

General Comments

This represented the fourth examination diet and the most disappointing set of results so far. There appeared to be significant knowledge deficits in some cases and a failure by some to harness knowledge, understanding and application to the given context. Candidates again scored heavily on Question 1 with a mixed performance in the remainder of the paper.

SECTION A – 50 MARKS

ANSWER ALL TWENTY SUB-QUESTIONS

- Questions 1.1 to 1.15 are worth 2 marks each (30 marks in total)
- Questions 1.16 to 1.20 are worth 4 marks each (20 marks in total)

Question 1.1

Frederick Herzberg's study of work and people is of significance to managers because it identifies

- A** a framework for HRM involving appraisal, training and motivation.
- B** the need to assess the personality of job applicants.
- C** factors associated with job satisfaction called motivators.
- D** satisfaction from a participative, problem solving environment.

(2 marks)

The answer is **C**

Question 1.2

Data redundancy arises as a result of

- A** viruses and computer misuse.
- B** downsizing the organisation.
- C** a lack of password controls.
- D** duplication of data held.

(2 marks)

The answer is **D**

Question 1.3

Kurt Lewin's ideas on change are based on the view that change is

- A** capable of being planned.
- B** emergent.
- C** inevitable and uncontrollable.
- D** transformational.

(2 marks)

The answer is **A**

Question 1.4

A network topology refers to

- A** the physical arrangements of a computer network.
- B** the type of hardware used.
- C** the hierarchy of access.
- D** the range of software operated.

(2 marks)

The answer is **A**

Question 1.5

Adding new tasks to a person's job, so increasing their responsibility, is called

- A** process re-engineering.
- B** job enrichment.
- C** HR development.
- D** career scoping.

(2 marks)

The answer is **B**

Question 1.6

Data integrity refers to its

- A** accuracy.
- B** security of storage.
- C** adaptability for multiple use.
- D** ethical use of personal details.

(2 marks)

The answer is **A**

Question 1.7

Entity relationship modelling is a technique used within

- A** an assessment centre test used in staff selection.
- B** market research and product testing.
- C** database analysis and design.
- D** business process re-engineering.

(2 marks)

The answer is **C**

Question 1.8

The intervention of a consultant or change agent is a common feature of

- A** co-operation and negotiation strategies for change.
- B** an inclusive culture.
- C** high levels of management visibility.
- D** a program of Organisational Development (OD).

(2 marks)

The answer is **D**

Question 1.9

A local area network (LAN) normally contains

- A** a file, print and communications server(s).
- B** distributed processing and local solutions.
- C** e-trading and e-marketing.
- D** internet access and firewall protection.

(2 marks)

The answer is **A**

Question 1.10

Public relations activity can be used within marketing as part of

- A** marketing decision support activities.
- B** a promotional mix.
- C** customer feedback processes.
- D** segmentation practices.

(2 marks)

The answer is **B**

Question 1.11

Remuneration is an example of

- A** self-actualisation reward.
- B** an intrinsic reward.
- C** an extrinsic reward.
- D** an individual's work/life balance.

(2 marks)

The answer is **C**

Question 1.12

“Spot rates” normally refer to a specific pay rate determined by reference to

- A** the market place.
- B** incremental progression.
- C** a negotiated point on a pay spine.
- D** experience and qualifications of a newly recruited person.

(2 marks)

The answer is **A**

Question 1.13

Charging a very low price on one item in order to generate customer loyalty and increased sales of other items is called

- A** market penetration.
- B** loss leader pricing.
- C** product penetration.
- D** skim pricing.

(2 marks)

The answer is **B**

Question 1.14

“Corrective”, “perfective” and “adaptive” are terms associated with

- A** system maintenance.
- B** change management approaches.
- C** quality assurance.
- D** HR disciplinary processes.

(2 marks)

The answer is **A**

Question 1.15

In the expectancy theory of motivation “valence” refers to

- A** a belief that an outcome will satisfy organisational tasks.
- B** a person’s own preference for achieving a particular outcome.
- C** a belief that the outcome will be shared by others equally.
- D** an understanding of the probability of an event happening.

