

TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

Paper 8958/5260

Travel and Tourism Core Module

General comments

This exam was set in two Far East destinations and two European destinations to enable candidates to express a depth of knowledge and understanding of tourism development in a range of worldwide destinations. The exam was handled exceptionally well by candidates from some Centres and it was pleasing to see that previous comments made with regard to the Marketing and Promotion questions had led to a great improvement in this section.

Centres have shown evidence of excellent teaching and learning of the syllabus and have been able to apply knowledge and understanding in an effective manner. The candidates in this session were able to write fluently on many theories of tourism development. Responses were generally set in context and it was most pleasing to read some exemplar responses.

Most candidates were able to complete the exam in the given time and have demonstrated a wide range of revision techniques and underpinning knowledge of the syllabus.

There was evidence of good exam technique and practice which has led to a generally high standard overall.

For future reference please note that the format for the examination will continue as follows;

Question 1	Based on Module A	Travel and Tourism Development
Question 2	Based on Module B	Marketing and Promotional Techniques
Question 3	Based on Module C	Destination Management
Question 4	A general question based on any of the above three modules giving candidates the opportunity to relate to destinations they have studied.	

As in the previous exams, the stimulus material is to be used; it should be referred to and is there as a prompt in context to stimulate responses and analysis. This would appear to have benefited many candidates and they should be pleased with the outcomes. It may be worthy of note that the stimulus material in the exam could differ in length and subject topic for each exam series.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Tourism Development

- (a) The stimulus material was used very well for this question and most candidates gained full marks as they were able to give good economic advantages.
- (b)(i) This question did cause quite a few difficulties as it was misinterpreted. Many candidates gave benefits to foreign funded travel agencies as opposed to benefits to China.
- (ii) As above, many candidates gave the benefits to foreign funded hotels rather than benefits to China.

- (c) Excellent response on the whole and good references made to the stimulus material. Many candidates gave a well reasoned analysis of the reasons why tourist destinations in the Asia and Pacific regions were pleased by the number of outbound visitors from China. For the candidates who stated that there were negative impacts on the number of outbound visitors from China, no marks were given.
- (d) This was a relatively new question and it was pleasing to see such varied and interesting in-depth answers with regard to the value of tourism training. The mention of repeat business, economic impacts, customer service and tourism developments needs were the most common responses.
- (e) It was of concern that a few candidates missed out this question. This may have been due to the fact that they had not read page 3 accurately enough as the question follows the article. Again, exam practice to learn exam technique will help. Many candidates were able to discuss environmental measures to protect the Great Wall of China, but very few were able to discuss the importance in cultural terms. Social and cultural impacts are usually the aspects which cause the greatest difficulty amongst candidates.

Question 2

Marketing and Promotion

- (a) This question was based around stopover holidays in Singapore and was answered generally very well throughout. In **Question 2a**, most candidates successfully gained full marks for being able to describe an advantage and a disadvantage of 'discount vouchers' in marketing terms.
- (b) This question carried 6 marks and most candidates achieved a maximum of 4. This was due to the fact that they were unable to give sufficient advantages from both the public and private sector organisations using marketing principles.
- (c) Excellent response with almost all candidates giving a full response.
- (d) 'Above the line' marketing communication methods were very well understood. The most common response was media, radio, posters and leaflets.
- (e) This question was again set on training but this time to travel agents. Some candidates were unable to differentiate between this and the previous **Question 1d**. For the candidates who understood the question, good use was made of the article.

Question 3

Destination Management

- (a) Many candidates successfully identified four factors and gained maximum marks.
- (b) History and culture are important to Malta for many reasons as identified in the stimulus material. For the candidates who used this, they gained maximum marks. There was also good use of the term 'national identity'.
- (c) The correct answer to this question was improved water supply and distribution network, together with new additions to the accommodation sector. Some candidates copied from the list in the stimulus material and misinterpreted the meaning of the term 'infrastructure'.
- (d) As above, this information was contained in the list in Fig. 3a; however, clear understanding of the terminology was important – not just taking from the list contained in the figure.
- (e) This was an 8 mark question and required a full written response of the involvement of the public, private and voluntary sectors in Malta. There were some brief responses, mainly about the public and private sector and many candidates lost marks on this question.

Question 4

European Union

- (a) Good explanation given of the meaning of GDP.
- (b) Good use of economic knowledge to answer this question was evident.
- (c) Passport, visas and work permits were the most common response with some good analysis given.
- (d) This question used a direct quote from the passage with regard to sustaining the natural environment. This question seemed to provide difficulties and there were very few reasoned answers. It would appear that general geographical knowledge of central European countries was generally lacking.
- (e) Poor response, probably the least well answered question on the paper. This may be due to the fact that it is the last question; however there was little reference to the principles of destination management with regard to the involvement of the sectors and the triangular relationship.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

Paper 8958/5262

Ecotourism

General comments

The work was appropriately presented and included evidence of authentication from both the candidate and the teacher. It was pleasing to see that Centres submitted work with the inclusion of the correct Student Assessment Record. Centres are reminded to ensure they use the Student Assessment Record, which operates with the current syllabus as this clearly directs candidates to the criteria to be addressed within their work. Failure to use the correct assessment record could lead to candidates not meeting the specific criteria of the module.

