

Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

June 2016

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in
Public Services

Unit 1: The Role and Work of the
Public Services (21484F)

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Introduction

This report has been written by the lead examiner for the BTEC unit entitled The Role and Work of the Public Services. It is designed to help you understand how learners performed overall in the exam. For each question there is a brief analysis of learner responses. You will also find example learner responses from Level 2 Pass, Merit and Distinction learners. We hope this will help you to prepare your learners for future examination series.

General Comments

This was the third examination series for Unit 1 entitled The Role and Work of the Public Services. It was pleasing to see many candidates attempted the majority of questions. In general, examiners were disappointed with the range and application of responses in some of the more challenging questions. These items tested both the higher order command words and Merit and Distinction grade descriptors.

Generally, learners were able to show an understanding of the role and work of the public services. However, it should be noted that their examination technique was not as effective as it could have been. Appropriate practice and preparation for external examinations should be a priority for tutors and centres using all of the information available.

The paper was wide ranging in terms of grades to be awarded. Often questions asked learners to explain **two** ways, or state **two** examples, but many learners limited the number of marks they could be awarded by only providing one example or limited explanations.

Learners found some difficulty with the terminology used within the examination although the same terminology is used within the specification.

Centres are encouraged to give learners copies of the specifications to support them in becoming familiar with the terminology that will be used during teaching, learning and assessment.

Feedback on specific questions

Q1

This was an identification question. Most learners were able to identify two roles of the public service (Ambulance Service) that were identified in the picture. Marks were not awarded if learners just named public services as this was not what the question required.

Q2 (a)

Many learners were able to outline what is meant by a 'reserve organisation'. Some just made reference to them being a 'back-up' and this was not awarded a mark as reservist work along side the regular army at all times.

Q2 (b)

Many learners were able to outline one way reserve organisations support the armed services. Popular answers for this included '*providing more staff*' and '*bring additional skills*'.

The examining team are aware that the STEM for both Q2(a) and Q2(b) referred to the Territorial Army who became know as the Army Reserves in 2014. The examining team where confident that this would not impact a learner's ability to respond appropriately to these questions.

Q 3

Two examples of how the fire services carries out its role was required here. Responses to this were wide ranging and many learners were able to gain two marks for this question. Popular responses included '*responding to incidents*' and '*putting out fires*'.

Q4 (a)

Most learners were able to give one example of a local authority with the most popular being '*local council*'. Marks were awarded for naming any type of local authority.

Q4 (b)

A significant majority of learners were unable to gain the full marks available here. Learners could not state two functions of a local authority. Marks were awarded for responses such as '*education*', '*rubbish collections*' and '*social services*'. Learners tended to focus on giving very generic responses such as:

Helping people (0 mark) Supporting society (0 mark)
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Q5 (a)

Most learners were able to identify another example of an emergency service with responses such as:

Police (1 mark) Ambulance (1 mark)

Marks were not awarded for stating '*paramedic*' as this is a person not a service.

Q5 (b)

Some learners only gained one out of the two marks available. Few were able to explain two advantages to the emergency services of being directly funded by central government with responses such as:

Funding is guaranteed therefore they do not need to rely on donations (2 marks) They know how much they will get so they are able to budget (2 marks)
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It should be noted that learners must be clear in their answers, reflecting why it is an advantage to receive central government funding not just funding in general as responses such as '*so they can buy equipment*' or '*pay staff wages*' were not awarded a mark.

Q6 (a)

Most learners were able to name the government department that is responsible for the Army. Marks were not awarded for responses such as 'Department of Defense'. Learners were required to provide the full title 'Ministry of Defense' to receive the mark.

Q6 (b)

Many learners gained all two marks available. Most were able to give two ways the Army supports international peacekeeping with responses such as:

Provide humanitarian support (1 mark) Protect civilians that are in worn torn countries (1 mark)

It should be noted that learners must be clear in their answers, reflecting the ways the Army supports international peacekeeping and not just roles of the Armed services in general as responses such as '*provide support at events*' and '*help in the floods*' were not awarded a mark.

Q7

This question was taken directly from the specification B2 (bullet point 7). Learner responses needed to be specific examples of direct charges for the use of services and learners performed well at this question.

Q8

Most learners were able to outline ways St John Ambulance supported the ambulance service. Responses such as '*support the ambulance service at concerts and events*' and '*provide additional support at disasters*' were awarded a mark. Responses such as '*give them equipment*' or '*help out*' did not receive a mark.

