

General Comments

The overall performance in this diet was similar to that of recent diets but with rather more candidates attaining very high scores which is most encouraging for all concerned.

Candidates scored reasonably well on questions 1 and 4 but the picture was more mixed for the other questions with well prepared candidates doing very well on Q5 and Q7, but less well prepared candidates unable to do themselves justice in the more demanding B and C sections of the Paper. Question 6 was the least popular and few competent answers were provided for this question. As in other recent examination diets, too many candidates repeated phrases from the scenarios as part of their answers rather than applying the relevant theory to the scenario situations to answer the questions set.

SECTION A – 20 MARKS
ANSWER ALL EIGHT SUB-QUESTIONS

Question 1.1

Which ONE of the following types of flexibility is described as the ability to redeploy employees to different tasks through multi-skilling?

- A Numerical flexibility
- B Organisational flexibility
- C Temporal flexibility
- D Functional flexibility

(2 marks)
The answer is **D**

Question 1.2

At which stage of group formation and development does establishing standards and agreeing ways of working occur?

- A Storming
- B Performing
- C Norming
- D Forming

(2 marks)
The answer is **C**

Question 1.3

At what stage in the project lifecycle is the scope of a project determined?

- A Planning
- B Initiation
- C Growth
- D Control

(2 marks)
The answer is **B**

Question 1.4

Decisions about acquisitions, mergers and sell-offs occur at which ONE of the following levels?

- A Functional level
- B Corporate level
- C Business level
- D Competitive level

(2 marks)
The answer is **B**

Question 1.5

Explain briefly what the *critical path* is in relation to a project.

(2 marks)

Answer:

The critical path is the sequence of activities in a project that takes the longest time and therefore determines the overall project duration.

Question 1.6

Strategy, style, structure and systems are all Ss in the McKinsey 7 S framework. Identify the **three** missing Ss needed to complete the model.

(3 marks)

Answer:

Shared values, staff, skills (1 mark for each correct S identified).

Question 1.7

Mintzberg's organisational configuration is made up of the strategic apex, operating core and which **three** other components.

(3 marks)

Answer:

Middle line, techno-structure, support staff (1 mark for each correct component identified).

Question 1.8

Identify in the correct order the **four** main stages in the negotiation process.

(4 marks)

Answer:

Preparation, opening, bargaining, closing (0.5 mark for each correct stage identified and 2 marks if in correct order).

Examiner's Comments

Overall, reasonably well done, with some high scores.

Common errors

- Q1.8 – Stages of negotiation process often placed in wrong order

SECTION B – 30 MARKS
ANSWER ALL THREE QUESTIONS

Question 2	
(a) Discuss why a role culture may no longer be appropriate for E Company.	<i>(5 marks)</i>
(b) Recommend, with reasons, the type of culture to which the company now needs to move.	<i>(5 marks)</i>
<i>(Total for Question Two = 10 marks)</i>	
Rationale	
The question examines candidates' understanding of the different types of culture and their ability to apply their knowledge by using the information in the mini scenario to recommend a type of culture appropriate to a particular organisation.	
Suggested Approach	
In part (a) the answer should discuss why a role culture is no longer appropriate for E Company, drawing on the key characteristics of role culture. Part (b) should develop to recommend the type of culture that the company needs to move to, providing reasons. This will involve identifying the main characteristics of the recommended type of culture.	
Good answers will use the information from the scenario to explain why a role culture is no longer appropriate, rather than simply describing the characteristics of culture.	
Marking Guide	Marks
Part (a)	
Explanation of the characteristics of role culture that make it no longer appropriate for E Company, for example:	(Max 5 marks)
Strict division of labour	1
Formalised rules and procedures	1
Bureaucratic decision making	1
Rigid controls	1
Hierarchy of authority	1
Tightly defined job structure	1
People do not work across boundaries	1
For each other relevant characteristic making role culture no longer appropriate for E Company - 1 mark	
Part (b)	
Recommendation of appropriate culture for E Company (e.g. task culture)	1
Reasons, justifying recommendation of appropriate culture, for example:	(Max 4 marks)
Promotes team work	1
Focus on completing task/project	1
Breaks down rigid hierarchies	1
Skills and expertise most important	1
People not hindered by job descriptions	1
Fosters creativity and responsiveness	1
For each other relevant reason – 1 mark	
Maximum marks awarded	10

Examiner's Comments

Candidates did not perform well on Part (a). Too much reliance was placed on repeating material from the scenario without expanding specifically on why a role culture is no longer appropriate, by making reference to the key characteristics of role culture. Weaker answers in Part (b) did not recommend a type of culture, and some referred only to structure.