There was an improvement in achievement rates for this module, but very few candidates achieved Distinction. This was largely due to the simplistic approach adopted by many Centres and limited depth of knowledge and understanding that was demonstrated.

Many candidates demonstrated their understanding of the principles of Ecotourism simplistically. Some had used standard definitions but did not demonstrate that they understood the meanings of key terms. Candidates had generally improved data presented and were able to relate it to the concepts and principles of Ecotourism rather than the general characteristics of the destination. This should be encouraged as it begins to demonstrate candidates' understanding of Ecotourism.

Candidates should be encouraged to describe the various organisations that are involved in raising awareness and responding to Ecotourism issues (AO A2). Simply listing organisations should be avoided as this allows the candidates to offer no form of justification or evaluation. Where evidence was good, candidates had demonstrated appreciation of the roles of Ecotourism organisations and made reference to these roles within investigations of destinations. It was often the case that the contribution of tourism to social, cultural and environmental issues received little or no attention.

Many candidates identified tourism projects and some were beginning to focus on the Ecotourism aspect of the project. Little or no attention was given to trends in Ecotourism. Candidates must avoid placing too much emphasis on tourism development, as opposed to principles and concepts of Ecotourism, if success is to be achieved.

Candidates need to address and meet all of the assessment objectives. It was sometimes the case that candidates lost sight of the assessment objectives and included unnecessary information. Clear assignment briefs provided by tutors to students would avoid this being repeated for future submissions. Although individual written reports had been produced, it was encouraging to see that fewer candidates had relied heavily on secondary sources and were being more selective of the sources used. There was less quoting of inappropriate information from them than in previous years. Candidates should understand that work provided directly from websites is often irrelevant to the criteria objectives. The work researched from websites needs to be interpreted and applied appropriately by candidates.

Conclusions are required to demonstrate analysis or evaluation from candidates' point of view and such conclusions must relate to the assessment objectives.

Candidates should be advised to include a comprehensive list of all sources used. This was evident in better work.

Assignment briefs should be included with all projects.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

Paper 8958/5263

Business and Executive Travel

General comments

2006 marks a year of transition for Business and Executive Travel and the majority of candidates entering work for this module have tended to produce assignments that represent an improving standard of performance compared to last year's entries. However, there would appear to be significant differences in terms of overall performance between assignments working with the old 2005 specification and the work now being produced using the 2006 version.

There was evidence to support the view that assignments following the 2005 layout still contained the same mistakes and misconceptions as in previous years. Similarly, it was a pity that the work seen tended to include few precise case studies or actual examples. Indeed, most of the 2005 style assignments seen had very similar shortcomings:

- the report was not of the standard expected at this level;
- the work did not always contain a proper assignment brief;
- the work was not usually structured to best effect.

It is most important for Centres to realise that the structure provided on page 15 of the syllabus document is to be followed and that candidates should undertake an investigation that meets these guidelines. Furthermore, the completed Student Assessment Record (SAR) should be used simply as an opportunity for the teacher to judge whether or not a candidate is on course for a successful outcome. The setting of a structured assignment task is one way in which this might be achieved.

Candidates should undertake an **investigation into the provision of Business and Executive Travel within a readily identifiable area that may be at either the national or the local scale**. Information from secondary sources can always be used to supplement the study. It is, therefore, very important that an appropriate investigative procedure is always followed. The outline of what is expected is included on pages 25 and 26 of the syllabus. It is suggested that the following structure be followed:

- Aim – the work has a specific title and can, if desired, follow a particular assignment brief.
- Method – there is a system of data collection/information gathering that the candidate fully understands and can then justify/evaluate (i.e. how and why was certain information collected and with what consequences).
- Data presentation (tables, graphs, etc. as appropriate)
- Write-up/analysis – the results of the investigation considered and explained as appropriate.
- Conclusion – what the investigation has shown about the provision of Business and Executive Travel in the area under investigation.

The above plan will allow for comment to be made about provision in the area chosen with the "theory" studied in connection with Assessment Objectives 1 to 4. Many candidates have some appropriate information about aspects of business travel, but this is rarely used to best effect in terms of this module's specific requirements. Furthermore, for any remaining work, it is suggested that candidates need to be given clearer instruction about the presentation and organisation of appropriate illustrative material, in order to meet the assessment criteria clearly itemised on pages 28 and 29 of the syllabus document.

