

# TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

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**Paper 8957/5250**

**Travel and Tourism Core Module**

## General comments

This session saw a significant increase in the number of candidates entered for this paper. It was pleasing to see that the vast majority of candidates were able to attempt all four questions within the time available and that most scripts contained four balanced answers. The better scripts usually contained frequent reference to appropriate industry examples. However, many candidates did not appreciate the wording of particular question sub-sections and, thus, did not fully address the issue that was being asked. On the whole, the stimulus material supplied with each of the four questions was well interpreted and many candidates were able to write with a degree of authority. However, far too many individuals resorted to copying sections of supplied text without any proper reference to the wording of the particular question they were attempting.

There were some significant variations both between and within Centres. Centres are strongly advised to give emphasis to the following as part of their examination preparations. The examination, as in all previous years, will involve candidates answering four structured questions in two hours. Each question will be based around at least one piece of original vocationally relevant stimulus material, specifically selected to reflect key aspects of the Syllabus content. Centres should make every effort to ensure that their candidates are familiar with past papers as part of their examination preparation. Furthermore, the structured questions based on each of the four pieces of stimulus material will show an increase in degree of difficulty and the following command verb hierarchy will be customarily used:

- Identify/Name/State
- Describe
- Explain
- Compare
- Discuss
- Evaluate.

The last part of each of the four questions will be more open-ended, inviting candidates to respond to a problem or issue. These parts of the questions will be assessed by the use of level of response criteria. These questions are often designed to examine several assessment objectives and provide candidates with the opportunity to write about actual examples or case studies with which they are familiar. Far too many individuals are unable to quote precise details therefore denying themselves access to higher marks.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

This was set in the context of international airline operations. The stimulus material used for this question merely helped set the scene; it was surprising to see some candidates simply copying out text without any particular regard for the precise wording of the individual sub-questions.

- (a) Many candidates were unclear as to the meaning of the word 'carriers' and there was much guesswork here. Some achieved three valid examples, most commonly British Airways and Emirates, but others simply guessed at references from the article like "Sky Nannies", "Heathrow" and "Norland College".
- (b) This was well answered generally; most candidates were able to score at least two marks for simple ideas and some developed them well.

- (c) This part of the question differentiated well and many candidates could refer to child meals, videos/cartoons/toys, etc. However, far too many candidates just gave simple ideas with no development and thus failed to obtain an additional mark. There was quite a lot of misconception that crew would take younger passengers to the toilet, play with them, etc. and many referred to a play area on the aircraft.
- (d) This proved to be another good differentiator; many had learnt this and answered in detail, often giving more than three skills. However, some candidates omitted the required explanations of each skill which was required in order to achieve the second mark.
- (e) Generally weak answers were given, with many candidates unable to progress beyond Level 1, referring simply to more customers/profits. A few candidates attempted to refer to examples, however there was little reference to the advantages of integration and economies of scale thus Level 3 answers were very rare.

### Question 2

This was set in the context of Sharm El Sheikh's tourism development and the stimulus material provided tended to be interpreted very well. This resulted in some very good scores for many candidates and it was pleasing to see such a consistent level of performance.

- (a) Generally well answered in all parts and the vast majority of candidates were able to interpret the climate graph correctly.
- (b) This was well answered by most candidates. It was pleasing to see the identification of appropriate information from the stimulus material and most answers went on to include the development required for full marks.
- (c) This was also well answered with only a minority of candidates dropping any marks.
- (d) This part of the question differentiated well. There were some good, developed responses from better prepared and perceptive candidates who were familiar with the concept of 'negative social and economic impacts'. However, weaker candidates mainly produced brief statements, for which they did score marks (e.g. crime, inflation) but then gave much irrelevant material about positive impacts and/or environmental impacts.
- (e) This tended to be poorly done and many candidates remained within Level 1 for merely recognising the simple and obvious link(s) between increasing visitor numbers and improvements in the infrastructure. Some were able to exemplify this (e.g. airports, roads, hospitals) therefore gained Level 2 but answers at Level 3 were rare, as few real examples were quoted to support the generalisations being discussed.

### Question 3

The focus of this question was the historic city of Bruges and the stimulus material contained both images and text that needed careful interpretation. Many candidates paid little attention to the clues contained in the stimulus and there was frequent straight copying of material with little thought being given to the demands of the particular sub-question.