Common Errors

There was a tendency by too many candidates to repeat phrases in the scenario rather than to address the question set.

Question 3	
Explain the key areas that H should cover in the health and safety seminar. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Total for Question Three = 10 marks)</i></p>	
Rationale	
This question requires candidates to evidence their awareness of health and safety issues in the workplace that should be covered in the seminar.	
Suggested Approach	
Answers should develop to explain the key areas that should be covered in the health and safety seminar. Good answers will make reference to a wide range of health and safety issues in the workplace, rather than focusing on just one or two areas.	
Marking Guide	Marks
Areas that could be included:	
Legal duties/obligations to comply with H & S legislation	1
Requirement for health and safety training	1
Inclusion of H & S issues in induction	1
Employers' responsibility for safe working practices/plant & machinery etc.	1
Company policy and code of conduct on H & S	1
Communications on H & S	1
H & S risk assessment	1
Accident report system	1
Employees' duties	1
H & S on third party premises	1
H & S advisors	1
For each other relevant area – 1 mark	
Maximum marks awarded	10
Examiner's Comments	
This question was answered moderately well. <i>Common Errors</i> Some candidates tended to focus on specific H & S examples, rather than key areas that should be covered.	

Question 4

Explain the purpose of a project feasibility study, making reference to the different types of feasibility that should be considered for the Snow Dome project,

(Total for Question Four = 10 marks)

Rationale

This question is designed to assess candidates' understanding of the purpose of project feasibility and the different types of feasibility that should be undertaken in the early stage of a project.

Suggested Approach

Answers should start by firstly explaining the purpose of project feasibility. Candidates should then explain the different types of feasibility that should be considered. Good answers will make reference to the specific issues associated with the Snow Dome project for each type of feasibility study identified.

Marking Guide

Marks

Purpose of project feasibility, for example:	(Max 2 marks)
To establish if proposed project can meet its objectives	1
Can filter out projects	1
Help decide between alternative project strategies	1

Types of feasibility study, (up to 3 marks max for explanation of each type of feasibility study) for example:	(Max 8 marks)
--	---------------

Technical feasibility, for example:	
Assess nature of technology needed	1
Possible engineering issues	1

Social feasibility, for example:	
Fits with business and social environment	1
Impact on people during construction phase	1

Ecological feasibility, for example:	
Comply with H&S legislation	1
Not harmful to surrounding environment	1

Financial feasibility, for example:	
Determine cost/benefit	1
Use of financial ratios	1

Business feasibility, for example:	
Fit with business goals	1
Responds to competitor developments	1

(Marks can be awarded for other types of feasibility identified, but must be explained in context of Snow Dome project to gain marks)

Maximum marks awarded

10

Examiner's Comments

This was the highest scoring of Section B questions. Candidates did make reference to different types of feasibility and linked their answers to the Snow Dome scenario.

Common Errors

A number of candidates provided headings such as 'social feasibility' and 'ecological feasibility' but then demonstrated that they misunderstood the meaning of such labels by writing content that had nothing to do with the headings provided.

SECTION C – 50 MARKS
ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS FROM THIS SECTION

Question 5(a)	
Explain the responsibilities of X in his role as project manager	(12marks)
Rationale	
This question examines candidates' appreciation of the key responsibilities of a project manager.	
Suggested Approach	
Candidates need to explain the key responsibilities of X as project manager. To gain a pass mark, answers must develop beyond just a list of bullet points by explaining the specific responsibilities of the project manager within the context of the project.	
Marking Guide	Marks
Responsibilities could include:	
Delivering project within budget	1
Delivering project on time	1
Define project objectives	1
Building the project team	1
Supervision of project team	1
Delegation of tasks	1
Co-ordination through PLC	1
Communication with different stakeholders	1
Allocation of resources	1
Monitoring and controlling project	1
Leadership of the team	1
Problem resolutions	1
Risk management	1
For each other relevant responsibility of project manager – 1 mark	
Maximum marks awarded	12
Examiner's Comments	
Part (a) was generally high scoring.	
<i>Common Errors</i>	
Weaker answers tended to develop in terms of the skills of a project manager or repeating problems identified in the scenario rather than focusing on 'responsibilities' as the question required.	

