



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT/FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, SYSTEMS AND TECHNIQUES

### AAT Fast-Track examination

**4 June 2008**

From 10.00am to 12.00noon  
plus ten minutes reading time from 9.50am to 10.00am

#### ***Instructions to candidates***

There are **three** questions on this question paper

Answer all **three** questions

Question 1 carries, in total, **40** marks

Question 2 carries, in total, **40** marks

Question 3 carries, in total, **20** marks

*All workings should be shown. Where calculations are required using formulae, calculators may be used but steps in the workings must be shown. Calculations with no evidence of this (for example, using the scientific functions of calculators) will receive no credit. Programmable calculators are not permitted in the examinations room.*

*Formula sheets, graph paper and cash analysis paper are available from the invigilator, where applicable.*

*Where a question asks for a specific format or style, such as a letter, report or layout of accounts, marks will be awarded for presentation and written communication.*

# 1

Individuals seldom work in isolation from others. Groups are a characteristic of all social situations and almost everyone in an organisation will be a member of one or more group. Work is a group-based activity and if the organisation is to function effectively it requires good teamwork. The working of groups and the influence they exert over their membership is an essential feature of human behaviour and of organisational performance. The manager must use groups in order to achieve a high standard of work and improve organisational effectiveness.

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- **Requirement for question 1**

- (a) Explain the differences and identify the characteristics of informal and formal groups. 10
- (b) Describe the characteristics of an effective work group. 10
- (c) *The concept of role focuses attention on aspects of behaviour existing independently of an individual's personality. Patterns of behaviour result from both the role and the personality. Role conflict arises from inadequate or inappropriate role definition and needs to be distinguished from personality clashes. These arise from incompatibility between two or more people as individuals even though their roles may be defined clearly and understood fully.*

*In practice, the manner in which a person actually behaves may not be consistent with their expected pattern of behaviours. This inconsistency may be a result of role conflict. Role conflict as a generic term can include:*

- *role incompatibility;*
- *role ambiguity;*
- *role overload; and*
- *role underload.*

(Mullins 2002)

Describe what is meant by: role incompatibility; role ambiguity; role overload; and role underload, and explain the potential impact of these conflicts on group working.

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**(40)**

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# 2

Most managers are likely to be faced with the frequent need to recruit and select staff. Effective resourcing of the organisation is a central part of Human Resource management and the personnel function. Whatever the organisation of the personnel function, it is only right and sensible that managers and supervisors have at least some say in the appointment of their own staff or those staff whose work they have to supervise.

Unit managers/supervisors would be expected to consult with the personnel department and to seek specialist knowledge and advice. The recruitment and selection of staff can rightly be regarded as a specialist activity, but all managers and supervisors should be well acquainted with the basic procedures and skills involved. In smaller organisations it is likely that unit managers will have a greater responsibility for staffing the organisation.

The message for all managers is to:

- recognise the importance of recruitment and selection;
- assess the effectiveness of present policies and procedures; and
- improve methods, skills and techniques of selection.

(Mullins 2002)

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- **Requirement for question 2**

- (a) Explain the value of Human Resource planning to both the manager and the organisation. 10
  - (b) A key task for managers is to create a job description and a person specification prior to an advertisement for a post being placed. Briefly describe a job description and a person specification, and identify the main considerations for the manager when undertaking this task. 12
  - (C) Once a short-list of candidates has been made they would normally be required to attend an interview. The interview, in many organisations, is a panel interview, for example the candidate is interviewed by a panel of three or more individuals. One of the problems associated with interviewing candidates is ensuring there is a balance between leading, open, closed and reflective questions. 18
- Describe the benefits and limitations of panel interviews; explain, with examples, what are leading, open, closed and reflective questions; and, how a balance between these types of questions can be achieved. 18

**(40)**

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# 3

Leaftown District Council has awarded a contract to Fullshire County Council for the provision of payroll services. The previous contractor had a good performance record in relation to payment of employees with regular hours and no variations. However, a significant number of customer complaints were experienced from employees, in terms of accuracy and timeliness of payments, particularly, when variations occurred. These variations included overtime, allowances, increments and pay awards.

Your manager is keen to ensure that an effective contract monitoring system is put in place, to avoid similar problems happening with the new contract.

A project plan has also been drawn up for implementation of the new contract.

Activity	Dependency	Duration (Days)	Full-time equivalent (FTE) resources per day
A	-	2	5
B	A	4	2
C	-	5	1
D	C	2	3
E	A	3	1

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• **Requirement for question 3**

(a) Prepare a briefing note for your manager:

- (i) Giving a definition of contract monitoring. 2
- (ii) Giving the features of an effective contract monitoring system. 4
- (iii) Detailing the three main stages of an effective contract monitoring system. 3
- (iv) Outlining some practical measures that could be implemented to avoid problems that have been experienced in the past. 5

(b) Prepare a resource histogram based on the information provided and clearly indicate the critical activities, the overall duration of the project and the number of resources required each day (assuming each activity happens at the earliest possible time). 6

**(20)**

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