(2 marks)

The answer is **B**

Question 1.16

Explain the concept of physical evidence when applied to the marketing mix.

(4 marks)

Answer:

Marketing mix = a manufacturing firm’s “blend” of price, product, promotion, place.

For service organisations other relevant factors include a lack of “physical evidence” because:

- Services are intangible
- Potential customers may therefore feel greater risk

Reassurance is therefore needed, e.g. testimonials/references from past customers.

Note: Other examples apart from testimonials/references might be given such as internet pages, paperwork, brochures, uniforms, the corporate logo, buildings, furnishings and signage etc.

Question 1.17

Identify the potential benefits of a marketing database and the source data from which it might be constructed.

(4 marks)

Answer:

Sources

One-off market research data already available
 Other marketing intelligence
 Internal information on products, trends, Markets and competitors etc.

Benefits

Improves problem solving capacity
 Method of structuring decisions
 Integrates all types of knowledge
 Maximises IT potential
 Total system of marketing information to support decisions

Question 1.18

In HR planning how might an organisation match the projected “supply” of human resources to future demand.

(4 marks)

Answer:

HR planning: satisfying projected demand by adjusting projected “supply”.

Increasing

Re-training/re-skilling/multi-skilling for potential “gaps”
 Development for internal promotions (succession planning)
 Overtime
 Increased use of IT
 Outsourcing
 Recruitment and selection (new employees)

Reducing

Early retirements
 Redundancy
 Short-time working
 Job sharing

Internal transfers/re-deployment to balance requirements

Question 1.19

Identify the advantages and disadvantages of a policy of succession planning for a large organisation.

(4 marks)

Answer:

Advantages

- Career structures, rewards visible
- Positive motivation
- Reinforces existing culture
- Rational approach

Disadvantages

- Lack of exposure to other influences
- Ignores possible better candidates from outside
- Trend for movement between companies strong
- Vacancies may arise at inconvenient times
- Expensive (?)
- Needs managing
- Only possible within a very large organisation
- Outdated concept?

Question 1.20

Identify both the advantages and disadvantages of a decentralised Human Resource provision for an organisation that has many business units and sites.

(4 marks)

Answer:

Advantages

- Empowerment/delegation strengthened
- In touch with detained unit/site issues
- Greater local knowledge
- Visible

Disadvantages

- Lack of central control
- Lack of specialist knowledge
- May lead to “maverick” actions/policies
- HR function may be diluted
- Uneven provision within organisation

| Rationale | |
|--|--------------|
| <p>Question One parts 1.1 – 1.15 test candidates' knowledge of a wide variety of topics within the syllabus through the use of objective test questions in a conventional "multiple choice" format. Question One parts 1.16 – 1.20 provide further objective testing through limited word responses. These sub-questions (valued at 4 marks each) test knowledge and understanding. Sub-questions 1.16 and 1.17 test aspects of Marketing (learning outcomes D(iii) and D(v)) while 1.18 – 1.20 test learning outcomes E(I), E(ii) and E(v) of Managing Human Capital.</p> <p>Responses to each sub-question are expected to conform to the word limit indicated. Responses beyond this limit are not marked.</p> | |
| Suggested Approach/Marking Guide | Marks |
| Sub-questions 1.1 – 1.15. These sub-questions have been constructed on the basis that there is only one correct answer. Marking is therefore on the basis of 2 marks for a correct answer and 0 marks for an incorrect answer. | 0 or 2 |
| Sub-questions 1.16 – 1.20. Responses should be in note form and should not exceed 50 words per sub-question (approximately half a page of the answer book). The use of bullet points and short definitions as part of notes is perhaps the most effective approach. | |
| An excellent response containing the majority of the points suggested in the examiner's answers or with alternative valid points instead. An excellent demonstration of understanding and application of subject matter. | 3.5 to 4 |
| A good/very good response containing a substantial number of the points suggested in the examiner's answers or with valid alternative points instead. A good demonstration of understanding and application of subject matter. | 2.5 to 3 |
| A sound response containing some points suggested in the examiner's answers or with valid alternative points instead. Demonstrates understanding and application of subject matter. | 1.5 to 2 |
| A weak response that nevertheless may contain some valid point(s). Demonstrates little understanding and application of subject matter. | 0.5 to 1 |
| A failure to achieve the standard suggested above. | 0 |
| Examiner's Comments | |
| <p>Most candidates coped well with the requirements of this question and scored heavily as a result. A substantial number of scripts (more than expected) did not conform to the 50 word limit. Only the first 50 words of the candidates' response attracted marks. Those scoring lowly on this section did so because of a lack of knowledge.</p> <p><i>Common Errors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of candidates struggled with 1.16 and 1.19 indicating that they were unfamiliar with the relevant concepts. Some gave no response; others provided incorrect "guesses". • Some muddled the notion of decentralised and centralised provision. | |