It is, however, most important to be aware that this module's requirements **changed** in 2006. Several Centres have adapted assignments to meet these changes and the work produced has been of a pleasing standard. However, there are still few pieces of work that are worthy of a Merit grade and Centres are advised to give emphasis to the following in an attempt to increase levels of candidate attainment.

Assessment Objective	Key Features of Candidate Performance
1.1 Define and provide examples	Major types of Business travel activity should be clearly defined and valid named local and international examples provided.
1.2 Reasons for growth	Globally and locally (if appropriate)
2.1 Comparison of business and leisure traveller needs	Active comparison, pointing out similarities and differences , is expected.
3.1 Identification of major Business Travel destinations	Globally and at both national and regional scales – statistics can be used to justify selection and can be shown on map(s) and/or table(s).
3.2 Evaluate one destination	It must be clear which aspects of the chosen destination's Business Travel service provision are judged to be the most important/significant in encouraging business tourism development.
4.1 Transport Providers	There must be clear identification and exemplification of a range of providers.
4.2 Business Travel Agents	At least one named provider must be investigated and commented on.
5.0 Business Travel Itinerary	This must be planned to meet the requirements of a particular traveller(s) and the final arrangements must be justified in terms of how client needs and expectations are being met – or preferably exceeded.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

Paper 8958/5264
Event Planning and Promotion

General comments

The majority of work was appropriately presented and included evidence of authentication from both the candidate and the teacher. Centres are reminded to ensure they use the Student Assessment Record, which operates with the current syllabus as this clearly directs candidates to the criteria to be addressed within their work. Failure to use the correct assessment record could lead to candidates not meeting the specific criteria of the module.

There was a spread of achievement rates for this module, with some candidates achieving Distinction Level. Centres should note the points in this report to ensure candidates achieve the required standard.

Most candidates work demonstrated their understanding of the principles of Event Planning and Promotion, and, generally, the evidence presented made it clear that an event had actually taken place. This resulted in assignments which had attempted to cover the theory and related that theory to the organisation of a specific event.

Comments on specific questions

Candidates need to present written evidence to meet the requirements of AO1.0 and AO1.2 of the syllabus, where a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the proposed event should be explained and the key processes involved in staging a successful event need to be described. These should relate to the event they are organising, rather than the general theory of event planning. Candidates should include a completed feasibility study and business plan as outlined in the syllabus.

In AO2, candidates should apply their knowledge and understanding of different promotional techniques and materials to consider the most appropriate one for their chosen event. Candidates need to justify their chosen materials which must include some type of brochure and also explain the reasons for advertising their event.

In AO3, the demonstration of effective selling skills needs to be evidenced through witness testimonies from colleagues or teachers. This should also cover the three A's of Attitude, Appearance and Acknowledgement. An explanation should be given for the choice of dress code and the use of any images chosen in association with the event.

In AO4, the criterion needs to be established for evaluation of the event, then resources devised to enable efficient analysis of the data collected, e.g. questionnaires, mail shots, one-to-one interviews. The resources devised must be used in order to complete the analysis of the event.

Teachers should ensure that all Assessment Objectives have been fully met before submitting candidates' work.

Candidates should be advised that whilst the actual event is very important and their pictorial evidence supports the facts that they have participated in the planning and promotion of an event, their written report demonstrating knowledge and understanding of event planning and promotion is vital.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

Paper 8958/5265
Applied Customer Service

General comments

Overall the work presented for the candidates was of a good standard. Evidence presented reflected a range of candidate ability. All work was well presented, paginated and indexed. This made for easy evidence tracking.

Comments on specific questions

Centres are asked to note the following points for future submissions:

1. All candidates **must** submit a bibliography. Evidence of research is vital and does impact on grades given. The bibliography must detail **all** sources used including websites (URL addresses should be given), visits made, employers spoken to, guest speakers, books and other documentation. In this examination period, some candidates signed an assignment cover sheet indicating a bibliography was included, but it was not included.
2. **Downloads of material are not acceptable.** If material is taken directly from websites it must be appropriately referenced.
3. Assessment Objective 2 requires an investigation into **TWO** organisations.
4. Evidence provided for Assessment Objective 3 was generally weak. Candidates should be encouraged to consider the impact of a wide range of technology on customer service. (Please see section Guidance on Assessment and Evidence Requirements on page 58 of the syllabus for further information.)
5. Assessment Objective 4 requires evidence of one telephone conversation with a customer, one face-to-face customer service situation and **one** piece of written communication with a customer. Overall this AO was completed to a good standard. Witness statements were clear and transcripts of Role plays provided good supporting evidence.
6. Centres are asked **NOT** to submit individual sheets in plastic wallets. This makes annotation of scripts difficult.