



General Certificate of Education

Travel and Tourism 8651/8653/8656/8659

TT09 People and Quality

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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GENERIC COMMENTS

This was the fourth operational paper of Unit 9 Travel and Tourism – People and Quality. As one would expect, candidates seemed better prepared than in the past. This was particularly manifest through the choice of valid travel and tourism organisations, the solid coverage of the entire Specification and the judicious compilation of pertinent information in the preparatory folders. This augurs very well for future series.

What was particularly good

1. Many candidates wrote very interesting answers to Task 4, demonstrating a breadth of knowledge of the various pieces of legislation affecting the travel and tourism industry as a whole. This shows that candidates did not just study a couple of organisations in some depth, but that they had also been taught about wider legal and contextual issues. This is very good; teachers may rightly be congratulated for providing their students with such an understanding of travel and tourism in general.
2. In their answers, many candidates happened to mention how they had collected their information, typically through visits to relevant organisations (airport, hotel, etc). It seems that many teachers have developed good relationships with these organisations, which in turn is highly beneficial to candidates. Again, teachers should be congratulated for all the arrangements they have made to enhance their students' learning experience.

What was not so good

1. Some candidates still seemed to believe that a very long answer (as long as possible!) would enable them to score higher, and consequently they filled in pages and pages of text. This approach is not the most appropriate one: the assessment strategy is not about asking candidates to copy everything they have in their preparatory folder; candidates should use and apply the information they have, in order to answer precise questions. All too often in June 2008, as in previous series, entire pages of text were not relevant.
2. In some cases, poor hand-writing made it quite difficult, if not impossible, to read candidates' answers. Although this is not an assessment criterion, legible text is important. Candidates cannot be given the benefit of the doubt, page after page, when examiners are not able to decipher keywords or important passages.

ASSIGNMENT TASK 1

This task was about complaints and serious situations. Most candidates were able to give examples of serious situations where managers would need to get involved, though some candidates did not appreciate that, in many organisations, some routine complaints are addressed differently (for example a hotel guest unhappy with the queueing time to check in). Several candidates referred to recent problems at Heathrow T5, showing some knowledge and understanding of current issues affecting the industry, for example about misplaced luggage or delayed flights. Most candidates had good information about the procedures and systems in place in their chosen organisations to deal with serious situations and emergencies (e.g. fire and evacuation).

ASSIGNMENT TASK 2

This task was about quality and customer service standards. Task 2(a) was deliberately similar to Task 4(a) from January 2008: candidates were asked to explain how 'quality' is defined in their chosen organisation. Some candidates did very well, but many answers were disappointing as they failed to refer to obvious aspects such as reliability and punctuality for trains. The same weakness was displayed by many candidates who only wrote about disabled

customers, when they were asked about the needs of different types of customer. It seems that candidates had learnt so much about disability issues that they forgot the fact that the majority of tourists actually are **not** disabled. This said, some discerning answers duly evaluated provision for a range of types of customer types (e.g. a city centre hotel catering for business tourists rather than for families with young children).

ASSIGNMENT TASK 3

This task was about management and motivation of teams. Most candidates were able to write about the three aspects of health, safety and security, although often their answers were descriptive rather than explanatory. More candidates than in the past were able to answer evaluative questions, which is good progress. Many managed to evaluate the approaches and techniques used in their chosen organisations to motivate staff. Some were even critical enough to score level 3 marks (8-10), commenting on the fact that many approaches and techniques have their limits and do not always work (e.g. an “employee of the month” scheme that may create resentment among staff).

ASSIGNMENT TASK 4

This task was about operating in accordance with the law. For the first time, candidates were informed that they were allowed to refer to more than one travel and tourism organisation. All answers followed that suggestion: it seems that candidates welcomed the opportunity to refer to the many organisations they had studied. The questions were deliberately broad (e.g. with reference to ‘recent changes in the legislation’) and candidates reacted extremely well. They were able to show their knowledge and understanding of a range of issues. Some candidates did not really discuss, instead providing a summary of several laws, otherwise they would have scored much higher.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future TT09 candidates

1. Candidates should be reminded that examiners are looking for quality, not quantity.
2. Candidates should be advised to pay attention to the layout of their answers. For TT09, candidates have enough time (1½ hours for each task) to consider how best to present their text; creating paragraphs can make a positive contribution, showing the candidate’s ability to structure their answer. This is particularly important for discussions (e.g. 4(b) here): discussions are supposed to have a conclusion (yet it was not always possible to see what or where the conclusion was).

Centres are from time to time asked to send in candidates’ preparatory folders to AQA; this is part of our monitoring process for TT09. In most cases, the preparatory folders include useful and sensible documents, such as research notes written by candidates (for example notes taken during an interview with a representative from the organisation) and original materials (for example copies of their Health and Safety policy). Adherence to examples such as these would enable candidates to focus their preparation appropriately.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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