Q9

Again, this question was taken directly from the specification B1 (bullet point 5). Learner did not perform well at this question. Learners were confused by the term 'delivery models' with muddled responses including:

The delivery might be late because of the model (0 mark)
Your parcel may not get to you in time (0 mark)

A few learners were able to give very clear disadvantages and marks were awarded for responses such as:

They can be quite expensive to set up and this makes services not want to hand over their budget (2 marks)
Communication between services can be difficult which can lead to confusion and a bad service being delivered (2 marks)

Q10 (a)

This question was taken directly from the specification A2 (bullet point 9). Learner responses needed to outline one function of HMRC. Many learners did not achieve a mark for this question with responses such as '*stop immigrants coming in*' or '*holding criminals due to attend court*'.

Q10 (b)

This question was taken directly from the specification A2 (bullet point 14). Learner responses needed to state one function of DEFRA. Many learners confused their role with that of the Food Standards Agency and any learners gave responses such as '*checking food in a restaurant*' or '*feeding people who have no food*'.

Some learners were awarded marks with responses such as:

Reducing pollution (1 mark) Supporting sustainable farming (1 mark)
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Q11 (a)

Most learners were able to identify two types of school or college. Responses such as '*secondary school*' and '*primary school*' were very popular.

Q11 (b)

Two ways education and training are provided to people looking for work was required here. Overall most learners were able to gain both of the marks on offer however some learners repeated the stem with responses such as '*training for a job*' or '*better education to get a job*'.

Q12

The majority of learners did not engage with the scenario and, although this was quite a challenging question, gained 0-2 marks. Learners demonstrated that they have knowledge of a range of ways community protection is provided but they did not read the question and the stem and did not give responses that explained two ways **local authority** provided community protection.

Examiners were unsure if this was because learners did not understand the language used or learners did not read the stem and question fully. This should be highlighted when teaching learners as well as when supporting learners with exam techniques.

Examples of responses that demonstrated learners have knowledge of ways community protection is provided but did not read the question and the stem and gained zero marks are:

They start Neighbourhood Watch schemes / in order to help citizens feel safer in their community (0 marks)

The police will patrol the area / in order to solve crimes and help people who live in that area (0 marks)

Some learners gained two mark and responses included:

Putting in CCTV cameras in the local area / in order to catch criminals so the police can prosecute (2 marks)

Having bumps in the road near schools to slow down the traffic / so that children can get to school safely (2 marks)

An explanation of how the British Army meets its purpose by providing humanitarian aid was required here. Overall most learners were able to gain one of the two marks on offer however learners repeated the stem with responses such around '*humanitarian aid*' and '*conflict*' which did not gain a mark. Responses that were awarded marks included:

If we help other countries they might help us when/if the UK is in danger (1 mark)
Supporting international peacekeeping (1 mark)

Q13 (a)

Few learners were able to define the term 'legacy' within the context of the stem. Many learners talked about '*being sponsored*' or '*donations*'. The responses that gained a mark included '*leaving money in your will to a charity*' or '*when you die your money goes to charity as part of your will*'.

Q13 (b)

The majority of learners did not engaged with the scenario and, although this was quite a challenging question, gained 0-1 marks. Learners demonstrated that they have knowledge of the impact of funding changes on service provision but they did not read the question and the stem and did not give responses that explained two ways changes to funding to the **voluntary sector** impacts the support they can provide public services.

This should be highlighted when teaching learners as well as when supporting learners with exam techniques.

Examples of responses that demonstrated learners have knowledge of the impact of funding changes but did not read the question and the stem and gained zero marks are:

When funding is cut for the police service they are not be able to help everyone and may not have the best equipment (0 marks) / when funding is cut for social services children may not get the support they need (0 marks)

If a response did not refer to the police or social services it was assumed by Examiners that the response referred to the voluntary sector support and the marks scheme was written to allow for marks to be awarded for responses such as:

There may be a reduction of support at incidents (1 mark)
Workloads may be increased (1 mark)

Q14

An explanation of one example of an issue dealt with by a civil court was required here. Learners did not perform well for this question. Learners appeared confused between the role of the civil and criminal courts with many learners responses referring to crime. For example;

When someone commits murder they will be seen in civil court (0 marks)
All crimes are heard in a civil court (0 marks)

Some learners were able to respond well to this question with responses such as:

If someone does not pay their rent the landlord can take them to the civil court to get their money (2 marks)
When a married couple get divorced and they have to decide when the dad sees the children and how much he pays (2 marks)

Q15

This question provided an opportunity for the learner to demonstrate their ability to discuss ways the health service could prevent similar concerns being raised in the future following a Care Quality Commission inspection at Colchester Hospital in November 2014.