- (a) (i) Although many candidates were able to correctly identify all three excursions, in many cases it was more by luck than judgement. There tended to be far too much straight copying of text rather than precise destination identification.
- (ii) Correctly answered by most candidates.
- (iii) Very few candidates were able to see that the **additional** cost for a single traveller requiring half-board on this tour was £72 + £30 which equals £102.
- (b) Few candidates appeared to know what a canal cruise was (even though Fig. 3 showed one); there was frequent irrelevant detail about walking around Bruges or the advantages of an ocean going cruise.

- (c) This question was poorly answered; most candidates did not seem to understand what the question was asking and there was often further straight copying of irrelevant text.
- (d) There were disappointingly poor responses from many candidates, not just the weaker ones, with many scoring either zero or just one for a simple cost reference. Lots of candidates gave reasons why they would drive rather than walk (e.g. too far to walk) and only a few gave explanations of the obvious ideas such as convenience, flexibility and door-to-door travel.
- (e) It was very surprising that most candidates just made general references to culture and provided very little, if any, precise detail about the cultural attractions to be found within a city with which they were familiar. Most answers stayed within Level 1. Those who named or identified specific aspects of cultural appeal associated with cities often did little more than just list them. There was far too little consideration of the visitor appeal of particular cultural attractions.

#### Question 4

The Australia stimulus material was quite well interpreted and there were many good answers to this question. However, many candidates simply copied out sections of text without proper reference to the images.

- (a) Most candidates were able to score something on each of the two sections, though there were few candidates who explained both properly for full marks.
- (b) Many candidates appeared not properly to understand what is a rainforest safari, however they managed to make three credit worthy comments.
- (c) This question differentiated well and there were some good responses from perceptive candidates who were able to develop ideas such as limiting numbers of tourists, anti litter strategies and the use of guides, fences and signs. However, many candidates lost credit by concentrating on the identification of negative environmental impacts rather than offering solutions to such problems.
- (d) In both sections, candidates tended to pick up marks (max 1) for general ideas and a few candidates developed their answers fully in relation to backpackers and business travellers. From the nature of their answers, some candidates were unsure about what is a Tourist Information Centre therefore were unable to explain the services offered to the “young backpacker” and the “Japanese business traveller”.
- (e) This question also differentiated quite well, though relatively few candidates were able to obtain Level 3. Many candidates, however, could only make simple references to cost and difficulty of access. Hardly any answers made reference to wider factors influencing the generation of tourists and there were very few valid illustrations or exemplifications of the points made.

# TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

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Paper 8957/5252  
Marketing and Promotion

## General comments

Performance across the cohort for this examination reflected the full ability range, with the majority of candidates being able to attempt most questions within the allocated time. The majority of candidates had clearly been prepared for this examination and many demonstrated some understanding of the principles of marketing and promotion within the travel and tourism industry. There were some good instances of candidates using specific examples from the industry to exemplify their answers.

Candidates demonstrated differing levels of ability in responding to the command verbs within the question paper; better performing candidates were able to 'discuss' and 'compare', whilst weaker candidates tended to respond with an explanation or description to these types of questions.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

The questions within this subset were related to a brief case study scenario about the island of Caye Caulker, off Belize. Candidates were required to use stimulus material to carry out SWOT and PEST type analyses and to consider the range of tourism products available to tourists to the island.

- (a) (i) and (ii) Candidates were generally able to identify correctly the threats to tourism and the economic influences on tourism provision within the area.
- (b) (i) Responses here were generally satisfactory, although some weaker candidates seemed unsure of what constituted a marketing opportunity.
- (ii) This level of response question required candidates to describe the role of Tourist Associations in the marketing process. Many candidates focused predominantly on the general functions of such organisations, rather than on the specific Role played in marketing.
- (c) (i) and (ii) Many candidates found it difficult to define the term tourism product in the first part to this question, and referred to both tourism and product as words within their definitions. The majority were able to identify appropriate products that might be found on Caye Caulker, although the weaker candidates made reference to natural features, which cannot by definition be a tourism product.
- (ii) This question proved largely difficult. Few candidates were able to provide an accurate description of the term mass tourism market, thus restricting marks here.
- (d) This level of response question discriminated between the better performing candidates and the weaker performing candidates well. At the bottom end, candidates made reference to a wide range of promotional techniques that tourism providers could use to raise awareness and increase sales generally. At the top end, candidates were also able to recognise the need to consider customer types.