SECTION B – 30 MARKS
ANSWER ALL PARTS OF THIS QUESTION.

Question 2

You have been asked to provide the new CEO with briefing notes on a number of issues that will help prepare her for the “away day” meeting. These notes should:

- (a) Explain why the changes attempted by the previous CEO were unsuccessful; (5 marks)
- (b) Explain the role Human Resources could perform in supporting any new initiatives for change; (5 marks)
- (c) Analyse the potential of outsourcing as a means of overcoming some of the problems facing Q2. (The CEO has identified two services initially; IT/IS and cleaning.); (5 marks)
- (d) Discuss which forms of benchmarking Q2 would use in order to contribute to better performance management; (5 marks)
- (e) Discuss how a culture of “care through quality” might be established within Q2; (5 marks)
- (f) Describe the performance measures that will be needed in order to satisfy future management and strategic reporting requirements of Q2. (5 marks)

(Total for Section B = 30 marks)

Rationale

Question two parts (c) (d) (e) and (f) test candidates’ knowledge and understanding through the application of thinking from Operations Management (learning outcomes C(ii), (vi) and (ix)). Part (a) involves an examination of why a change attempt was unsuccessful (learning outcome B(iv) and part (b) explores the potential role HR might perform (learning outcome E(i)).

Suggested Approach/Marking Guide

Marks

Responses for each sub-question are expected on a single side of A4 and in a form that might include a few sentences and bullet points. This limit simulates a real life scenario in which accuracy, brevity and clarity are called for and also hopefully prevents candidates from spending a disproportionate amount of time on each sub-question. Responses beyond the limit indicated are not marked.

All sub-questions require application of knowledge to the scenario.

| | |
|---|---------|
| <p><i>Part (a)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify several key points • Identify significance of each • Explain implication of each on the change program | |
| Limited answer: Limited or some recognition of some failing(s) or wholly generic explanation of change methodology. | 1 max |
| Pass standard answer: Understanding of a few key points (e.g. lack of consultation, inappropriate responsibilities, lack of involvement, inappropriate communication, faulty planning, etc.) related successfully to the scenario. | 2-3 max |
| Strong answer: Explanation of several key points (e.g. lack of consultation, inappropriate responsibilities, lack of involvement, inappropriate communication, faulty planning, etc.) related successfully to the scenario. | 4-5 max |
| <p><i>Part (b)</i></p> <p>Explain what Human Resource Management (HRM) involves. Within this context explain the help HR could legitimately provide in supporting the new initiatives for change (e.g. discussion of initiatives, getting intelligence on HR practices used elsewhere, developing HR practices, HR supportive actions (e.g. training), assist in cultural change, support and counselling, etc., monitoring and control).</p> | |
| Limited answer: Recognition of the role that can be played by HR, weak relationship to the scenario and few relevant initiatives identified. | 1 max |
| Pass standard answer: Some explanation of HR's value and a limited range of initiatives that are linked to/relevant to the scenario. | 2-3 max |
| Strong answer: Comprehensive explanation of HR well conceptualised to the scenario and including an extensive range of fully explained initiatives relevant to the change context.. | 4-5 max |
| <p><i>Part (c)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse problems facing Q2 • Explain concept of outsourcing • Analyse advantages and disadvantages of outsourcing services suggested • Some summary and/or conclusion/recommendation | |
| Limited answer: Correct identification of outsourcing as a concept, unstructured discussion with weak/no linkages to the scenario. | 1 max |
| Pass standard answer: Some balanced discussion of the merits of outsourcing and the establishment of some link to the scenario. | 2-3 max |
| Strong answer: Comprehensive analysis including evaluation of outsourcing and its potential to overcome some of Q2's major problems. | 4-5 max |