Question 5(b)

(i) Discuss the purpose of project control.

(4 marks)

(ii) Explain the controls that should be set up for the customer information database project in order to help X manage the various stages of the project.

(9 marks)

Rationale

This question assesses candidates' understanding of the purpose of project control during the various phases of the project management process.

Suggested Approach

For Part (i) answers should provide an overview of the purpose of project control and why it is needed for the customer database project. Part (ii) should provide specific examples of project control.

Good answers will work through the different phases of the project and explain what controls are needed, making reference to milestones and gates.

Marking Guide

Marks

(i) Purpose of project control, for example:

(4 marks max)

Ensure project remains on course at any given stage

1

Measuring results against plan

1

Detection of deviations

1

Determine corrective action needed

1

(ii)

Project controls for customer information database project, for example:

(9 marks max)

Establishing project milestones and gates (in planning phase)

Up to 2

Project reporting information systems

Up to 2

Progress reports and meetings (execution of project)

Up to 2

Monitoring (for example against plan and milestones)

Up to 2

Taking corrective action linked to cost, time, quality (execution of project)

Up to 2

If project management tools and techniques are mentioned these must be discussed in the context of project control to gain marks.

Maximum marks awarded

13

Examiner's Comments

Candidates performed less well on Parts (b)(i) and (b)(ii). Very few candidates were able to explain the project controls that should be set up relating to different stages of the project.

Common Errors

There was too much reliance on making reference to project management tools, without explaining them in the context of project control.

Question 6(a)

Explain the extent to which C Chocolate Company is adopting this strategic approach to gain competitive advantage, making reference to the principles of the Resource Based View.

(13 marks)

Rationale

The question is designed to examine candidates' understanding of the Resource Based View of Strategy, applying their knowledge to explain how it is being used by the company in the scenario to achieve competitive advantage.

Suggested Approach

The answer should firstly explain the underlying principles of the Resource Based View (RBV). Candidates should then go on to use the characteristics of the RBV to explain the extent to which C Chocolate Company is adopting this approach to gain competitive advantage.

To pass, candidates' answers must develop to explain the use of the RBV in the context of C Chocolate Company, rather than just explaining the theory.

Marking Guide

Marks

Basic principles of the RBV, for example	(4 marks max)
Internal resources more important than external factors in creating competitive advantage	1
Inside out approach	1
Sustainable competitive advantage based on possession of unique resources/distinctive competencies	1
Exploiting unique resources/distinctive competencies	1
Application to C Chocolate Company, for example using Barney's criteria:	(9 marks max)
Resources of C Chocolate Company identified	Up to 2
Assessment of whether C Chocolate Company resources are valuable	Up to 2
Assessment of whether C Chocolate Company resources are rare	Up to 2
Assessment of whether C Chocolate Company resources are imitable	Up to 2
Assessment of whether C Chocolate Company resources are substitutable	Up to 2

(Marks can be awarded using other appropriate criteria/principles of RBV)

Maximum marks awarded

13

Examiner's Comments

This was the least popular of the Section C questions. Very few candidates were able to evidence any knowledge of the principles of the RBV other than discussing core competences.

Common Errors

Too many answers simply used the core competences from the scenario to illustrate the core competences of C Chocolate Company without attempting to explain how the RBV approach could be used to gain competitive advantage.

Question 6(b)

Demonstrate how the value chain framework would assist C Chocolate Company in understanding its internal position.

(12 marks)

Rationale

This examines candidates' understanding of how the value chain framework can be used in helping to understand an organisation's internal capability.

Suggested Approach

The answer should start by firstly explaining what the value chain framework is and how it can be used to determine where value is being added. Answers should then go on to explain how it could be used to determine the activities that C Chocolate Company is involved in, where specifically value is being added.

To pass, answers must make reference to the value adding activities of C Chocolate Company rather than simply describing the value chain framework.