The examiners remind learners that marks will not be awarded where responses:

- simply restate the findings of the report
- look at one aspect of the report but fail to consider other issues
- only discussed consequences for prisoners.

Learners are reminded that the use of offensive and derogatory terms is unacceptable. Tutors must ensure that this does not happen in future series.

Learners did not respond well to this question with most learners who were awarded marks only providing a Level 1 response.

The response below gained three marks. The response only identifies ways the health service could prevent these concerns in the future briefly. Most points are relevant:

This could be prevented by putting **more training** into place to ensure that things will be better in the future, also make **more spaces for operations** and make sure every patient is treated equally making sure that **people was discharged with full knowledge that they are okay to go** (3 marks)

A few learners engaged well with this question and the response below gained seven marks. The response discusses several ways the health service could prevent these concerns in the future giving weight to all viewpoints. Most points are relevant:

The hospital must **scrutinise their staff**. This means **assessing and reviewing their work, this will let managers and the hospital know who are making the mistakes**. The concern about the lack of appropriately trained personnel can, simply be prevented by **training the staff more**. This makes the staff better at what they do meaning fewer mistakes will be made in the first place.

The concerns of which the CQC has given can **lead to fines** which can damage the hospital. This means the hospital needs to **reduce the chance of any legal action** being made against it.

The CQC said there is a lack of capacity in both facilities. This means the hospital must increase the number of staff in the facilities this means there will be more staff needed for operations and other duties. If **the public hear about the concerns of the hospital then this might stop people from coming**. The hospital needs to give the **public confidence**. This will improve service and make the hospital feel good.

Cancellation of minor operations might be due to not enough equipment and facilities this means the hospital need to **improve their funding** to be able to expand their hospital meaning minor operations can be done and completed. Sedatives have been give to patents without consent this is bad because this can affect bad on the hospital and the staff.

The hospital must **increase the staff morale** this means staff are happy to help meaning taking peoples thoughts into account meaning a good service this also improves the work environment. The public might not understand the hospital and people being discharged into the care of other services could be down to **a lack of transparency in the hospital** because patients might not know the reason they are being discharged so the **hospital needs to be transparency** so the **public and patients have full understanding of their methods and duties**. (7 marks)

Summary of performance on the paper

Based on their performance on this paper, in future learners should:

- Be aware that there is an hour to complete this paper and plan time accordingly. The lengthier questions come towards the end of the paper so more time could be allocated for later questions.
- Spend time **reading each question thoroughly** to ensure the question asked is the question answered.
- Be aware that **all parts of the specification will be tested during the life of the qualification.**
- Study the specification to ensure key aspects that could be tested are known.
- Look at the command word in the question – outline, describe, explain, discuss. These words provide information on the type of response required and how the answer should be phrased. For example, 'outline' requires a basic response, whereas 'explain' will require an initial idea or way to be identified followed by expansion and/or examples to apply and illustrate why this idea or way is suitable. If two explanations are required half the marks will be awarded for the first response and the other half will be awarded for the second response. So if only one explanation is made then half the marks allocated for the question will be lost.
- Plan the response to the last question which will require a number of different aspects to be addressed, with reasoning, for higher marks to be awarded. Use all of the information supplied, such as statistics.
- Exam techniques are important and appropriate preparation will ensure that learners approach the exam more confidently and with knowledge of how to respond to different types of questions.

Grade Boundaries

Unit	Max Mark	D	M	P	L1	U
21484F – Unit 1: The Role and Work of the Public Services	50	38	29	21	13	0

External assessment

The suite of 'next generation' NQF BTECs include an element of external assessment. This external assessment may be through a timetabled paper-based examination, an onscreen, on demand test or a set-task conducted under controlled conditions.

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we 'set' the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade (Distinction, Merit, Pass and Level 1 fallback).

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries - this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark should be for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries ensures that a learner who receives a 'Distinction' grade next year, will have similar ability to a learner who has received an 'Distinction' grade this year. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to make sure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in externally assessed question papers

Each exam we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries year on year because then it wouldn't take into account that a paper may be slightly easier or more difficult than the year before.

Grade boundaries for all papers can be found here:

<http://pastpapers.edexcel.com/content/edexcel/grade-boundaries.html>

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