plans varied and some had been retrospectively developed. When these were realistic they matched good research projects allowing learners to move throughout the mark bands. Aims and objectives were used with accuracy.

Some learners had difficulty in demonstrating organisational skills that are involved in research projects i.e. to produce and submit their project to meet deadlines. When a checklist approach was developed by centres this guided the learners well. Proposals took the format of a series of intended questions to be answered. Some learners included feasibility studies – these showed a marked improvement. Plans were highlighted against timescales with some more detailed than others. It was apparent that plans were rarely focused on in the evaluation section and were not applied within the unit. It is important that centres see this as an important part of the development of the research project.

A02 – Research that includes references related to the sport.
Research was good throughout the research projects with most learners including both primary and secondary research. The internet had been used widely with some other sources also used. Data collection, data presentation and analysis showed marked improvement with good analysis and conclusions being drawn. On the whole this section is completed well.

Learners are required to research the chosen subject area and possible methods of data collection. Learners should be able to reference the text and include quotations. When learners were able to compare findings from previous research in order to establish the relevance of current information, this was acceptable within the research and was rewarded. Some learners had difficulty in extracting the relevant information from other sources for their own projects. There was a tendency to download substantial information with very little processing and application.

A03 – A completed research project
Research still tends to rely on the internet and this limits some learners who only use this information source and more importantly only use a few websites. It is evident to see that these learners find it difficult to move up the mark bands. Learners are required to organise the collection and analysis of data and to complete the research project. Most projects were completed however some proposals had not been addressed and information had not been presented in a format to make considered judgements. Some conclusions were presented in a statement format and in bullet points. Learners must include explanations of intended aims, methodology, analysis and conclusions that acknowledge formal structures. The aspect of the leisure industry discussed in the research project must clearly reflect the project aims and objectives. Results must be presented in a variety of formats where findings and conclusions can be drawn from. It was evident that centres did not provide appropriate guidance here. Some learners had included all the raw questionnaires carried out. These must be processed and removed with one copy being placed in the appendix as evidence. It is the processing of the questionnaires that is more important. This should also be placed in context with the sample size used highlighting any limitations here.

A04 – An evaluation of the research project
There was a marked improvement demonstrated here. Evaluations were detailed and showed clear evidence that the learner had reviewed each stage of the research project.

Learners are required to review their completed project and identify areas where improvements can be made. These suggestions must be relevant and realistic. Learners had attempted to evaluate the research project in relation to their proposals. Evaluations were still sometimes brief statements and descriptive accounts. Evaluations must consider the intended research proposal as well as the methodology that has been used. Learners should be able to put forward other recommendations on how the proposal could have been improved if research had been focused in a completely different way. Some conclusions given did not demonstrate that the learner had understood the chosen issue.

Statistics

Unit 1: The Leisure Industry (6966)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	47	40	34	28	22
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 2: Working Practices in Leisure (6967)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	52	44	37	30
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 3: The Leisure Customer (6968)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	47	41	35	29	23
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 4: Leisure in Action (6969)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 5: Employment in Leisure (6970)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	53	46	39	33
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 6: Current Issues in Leisure (6971)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	47	41	35	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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