## Question 2

There was no specific case study focus for this question. However, candidates were required to demonstrate their ability to apply their understanding through the tasks set.

- (a) (i) and (ii) Surprisingly, many candidates were unable to identify specific sources of data, and instead gave examples of data type and even research methods.
- (b) (i) This question caused little difficulty for the majority of candidates.
- (b) (ii) Weaker candidates seemed confused by the term 'customer profile'. However, the majority of candidates attempted to extract some information from the table provided – many just cited age, gender and disability rather than extracting specific data relating to each of these categories to score maximum marks.
- (c) Candidates here were expected to explain how demographic information can be used to achieve customer satisfaction. Many scored two of the three available marks for their reference to types of demographic information, but few provided specific amplification.
- (d) (i) The majority of candidates were familiar with the product life cycle model and many were able to analyse the reasons why certain destinations were at the growth stage. There were also several incidences where candidates did not select a destination, rather a product.
  - (ii) The concept of rebranding seemed to pose more of a challenge. Most candidates recognised the need to move products through the life cycle model but few were able to describe this process in any detail.
- (e) Candidates were asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of branding destinations. The majority of candidates who attempted this question used a bullet pointed list within their response. This limited marks to level 1 as a more detailed or comparative approach was required to go beyond this level.

## Question 3

The context of this question was set around the 'price' element of the marketing mix.

- (a) Many candidates were unable to differentiate between pricing policies and selected inappropriate examples – i.e. prestige pricing is not for those customers sensitive to price. There was also some confusion over how each policy worked, with common overlaps between discount pricing and promotional pricing.
- (b) Responses to this question about the 'going rate' varied. Better candidates understood the concept of price makers and price takers, whereas weaker performing candidates relied heavily on the concept of competition increasing or decreasing prices randomly.
- (c) This question was poorly evidenced by the majority of candidates. Candidates saw the reference to influences on price but did not register the requirement to consider external influences such as taxation and subsidies. As a result few scored maximum marks for this question.
- (d) (i) There were some interesting diagrams produced in response to this question. More able candidates were able to clearly identify where the Internet fits into the distribution picture. Less able candidates replicated five models of distribution or omitted the Internet from their answer completely.
  - (ii) Many candidates missed the point of this question, seeing it as an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the advantages of the Internet to both customers and organisations. Only a limited number of responses actually focused on the impact that this technologically advanced distribution channel brings on price, as the question required.
- (e) As with other level of response questions within this paper, candidates performed poorly at level 3 within this question. Many responses were repetitive and omitted to mention the competition element of the question.

#### Question 4

The majority of the questions within this subset relate to the 'promotion' element of the marketing mix.

- (a) (i) Many candidates demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the importance of sponsorship as a marketing communication method, and the majority were able to provide examples of how this works. However, only the better performing candidates were able to accurately explain the financial aspect of sponsorship.
- (ii) Few candidates were able to give an accurate explanation of public relations.
- (b) Responses were generally good to this question, with the majority of candidates being able to offer some relevant information about these two forms of promotional material.
- (c) This question attracted a range of responses. A small number of candidates confused the question with one asking the different stages of a promotional campaign. However, a large number of candidates scored highly within this question.
- (d) Some candidates recognised the specific features that appeal to customers taking short haul, City Break holidays. Few realised that they should identify generic features of cities – i.e. architecture, night life etc.
- (e) Responses to this question varied a great deal. A significant number of candidates could not describe the term 'marketing mix'. A reasonable number were able to identify the four elements of the mix and the better performing candidates were also then able to apply some or each of these elements to a specified tourism product. There were surprisingly high numbers of non-tourism related products cited.

# TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

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Paper 8957/5253

Travel Organisation

## General comments

The paper produced widespread differentiation, both within and between Centres. There were some excellent scripts where candidates showed a thorough knowledge and understanding of all the content being tested, and there were few candidates who did not appear to have benefited in some way from completing the module. There were many impressive answers and clearly most candidates were well prepared. Weaker candidates were able to attempt the majority of the questions, however many of their answers displayed a lack of knowledge and understanding and/or a failure to develop answers. A small number of candidates struggled with the subject specific terminology and command words used, and were unable to come to terms with the tasks required, producing lists of brief ideas with little or no contextualisation to the required circumstances.