Marking Guide

Marks

Explanation of the value chain framework, for example:	(4 marks max)
Examines relationship between different activities to see where value added	1
Assists in understanding C Chocolate Company's strengths and weaknesses	1
How resources are configured to achieve least cost/differentiation	1
Support and primary activities	1
VC diagram	2

How value chain can be used by C Chocolate Company, for example:	(8 marks max)
Inbound logistics – (delivery of raw materials e.g. cocoa beans)	1
Operations – production of hand made chocolates	1
Outbound logistics – orders processed and delivery dates met	1
Marketing and Sales – building the brand	1
Procurement of high quality cocoa beans	1
Technology development - supporting production	1
Technology development - supporting web based orders	1
Technology development - supporting marketing and sales	1
HR – developing policies to retain staff with key skills and knowledge	1

For each additional relevant example relating to C Chocolate Company – e.g. relating to service, infrastructure - 1 mark

Maximum marks awarded

12

Examiner's Comments

Candidates performed better in Part (b), demonstrating their understanding of the value chain framework.

Common Errors

Weaker answers described the value chain model without going on to apply it to C Chocolate Company.

Question 7(a)	
Explain the different approaches to leadership demonstrated by J and T, making reference to leadership theories. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(12 marks)</i></p>	
Rationale	
This question examines candidates' understanding of leadership theories and their ability to apply their knowledge to a particular scenario.	
Suggested Approach	
The suggested approach would be to start by explaining what leadership is and why it is important, and then go on to use relevant leadership theories to explain the different approaches adopted by J and T. Good answers will draw on the information from the scenario to support their discussion about J and T's different approaches.	
Marking Guide	Marks
Explanation of J's approach:	(6 marks max)
Blake and Mouton's grid (high on task and team)	1
Tannenbaum and Schmidt - democratic style	1
Team members contribute knowledge and experience	1
Achieves results through participation/involvement of team in decision making	1
Gives team members stronger ownership	1
Lewin's research suggests most productive/effective	1
Can take more time	1
Relies on team members being motivated to be involved	1
Explanation of T's approach	(6 marks max)
Blake and Mouton grid (high concern for task)	1
Low concern for people in team/individual's needs	1
Tannenbaum and Schmidt - autocratic style	1
Emphasis on planning and controlling work	1
Leader makes all decisions	1
Communications top down	1
Lewin's research – least satisfying for team	1
Team members not committed to targets	1
<i>(Credit will be given for alternative theories on leadership that are used appropriately)</i>	
Maximum marks awarded	12
Examiner's Comments	
There was a mixed performance on Part (a). Some candidates scored high marks, using a range of leadership theories to explain the different approaches.	
<i>Common Errors</i>	
Weaker answers evidenced a lack of knowledge of relevant leadership theory or simply regurgitated theory without application.	

Question 7(b)

Describe how the concept of action-centred leadership would help in identifying the training T needs to become a more effective leader.

(7 marks)

Rationale

This question requires candidates to evidence their understanding of action-centre leadership and how this can help in identifying training needs.

Suggested Approach

The answer should develop to use the theory of action-centre leadership to identify the training that T needs to become a more effective leader.

To pass, answers must develop to explain T’s training needs, drawing on information provided in the scenario, rather than simply describing action-centre leadership theory.

Marking Guide

Marks

Explanation of action centred leadership, for example:

Leadership skills can be learnt by concentrating on functions that lead to effective performance 1

Effectiveness of leader is dependent on meeting needs of task, group, and individual or 1

Diagram of ACL 2

Using theory, identification of T’s training needs
 Need to Achieve Task
 T has strong skills in this aspect of leadership 1

Needs of group
 T needs training to improve communication skills 1
 T needs training to improve team building skills 1

Need of Individuals
 T needs training on how to develop individual 1
 T needs training on feedback and recognition 1

For each other training need identified using ACL – 1 mark

Maximum marks awarded 7

Examiner’s Comments

A significant number of candidates did not appear to have knowledge of action centred leadership, hence did not do very well in Part (b).

Common Errors

Many of those who could describe the theory did not go on to describe how it could help in identifying training needs.

Question 7 (c)

Explain how a mentoring system could help T.

(6 marks)

Rationale

The question requires candidates to evidence their understanding of mentoring.

Suggested approach

The answer should develop to explain the different ways in which a mentoring system could help T.

Marking Guide

How mentoring could help T, for example:

Mentor acts as role model	1
Mentor provides support and guidance	1
Identify T's strengths and weaknesses	1
Sounding board for ideas	1
Help career advancement	1
Development of management competences	1
Networking	1

For each other relevant point explaining how mentoring could help T – 1 mark

Maximum marks awarded

6

Examiner's Comments

A considerable number of candidates did not understand the concept of mentoring and were therefore unable to explain how a mentoring system could help, which was the requirement for Part (c)

Common Errors

See above.