Part (d)

- Establish what benchmarking is.
- Discuss relationship to performance management.
- Identify and discuss main types of benchmarking (internal, competitive, best practice activity).

Limited answer: Correct but general discussion of benchmarking poorly related or unrelated to the scenario. 1 max

Pass standard answer: Some discussion of benchmarking, types, performance management and some relationship to scenario established. 2-3 max

Strong answer: Purposeful and comprehensive discussion of benchmarking and its relationship to performance management, including discussion of the three benchmarking types and the most appropriate within the context of the scenario. 4-5 max

Part (e)

- Identification of the cultural implications of “care through quality”.
- Indication of TQM (or other appropriate mechanism) as a way of achieving “care through quality”.
- Discuss potential of TQM (or other appropriate mechanism).

Limited answer: Some unstructured points relating to the issue or an attempt to present theoretical issues with little or no reference to the scenario. 1 max

Pass standard answer: Some structured description of issues relevant within the context of the scenario, including some realistic quality mechanisms. 2-3 max

Strong answer: Clear, realistic and comprehensive discussion of cultural implications for Q2, including identification of a range of purposeful scenario derived quality mechanisms. 4-5 max

Part (f)

- List measures under three headings (external, management and strategic).
- Describe measures within the context of the scenario and the need to support future performance management.

Limited answer: Demonstration of some knowledge of measures supporting performance management, no or little attempt to relate to scenario. 1 max

Pass standard answer: Either a range of ill described but relevant measures or description of several appropriate measures. 2-3 max

Strong answer: Clearly identified and described range of appropriate measures related to all three categories, up to one full mark per substantive measure to a maximum of 5. 4-5 max

Examiner’s Comments

Sub-question (f), performance measures, was particularly poorly dealt with. A significant number of candidates did not understand the concept of outsourcing (2(c))

Common Errors

- A large number of candidates exceeded the one page limit.

SECTION C – 20 MARKS
 ANSWER ONE QUESTION ONLY

Question 3

- (a) Evaluate the opportunities for B3 identified in the consultancy report. (12 marks)
- (b) Produce guidelines for the selection process that should be adopted by an organisation presented with a short-list of candidates. (8 marks)
- (Total for Question Three = 20 marks)*

Rationale

Question Three tests candidates' understanding of issues associated with Information Systems and Managing Human Capital. The question requires an application of knowledge and understanding to the scenario of a family run personnel agency facing up to the opportunities offered by information technology. Question three part (a) requires the candidates to evaluate these opportunities. Learning outcome A(iii) is tested and is worth 12 marks. Question three part (b) requires the production of guidelines for selection from job candidates. Learning outcome E(iii) and is worth 8 marks.

Suggested Approach/Marking Guide

Marks

Part (a)

- Identify the detailed opportunities arising from opportunity 1 (extended service offering, positive image, enhanced competitive strategy, etc.).
- Evaluate taking account of potential problems (costs and expertise, ethical implications, damaged reputation amongst corporate clients, company image, etc.).
- Conclude and make recommendation.
- Identify the detailed opportunities arising from opportunity 2 (potential, image, cost, etc.).
- Evaluate taking account of potential problems (resistance by clients, security and backup, etc.).
- Conclude and make recommendation.

Up to 6 marks for each opportunity evaluated.

