

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 5250

Travel and Tourism Core Module

General comments

It was pleasing to see that the 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 some reference to industry examples and there was the accurate use of appropriate terminology. 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 candidates resorted to copying sections of supplied text without proper reference to the precise wording of the particular question.

All Centres are advised to give emphasis to the following as part of their final revision preparations. The examination 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 Core Module's content. 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 used:

- Identify/Name/List
- Describe briefly/State
- Describe fully/Outline/Explain
- Compare
- Discuss
- Evaluate.

Centres are strongly advised to make the following **'Key Word'** definitions part of their examination preparation sessions:

Key Word(s)	Meaning/expectation
Identify	Simply name, state or list.
Describe	State the characteristic features of something.
Explain	Make the meaning of something clear by providing appropriate valid details.
Outline	Set out the main characteristics describing essentials only
Compare	Point out similarities and differences.
Discuss (including the ability to analyse)	Provide evidence or opinions about something arriving at a balanced conclusion. The candidate is being asked to consider an issue and is expected to present arguments and evidence to support particular points of view and to show where they stand in relation to topic. The candidate is expected to look at different interpretations or approaches to the issue.
Evaluate	To judge from available evidence and arrive at a reasoned conclusion. The candidate is expected to present a number of factors or issues and weigh up or appraise their relative significance or importance.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was set in the context of international tourism development. The stimulus material used for this question merely helped to set the scene and it was surprising to see some candidates presenting their answer without any particular regard for the precise wording of the individual sub-questions.

- (a) Many candidates stated three impacts but, often, these were not appropriate to guests staying at the hotel shown in photograph A. Better responses simply stated that there would be noise, the view would be restricted and that windblown dust might be a problem.
- (b) This was poorly answered. Few candidates were able to identify simple ideas about the new properties under construction and develop them well. Very few mentioned the obvious that both photographs were taken around the Dubai marina development and that the tower blocks would provide good views. Very rarely was mention made of having a holiday home or buying property as an investment for the future. The possibility of rental income was also largely ignored. Generalisations about Dubai did not answer the question and thus received little, if any, credit.
- (c) (i) This part of the question was well understood and usually scored well. A minority of candidates did not make the distinction between transport to the destination and transport to place of accommodation (transfer). Furthermore, insurance and car hire are **not** usually included in the price of a package holiday.
- (c) (ii) Ancillary services appear to be not well known but there were a few outstanding answers. Candidates obtained credit for identifying any four appropriate services and car hire, insurance, foreign currency, excursions, attraction tickets and visa/passport information were all popular valid choices. However, few individuals were able to provide much in the way of descriptions for some of their choices and credit was often limited, particularly where inappropriate choices had been made.
- (d) This proved to be a good differentiator and many candidates made a positive, if somewhat limited, attempt to answer the question. Much emphasis was given to disabled travellers and there were some excellent answers. However, all special needs were credited if they were correctly identified and illustrated. Weaker answers tended to stray into services provided on board the aircraft and to simply list airport service provision without explaining how and why they were appropriate to passengers with a particular special need.

Question 2

This was set in the context of Australia's Gold Coast 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) (i & ii) Generally very well answered in both parts and the vast majority of candidates were able to interpret the stimulus material correctly.
- (b) This was not well answered and most candidates failed to explain three appropriate advantages of hiring a car. There was frequent reference to convenience and flexibility but these were seldom contextualised. Furthermore, the advantages of door-to-door transport and cost savings for family transport tended to be rather neglected.
- (c) (i) This was badly answered with only a minority of candidates scoring higher marks. Preservation and conservation of the fauna and flora were not appreciated. There was little reference to sustainability and the educational function of such developments. Answers tended to be very superficial.
- (c) (ii) This was also poorly attempted with most answers vaguely stating litter/pollution and hinting at congestion. Only the better candidates were able to explain why their chosen problems caused damage to the environment. There were, however, some excellent answers about the disposal of waste and footpath erosion but these were very much in the minority.

