



General Certificate of Education

Travel and Tourism 8651/8653/8656/8659

TT09 People and Quality

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - January series

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GENERAL

This was the third operational paper of Unit 9 Travel and Tourism – People and Quality.

To help prepare their candidates, many teachers had clearly benefited from the two 2007 Examiner's Reports, and many had attended the Teacher Support Meetings organised by AQA in the autumn. As a consequence, some of the weaknesses previously identified (such as choice of unsuitable organisations and lack of conceptual knowledge) were not encountered this time. Overall, candidates' answers were better than last year, which augurs well for future series. One candidate was awarded almost full marks, which shows that top scores are achievable.

What was particularly good:

1. Most candidates chose very suitable organisations to answer the questions asked (for example, hotel chains and airlines were a judicious choice for Task 4 about benchmarking and quality of service).
2. Most candidates had prepared notes on a wide range of pieces of legislation, which helped them for Task 2 about operating in accordance with the law.

What was not so good:

1. Many candidates presented their answers as pages and pages of text without any break, any paragraphing or any indication of structure. Although candidates are not expected to polish the layout of their answers, they could readily organise their text in sections and sub-sections, thereby showing the logic and the plan of their answer. One candidate did not even indicate at all where one answer stopped and where the next started, usually in the middle of a line, leaving it to the examiner to guess.
2. A few candidates still failed to answer the precise question asked: instead, they copied everything they had in their notes about a particular topic, for instance about quality (Task 4).

ASSIGNMENT TASK 1

This task was about security in travel and tourism. All candidates were able to identify at least one security hazard relevant to their chosen organisation, and to describe the procedures in place to deal with that hazard. The most common choices of security hazards were theft of property and fraud, but some candidates also included original answers about air rage (for an airline) or about accidental damage (in a museum). The final question invited candidates to evaluate the risk posed by possible terrorist acts on their chosen organisation; many answers remained quite basic (about 9/11 and Al Qaeda, irrespective of the type of organisation chosen) but many others were very good, especially when candidates referred to precise local or contextual issues, such as the history of IRA bombings and Belfast Airport or the URBIS Museum in Manchester in the vicinity of the Arndale Centre bombed in 1996.

ASSIGNMENT TASK 2

This task was about operating in accordance with the law. Candidates had to write about two pieces of legislation of their choice; interestingly, candidates did not all write about the Disability Discrimination Act and the Data Protection Act, as some chose the Health and Safety at Work Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Consumer Protection Act, licensing laws, procedures laid down by the Civil Aviation Authority, etc. This shows that centres fully cover the Specification, which is very good. If most candidates managed to present their two chosen pieces of legislation reasonably well, many had problems with evaluating how they affected operational practice in the chosen organisations: many answers to 2b were rather descriptive, failing to establish any link between legislation and operations.

ASSIGNMENT TASK 3

This task was about customer feedback. Most candidates, if not all, duly described how their chosen organisation collects customer feedback, thereby showing their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of methods (the most popular ones being questionnaires and 'mystery shoppers'). Asked to explain the strengths and weaknesses of one method, most candidates were able to comment critically in a balanced way, even though some answers remained cryptic and unsubstantiated, if not vague and superficial: "the questionnaires look dull". Many candidates struggled with the third part of the task, which invited them to link collecting customer feedback with improving customer service practice. Many candidates failed to make that link and could not show that collecting customer feedback is not an end in itself, but a way to improve customer service practice. Many answers missed the point and suggested alternative methods to collect more data, which was not at all what they were asked to do.

ASSIGNMENT TASK 4

This task was about quality – a keyword in the name of the Unit itself! Candidates clearly had a lot of relevant material in their preparatory folder, but many struggled to use it pertinently, for the right question – for example, definitions of quality and references to quality criteria were made in answer to question 4b and not in answer to question 4a. The final question about benchmarking was well answered by many candidates, which is a marked improvement since June 2007 when a similar question had penalised many candidates.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future TT09 candidates:

1. Make use of previous exam papers and examiner's reports (all available from the AQA website): this is an excellent method to prepare candidates.
2. Stress the visual importance of the layout and presentation of the answers: the exam script ultimately remains a tool of written communication.
3. Make sure that candidates understand the documents they have in their preparatory folders and that they appreciate how best to use them.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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