Limited answer: Some mainly unstructured but relevant points relating to the opportunities. 3 max

Pass standard answer: Several valid points as part of an evaluation of both opportunities, maybe lacking in depth or failing to provide guidance on desirability of opportunities 6 max

Strong answer: Purposeful evaluation of both opportunities containing many valid points (similar to those in examiner's answers). Clear guidance provided on both opportunities. 12 max

Part (b)

- Identification of main stage/headings (e.g. agreement of selection criteria and testing method, testing against selection criteria, choosing the most suitable candidate, administration, etc.).
- Identify appropriate checklist items under each heading (see examiner's answer).

| | |
|---|-------|
| Limited answer: Some mainly unstructured but relevant points relating to selection. Effort might contain possible confusion with recruitment issues. | 2 max |
| Pass standard answer: Some relevant selection points appropriately presented, maybe lacking in overall cohesion or comprehensive coverage. | 4 max |
| Strong answer: Well presented, useful and realistic guidelines covering all main aspects of selection. Clear identification of stages containing many valid selection points. | 8 max |

Examiner's Comments

A substantial number of scripts were muddled and lacked structure and cohesion. Part (a) was handled better than part (b).

Common Errors

- Rather than produce guidelines as requested, some provided a lot of detail along the lines of "everything I know about recruitment and selection" in part (b).

| Question 4 | |
|---|-------------------|
| (a) Evaluate CM's situation making specific mention of marketing and ethical issues. | (10 marks) |
| (b) Explain how CM might develop a marketing strategic plan. | (10 marks) |
| (Total for Question Four = 20 marks) | |
| Rationale | |
| <p>Question Four tests candidates' understanding of issues associated with Marketing and is set within the context of a breakfast food producing company at something of an organisational cross-road. Part (a) requires an evaluation of the organisation's position having regard to both marketing and ethical issues (learning outcome D(ii)). Part (b) requires the candidate to explain how a marketing strategic plan might be developed (learning outcome D(vi)).</p> | |
| Suggested Approach/Marking Guide | Marks |
| <i>Part (a)</i> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish framework for consideration of marketing processes (possibly Major challenges (increasing competition, sales levels that seem to have "peaked", the prospect of the retirement of the key decision maker), Ethical issues, Product nature and Marketing mix, etc.). • Discuss each point and evaluate each within the context of the scenario. • Through evaluation, draw reference to relevant academic frameworks (e.g. Greiner's organisational growth model (1972), the market life cycle, etc.). | |
| Limited answer: Confused or partial understanding of marketing processes. Possibly some relevant issues, identified points or extensive marketing theory unrelated to scenario context. | 3 max |
| Pass standard answer: Discussion and limited evaluation of several salient marketing processes. Demonstrates understanding and ability to apply knowledge | 5 max |
| Strong answer: Well structured evaluation involving processes in relation to key marketing challenges, ethical issues and other issues. Demonstrates mature understanding, purposeful evaluation and ability to conceptualise relevant "theory" to the scenario | 10 max |

Part (b)

- Provide a context or background identifying responsibilities.
- Identify key stages/process (conducting an audit of the external environment, conducting an internal analysis, synthesis and discussion, communication and co-ordination).
- Explain through discussion, practical details associated with each stage/process.
- Conclude by summarizing the content of the strategic marketing plan.

Limited answer: Confused and partial understanding. Some relevant issues identified, possibly in an unstructured fashion. Either lacking in realism or knowledge of marketing planning processes. 3 max

Pass standard answer: Comprehensive, some structured explanation possibly incorporating main stages. Some identification of detailed issues. Demonstrates understanding and some attempt to relate this to the scenario. 5 max
1-2 marks per substantive factor discussed.

Strong answer: Comprehensive, structured explanation containing detailed issues associated with key stages in the development process. Demonstrates excellent understanding and realistic, practical approach. 10 max

Examiner's Comments

Again part (a) was handled better than part (b).

Common Errors

- Part (b) contained some poor responses including the description of the possible content of a plan rather than a concentration on how the plan should be developed..