- (d) This tended to be quite limited and many candidates remained within Level 1 for merely listing methods of promotion. Some were able to explain why a new tourist facility might use such methods and thus got into Level 2. Answers at Level 3 were rare as there was very limited evaluation offered and far too many candidates were talking about the National Park rather than a particular activity/organisation/business contained therein.

Question 3

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

- (a) The vast majority of candidates were able to correctly identify all five attractions.
- (b)(i) The correct price was readily identifiable.
- (ii) A significant minority of candidates were unable to recognise Dubai as the departure airport.
- (iii) Most candidates knew that local Beijing time was in advance of time in Dubai.
- (iv) Both items were correctly identified by the vast majority of candidates.
- (v) This question tended to be very poorly attempted and candidates had only limited ideas why such a package would be introduced in the U.A.E. There were very few references to high GDP, high disposable income, a large potential market and the area being a tourist generating region.
- (c) This was a poorly answered question; most candidates did not seem to realise that the question was asking about the advantages of flying business class and there was often copying of irrelevant text. The better answers simply explained three features of business class service provision.
- (d) Most answers were limited and many candidates had little idea about vertical integration. There was some appreciation of economies of scale and the chain of distribution but very few managed or even attempted to contextualise this in terms of China Southern Airways. The level of explanation offered was quite limited in many cases and, therefore, most answers remained within Level 1.

Question 4

The Orlando stimulus material was quite well interpreted and there were some very good answers to this question.

- (a) Most candidates were able to score well and four valid products/services were clearly identified.
- (b) Answers to this question tended to be varied in quality. Many candidates appeared not to understand fully what appropriate **skills** were and there were often generalised comments offered. Few answers made specific reference to the visitor centre context and many answers were very superficial. Valid structured responses scored well, for example, linking languages/overseas visitors, numeracy/selling merchandise, ICT/making reservations, literacy/following office procedures and communication/clear advice.
- (c) (i & ii) Both sets of answers tended to ignore the sub-tropical climate context and few candidates could itemise accurate seasonal differences. Only the minority knew that low season is associated with high humidity, rain and the threat of tropical storms. Similarly, few recognised that high season is the opposite and that December is northern hemisphere winter so there is demand for winter sun during the Christmas and New Year holiday season.
- (d) From the nature of the answers supplied, many candidates appeared to be unsure about what a convention centre actually is, therefore were unable to contextualise how visitors might make use of the one located in Orange County. Credit was given for appropriate business use, but little emphasis was ever given to the size of such venues and the fact that they are purpose built.

- (e) There were many very good answers. The concept of economic impact is well known and understood and it was pleasing to see frequent accurate reference to the multiplier effect. Many answers were thus good value for full marks Level 3.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 5252

Marketing and Promotion

General comments

It was pleasing to see entries for this module from a much wider range of Centres around the world. The performance of candidates was spread across the ability range as would be expected. On the whole, candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the principles of marketing and promotion and had been adequately prepared for the demands of the examination paper.

The examination was divided into 4 questions, each worth 25 marks. Each sub-set of questions within the four main questions was based upon a case study scenario. **Question 1** used the Maldives as a focus. **Question 2** examined tourism issues in the Arabian Gulf, whilst an investigation into the product portfolio of the airline Air New Zealand formed the basis for **Question 3**. A promotional campaign from the UK tested candidates' skills in **Question 4**.

There was good evidence to show that many candidates were able to transfer knowledge acquired in the classroom and use it in an applied manner through these case study type questions. The majority of candidates, who sat this examination, appeared to have sufficient time in which to answer all of the questions. It was also pleasing to note that the majority of candidates were able to use the space provided in the question paper for their answers, without needing to continue on additional pages. Certainly the intention is that the space allowed should act as a guide to candidates to the expected length of response.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The scenario for this set of questions was the Maldives. Candidates were provided with brief promotional materials from two accommodation providers