All candidates were able to finish in the time allowed, though those who wrote brief, superficial answers would have had much time to spare.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were successful in all parts of this question.
- (b) All three of these terms were well known and many candidates were able to write answers which showed their understanding of their meanings. Some candidates lost marks by writing very brief statements, and others by trying to write definitions by repeating the words they were trying to define, especially for 'accommodation only' and 'flight only'.
- (c) This question differentiated well with weaker candidates simply outlining the greater flexibility of independent travel in simple terms and/or the disadvantage of having to do all the organisation personally, whilst others were able to consider fully the advantages and disadvantages of independent travel compared with a package holiday. There were many references to cost, with some candidates claiming package holidays to be cheaper whilst others claimed independent travel was cheaper. Either scenario could have been argued, however for credit candidates needed to develop their idea and give their justification.
- (d) Most candidates could identify at least two products/services which travel providers might offer, typically accommodation and transport services, and many scored full marks by identifying in addition services such as the provision of car hire, excursions and insurance.
- (e) The question asked candidates to describe the 'full range' of services which might be provided by a travel agent. Whilst most candidates clearly wrote about a travel agent, there were a number whose answers referred more to a tour operator or transport provider. Successful candidates were those who considered the full range, rather than simply referring to one or two services, and described the services in some detail, rather than simply writing a list.

## Question 2

- (a) Most candidates were able to give at least one feature of scheduled airlines, typically that they run to a timetable, and many were able to suggest other features of relevance, including the fact that they run as advertised regardless of demand. Some candidates referred to them always being on time, which is clearly not the case, whilst others focused on services provided (e.g. in flight meals) and their cost. It is not true that all scheduled services are more expensive than charter flights, which could also provide in flight meals and entertainment.
- (b) Most candidates were able to accurately define both international and domestic flights.
- (c) All candidates made an attempt to complete the travel itinerary, many of which were completed perfectly to earn full marks. It is essential that candidates fill in such forms with care, completing all appropriate sections which are left blank. Those candidates who made few or no errors had clearly practised this type of task, an activity which is highly recommended, so they can become familiar with the degree of accuracy required.
- (d) The focus of this question was on suitable **accommodation** for the business woman so those who wrote about other issues, such as flights, missed the point. The command word 'evaluate' suggested that some attempt should be made to consider the importance of each of the features, maybe assign a priority order to them, rather than simply describe the features which she would be looking for. Only the very perceptive candidates were able to include an element of evaluation in their answers and score full marks, however there were some very good detailed and reasoned descriptions of the features of the accommodation which she would be looking for, which scored high marks.

## Question 3

- (a) The question asked for paper-based sources of information and most candidates could suggest ideas such as brochures and pamphlets. Many suggested travel magazines and guide books, though the words 'magazines' and 'books' by themselves were insufficient for credit.
- (b) There were many candidates who were able to suggest at least three computer/electronic sources of information, the most popular types being computer reservation systems, touch screens, global distribution systems or the Internet. As the question asked about 'sources' of information, the candidates who wrote about electronic devices which could be used by a travel agency such as a fax machine or photocopier did not gain credit.
- (c) Most candidates selected an appropriate information source here, often the Internet, and the question differentiated well with most candidates at least being able to make simple statements describing their use by travel agents and travellers, many developing their answers and including relevant details.
- (d) Most candidates could identify some of the advantages of hiring a car, such as the flexibility and independence which it offers. Others were able to develop their answers by incorporating reference to the 'fully inclusive' nature of the offer, referring to the potential savings in cost on the hire and insurance.
- (e) This question asked about the tourist information centre, and it focused on how it could help adventure seekers to the area. Some candidates seemed to be referring to a travel agency, referring to package tours and the sample product described in Fig. 5. Most did, however, write about how a tourist information centre could be useful to travellers in general, with many generic references to maps, transport timetables and visitor attraction leaflets. Some candidates did not help themselves by listing words such as accommodation, entertainment and transport without making it clear that the tourist information centre might provide a **booking service** for accommodation, or **leaflets** about entertainment or **timetables** for public transport. The best answers, of course, were specifically targeted to adventure seekers, e.g.