- (a) (i) Candidates were asked to identify one common product that both providers offered tourists. Most candidates were able to choose appropriate examples from the stimulus.
- (ii) A number of candidates seemed a little unsure of the differences between products and services, when providing examples of services from one of the resorts in the Maldives. There were many instances where candidates used overlap products already cited in the previous question.
- (b) Generally, most candidates were able to use the stimulus material to find the market segment targeted by both of the accommodation providers.
- (c) This question required candidates to explain three reasons for the marketing and promotion of the 80+ island resorts in the Maldives. The majority of responses were able to identify more than three reasons why this is important but weaker candidates were then not able to give a fuller explanation, thus restricting their marks for this question.
- (d) This question caused some difficulty for candidates. They were asked to explain the term 'perishable' and to give two examples from the tourism industry to illustrate the perishability of tourism products. Better performing candidates scored well here, using examples such as flight seats and theme park rides to illustrate their responses. However, a significant number of candidates could not explain the term correctly and, therefore, used inappropriate examples within their responses.

- (e) This level of Response question was attempted well by the majority of candidates and responses largely focused either on a variety of promotional methods which could be used to raise awareness of the tourism offerings of the Maldives to a wider audience, or on a range of differentiated tourism products which could be offered to lure different market segments. Both types of answer were accredited and the best answers incorporated both of these strands to achieve the highest grading for this question.

Question 2

The series of questions within this sub-set were based around the stimulus material on tourism in the Arabian Gulf. Candidates were provided with data from a situation analysis, which they needed to interpret, in order to answer questions about a PEST analysis and a SWOT analysis of this area. Further questions then used the Emirate airline to examine candidates' understanding of distribution channels and locational factors in the travel industry.

- (a) Performance in the PEST analysis task was variable. Many candidates were able to achieve full marks, by correctly identifying two positive and two negative influences from the statements listed. However, several candidates used all of the statements to complete the table, often more than once, thus making it difficult to judge how effectively the candidate understood the process of PEST analysis. In questions where a specific number of influences is requested, candidates should be advised not to exceed this number, as no additional credit will be awarded.
- (b)(i) – (iv) This series of questions required candidates to specify which statement showed the greatest strength, weakness, opportunity and threat – in other words, candidates should have used the statements to carry out a SWOT analysis. Unfortunately, this caused some confusion and the majority of the candidates scored either 0, 1 or 2 marks for this task.
- (c) Most candidates were able to achieve maximum marks for the diagram they drew of the channel of distribution used by the Emirate airline. There was some evidence of links within the chain appearing in the wrong order – e.g. travel agents selling to tour operators rather than the other way round.
- (d) This follow-on level of response question tested candidates on their knowledge of the reasons behind having a choice of distribution within the travel industry. Responses were of a variable standard here, as would be expected. Weaker candidates tended to repeat information from their diagrams to explain what the choices are, rather the reason behind having such a choice. Better performing candidates identified cost, scale of operation and scope as the main reasons.
- (e) This question tested candidates' understanding of factors of location within the specific context of Emirates. It was answered well by a small number of candidates and badly by the rest. Those who had rote-learned information from the assessment objectives from the syllabus were not always able to apply the factors to this given context and, thus, did not always achieve high marks. It is the ability to consider the factors from the specific viewpoint of the airline, such as demand and gaining competitive advantage that gained higher marks in this instance.

Question 3

This question used a comparison of airline fares on a specified route as its stimulus. The following sub-set of questions then focused on pricing policies, market research, the marketing mix and brand image set within the context of one of the airline principals listed in the table.

- (a) This question asked for general reasons why the price of seats varies from airline to airline. In effect, this question was testing candidates' understanding of external influences on price. This was answered reasonably well by most candidates.
- (b) Candidates were invited to explain two pricing policies relevant to the airline industry in this question. It was disappointing to note how few candidates were able to name the policies they were describing. Thus, full marks were achieved by a relatively small number of candidates.

- (c) (i) and (ii) These two questions required candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the market research process. The first sub-question tested knowledge of research techniques, which was generally answered well and the second tested knowledge of segmentation characteristics, which was answered less well. It would appear that some candidates did not understand the term 'characteristics' despite this being an integral part of the assessment objectives within the syllabus.
- (d) This level of Response question provided a wide range of responses. Candidates were asked to discuss how the marketing mix may be developed to meet different market segment needs. At the top end, candidates were able to identify each of the four elements of the marketing mix and use these within the specific applied context of airline products and services, looking closely at price, promotion, place and product for each of the three named market segments. To achieve the highest grade, candidates needed to attempt a conclusion or judgement about which element of the marketing mix needed most development, in response to the command verb 'discuss'. There was limited evidence of this happening. At the bottom end, candidates were credited for correctly identifying the elements of the marketing mix.
- (e) This level of Response question was generally poorly answered. Previous experience shows that candidates often find questions on branding and brand image difficult. Weaker candidates gave a basic definition of the term brand image, with little further exemplification. Better performing candidates also provided the definition and then often made an attempt to apply this – often using examples other than Air New Zealand. However, few candidates were able to explain the full range of concepts that make up the brand image of an organisation, from corporate communications through to the uniform worn or the company's logo.

Question 4

This question used the 'Totally London' marketing campaign as its stimulus. Questions within this sub-set were based on marketing communications and promotional techniques used in the tourism industry.

- (a) Candidates were generally able to use the stimulus material to correctly identify at least two examples of marketing communication for this question.
- (b) This level of Response question was answered reasonably well by most candidates. The emphasis is on the fact that a national newspaper campaign will only target potential customers in the UK. Many candidates assessed the impact of all of the promotional materials by making specific reference to the other techniques being used by the campaign, but could not gain credit for this as this was not required by the question set. The best performing candidates were able to identify the fact that only a small number of overseas visitors would have access to British newspapers abroad to gain access to this form of advertising.
- (c) Candidates clearly understood the appeal of using mobile technology to market travel and tourism products, but few could actually put into words the nature of the appeal. Words such as interactive rarely appeared in responses but credit was given for descriptions, which made an attempt to determine the youth market.
- (d) This question required candidates to identify the factors affecting the production of any form of promotional material. Responses were variable. A small number of weaker candidates tried to evaluate the success of the mix of techniques being used by the campaign, but could not be credited as this did not answer the question set. Better scoring candidates identified cost, timing, brand image and target audience, with one or two also identifying the AIDA principle as being important. What most responses lacked was the analytical element required by the command verb for this question. Responses tended to be simple lists rather than an analysis of why each of these factors is important. This limited the marks achieved for this question.
- (e) This last question on the paper offered candidates a second opportunity within the question paper to apply their knowledge of the marketing mix to the specific product – here, London as a tourist destination. Responses tended to either list the four elements of the marketing mix with no attempt at application or they made a good attempt at application, discussing London's appeal but without making direct reference to the elements of the marketing mix. This again restricted the scores for this question.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 5253

Travel Organisation

General comments

The paper achieved widespread differentiation, both within and between Centres. From able and well prepared candidates there were very good scripts, in which candidates showed a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject content, with most answers being written in detail and with confidence. At the other end of the spectrum, weaker candidates displayed little knowledge and understanding, producing brief, undeveloped lists of ideas, with no attempt to fit their answers to the required context. A small number of candidates struggled with the linguistic demands, including the subject specific terminology and command words used in the questions, thus were unable to understand the nature of some of the tasks required.