*The tourist information centre would be able to supply maps of the area so adventure seekers would be able to find locations where they could take part in mountain biking, rafting and other adventurous activities. They would be able to recommend activities most suited to meet the needs of the adventurous traveller and pre-book the preferred activities. They could help with advice on equipment hire (the best place to hire from). They might even have details on the place to seek medical assistance in the case of an emergency.*



**Question 4**

- (a) In (i) there were many good definitions of the term 'check-in', the best ones referring to 'the procedure passengers must follow for registering their arrival before boarding the plane' rather than simply stating a 'check in time' which does not answer the question.

In (ii) credit was given for reference to any of the procedures which passengers go through before their flight, ranging from the need to arrive in advance, check-in desk procedures such as checking of tickets and passports, weighing and tagging of luggage, and issuing of boarding cards, to the security procedures which passengers undergo beyond the check-in desk. There were some excellent, detailed responses.

- (b) Most candidates could explain fully the term 'transfer' - transport provided between their point of arrival (airport) and destination (their hotel).

- (c) Almost all candidates were able to make some valid reference to the advice which a travel agent might give about currency services. Basic responses referred to advising the travellers what currency would be needed and how to obtain it, however many candidates developed their responses and gave detailed advice about currency, travellers cheques and credit/debit cards e.g.

*The agent would advise them that it would be more convenient to use credit cards for security purposes and easy access to making bookings/buying tickets to attractions/restaurants, together with local currency for buying small things like coffees and paying for taxis. They might advise that travellers' cheques offer the greatest security as, if lost, they cannot be cashed without correct identification. Travellers can use the credit card for a variety of uses such as car hire or accommodation; they do not have to worry about carrying large amounts of cash.*

- (d) In (i) many candidates gave a poor response, giving advice relating to health precautions to take at the destination rather than during the long haul flight itself, as required. Responses worthy of credit included reference to: drink plenty of fluids/water, but avoid excess alcohol, move about regularly; wear travel socks to help avoid DVT, and rotate feet and ankles.

In (ii) most candidates showed their awareness of what is meant by the term 'stopover', and many could explain why they are necessary in terms of the health benefits of a break in the journey and/or the benefits of spending a short time in a location en route. High scoring answers were those which explained in detail why stopovers are used and thoroughly described their benefits to travellers taking long haul flights with large time differences.

# TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

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**Paper 8957/5254**

**Visitor Services**

## General comments

It was evident that those candidates who completed this module acquired a good level of understanding of the theoretical knowledge of the operation of Visitor Services and were able to utilise effectively their research skills, in order to carry out the necessary practical investigation that this study unit requires.

Candidates generally focused attention on one specific organisation responsible for the provision of Visitor Service information within the destination country. The better scoring candidates were able to offer a fuller range of information about how Visitor Services operate within a national context; only a very small number of candidates presented the international perspective of Visitor Service provision. The aspects least well covered remained sources of funding and the inter-relationship between different providers of Visitor Services.

Candidates generally provided detailed information about the specific roles and functions of selected Visitor Service organisations. Assignments often provided in-depth coverage of information services, quality standards and classification schemes operated within destination countries, with more limited references made to the marketing research such organisations carry out and the extent of the marketing and promotion function.

There was good evidence through the assignments presented of the range of products and services provided, with many examples being cited. More limited evidence was presented to explain the actual promotional techniques used by Visitor Service providers.

Assignments generally included a section on the differences between provision for leisure and business travellers, although few assignments provided any depth within this aspect of the investigation. Information here tended towards a bullet pointed list of events.

The overall quality of presentation within individual assignments was high, with the vast majority of candidates using high-level ICT skills to present the findings of their investigations. Most candidates adopted an appropriate format for their reports and some attempt was made to reference their evidence. Bibliographies tended to comprise wholly of website addresses. It would be beneficial to guide candidates towards a broader range of source materials, given the wealth of Visitor Service information available. This would enable candidates to make value judgements about the effectiveness of a variety of sources as part of the investigation itself.

The majority of Centres adhered to the instructions to submit a completed copy of the SAR (Student Assessment Record), together with the assignment cover sheet. However, it was rare for a copy of the assignment brief to be included. Most candidates alluded to this through their introductions but few supported these statements by including a copy of the task sheet/s that had been issued to them.

# TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

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**Paper 5255**  
**The Hospitality Sector**

## **General comments**

There were no entries for this module during 2006.