All candidates were able to finish in the time allowed, though the brevity and superficial nature of answers from some weaker candidates suggested that they must have finished with much time to spare.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to show some knowledge of chartered flights, though in some cases it was limited. In (i) the best definitions referred to chartered flights being pre-booked by a tour operator and either sold as part of a package or booked for a special event. Weaker candidates did little more than comment on chartered flights not running to a schedule, and many started to describe their advantages and disadvantages in (i) rather than explaining the meaning of the term. In (ii) many candidates could suggest that an advantage of chartered flights was that ticket prices tend to be cheap; a few gave other ideas, such as the wide variety of airports from which they operate and the flexibility of being able to create a flight for a specific event. Disadvantages such as the tickets being non-transferable and that times of flights may be inconvenient were well known, though many weaker candidates showed misunderstanding by suggesting that planes would be small, of poor quality and with little legroom, which can be true of scheduled services as well as chartered flights.
- (b) Generally, this question was answered well, especially parts (ii) and (iii) where most candidates could make valid suggestions relating to types of information that might be available through a TIC's touch screen service, along with the benefits of using this type of service. The key phrase in (i) was 'information service provider', thus examples such as tour operator, travel agent and airline were good answers. Suggestions from weaker candidates, such as the Internet, brochures and guide books, showed a lack of understanding of the required terminology. In (iv), the success of the candidates depended on the degree to which they were prepared to write in depth and respond to the command word 'discuss'. Most candidates could at least list, in a simple way, sources such as maps, brochures, guide books, the Internet and travel agents, however such an approach could only obtain limited marks. Those candidates who were most successful attempted to develop their ideas, and discuss each of a variety of sources, many elaborating on their potential use during a visit.
- (c) In (i) candidates were asked to suggest how the students could tour the island of Bermuda. Generally this was well answered with most candidates suggesting acceptable ideas such as car hire, bus/coach or taxi. Whilst the suggestion of a boat trip around the island or to nearby bays was acceptable, suggestions of other water-based transport such as cruises showed a misunderstanding of the task, as did the suggestion that the students could travel by air.

Many candidates were well prepared for (ii) and there were some excellent responses. Again, these were characterised by including both advantages and disadvantages, and being fully developed, rather than just a list of simple statements. The following extract from the mark scheme, together with examples of candidates' responses, indicates the difference between the rewards obtained for simple and developed statements:

Level 1

1 or 2 simple statements with limited exemplification. Possibly only dealing with advantages or disadvantages.

E.g. Public transport would take away the hassle of driving. They can choose the method that is most convenient and cheapest. Being candidates they might be able to have discounts. It is not door to door.

Level 2

Candidates show better knowledge and understanding by developing their response with more detail.

E.g. The candidates would be able to relax more by using public transport as they would see and enjoy more as they would not have to worry about driving and navigating on unknown routes. They would not waste time as they would need to stick to the printed times of public transport timetables but they would have less flexibility. They might not get to remote places as public transport would be more likely to stick to popular areas. Public transport could be crowded and uncomfortable at certain times of the day such as rush hours when buses are packed with people travelling to work.

Question 2

- (a) This was poorly answered as many candidates wrote generally about health precautions in relation to foreign travel, rather than advice to travellers taking a long-haul flight such as:

*doing exercises in your seat;
stretch and relax the muscles in your toes and feet;
tense and relax your calves and thighs;
take a short walk around the cabin every couple of hours;
do not drink (much) alcohol, tea and coffee;
drink lots of clear fluids;
do not eat large amounts of food before/during journey, etc.*

- (b) Most candidates were able to correctly explain the meaning of the term 'open-jaw ticket', some illustrating their answer with an appropriate example.
- (c) Whilst some candidates did not read the question correctly and wrote about 'open-jaw tickets' rather than 'open tickets', most who did read the question correctly could successfully explain an advantage and a disadvantage. The best answers were those which went beyond a simple statement, explaining the points they made fully.
- (d) The focus of this question was on the advantages and disadvantages of two different forms of transport for a group of travellers within a large city like Rome. Thus bus and taxi were obvious choices, though answers relating to the use of hire cars and trains were credited. Some candidates failed to indicate a form of transport, simply writing generally about public transport and private transport, whilst others wrote about inappropriate methods of transport such as by air. The question differentiated well, as always better answers being characterised by developed statements, and a balanced approach. Weaker candidates made simple statements, including many direct opposites, and some wrote about either advantages or disadvantages, or just one method of transport.
- (e) This question differentiated well. Many well prepared candidates wrote in detail and scored high marks, whilst weaker candidates merely commented on 'good services', simply listed appropriate business and leisure facilities or focused on the location rather than the type of hotel, as required.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates were familiar with the idea of a tour package, though some merely described one rather than considering the benefits of such a package to customers. Well prepared candidates included the fact that a package tour offers convenience to visitors in that the visitors do not need to worry about booking visits to the various places such as attractions, restaurants and travel; it would also offer increased safety, as everything would be organised and may include the services of a Japanese speaking guide. A package tour can sometimes work out cheaper, particularly if meals and excursions are included in the price and the operator passes on savings from buying in bulk. Such developed points scored high marks, in contrast to simplistic, brief statements such as 'they are safer, easier and cost less'.
- (b) (i) In this question, the focus was on the advantages of independent travel, rather than using a tour package. In a similar way to **Section (a)**, this differentiated well and, from better candidates, produced some excellent developed responses, including reference to travelling independently can often be cheaper as the principals can be booked separately and commissions would not need to be paid to intermediaries. Travellers would have a greater level of freedom of choice travelling independently because they would not have to stick to a rigid timetable of visits and excursions. They can please themselves making their own way at the times they choose. Travelling with a tour party would mean following the timetable set down by the company. Travelling independently would give a sense of freedom and satisfaction in doing it themselves and enjoying the process, whereas a tour party would mean everything is done for them.
- (ii) Most candidates were able to suggest at least one method of payment, local currency, credit/debit cards and travellers cheques being good choices. Some candidates lost marks by a lack of precision – stating 'cash', 'cheques' and 'cards' without any further elaboration.
- (c) The focus of this question was on sources of information which could be used by independent travellers before they travel to a destination. Both electronic and paper sources were acceptable, along with organisations such as tourist offices, travel agencies and tour operators. Marks were available for identifying different sources and for writing about the benefits of using each source, thus candidates who were able to offer reasoning gained high marks. There were some excellent reasoned responses; however, too many candidates were satisfied with similar, simple statements for each source (e.g. 'you can get a lot of information from it'). Clearly repetition of simple ideas will not gain extra credit in questions such as this and candidates should look for different specific ideas (e.g. a benefit of the Internet is the large quantity of information available from your home, 24 hours a day; a benefit of travel agents is that they employ specialist staff to answer queries; a benefit of brochures is that they show visual materials about attractions of a destination, etc.)

Question 4

- (a) Both parts of this question were well answered by most candidates, though some confused the transport provider with the departure airport, quoting London Heathrow.
- (b) Many candidates gave good answers here, with the reasons for any four of the following being acceptable: medical insurance; accident insurance; insurance against loss/damage/theft; cancellation/delay insurance; and insurance to cover the costs of repatriation. Weaker candidates were imprecise and wrote phrases like 'if anything happens to them' which gained no credit.
- (c) All candidates made an attempt to complete the booking form and the quality varied immensely from candidate to candidate. It is essential that candidates fill in such forms with care, completing all appropriate sections, as instructed. For example, the initial of the passenger was required not her full first name and the name of the cardholder needed to be in capitals. A significant number of candidates did not enter the details of payment, including the cost of insurance and the sailing package, whilst others omitted to complete details of the hotel, date and room requirements. 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) This question was generally poorly answered, though there were notable exceptions where candidates had excellent knowledge and understanding of how providers link together and benefit as a result. Such answers described how travel providers such as airlines, accommodation and local transport benefit from linking together because they are able to bulk purchase seats/ rooms and take advantages of economies of scale. This allows them to generate a package deal that

attracts customers and guarantees the travel providers business. When local businesses get involved, like the sailing or scuba businesses, they are able to offer special deals as part of the package; this increases business for them as they are able to take advantage of the regular influx of customers. This is particularly beneficial during low or off peak season when custom is needed. In contrast, far too many candidates did not attempt the question and many wrote very basic responses about 'more customers', 'more profits' or similar.