

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 8957/5250

Written Paper

General comments

There was quite a large entry for this examination session and it is pleasing to note that candidate performance is starting to reflect the advice given to Centres in previous reports. Candidates are starting to demonstrate both an understanding and an appreciation of the international Travel and Tourism industry at a variety of scales. It was pleasing to see accurate reference being made to developments in a variety of locations, particularly the candidate's own local area. There were some outstanding scripts but there was a very wide variation between Centres in terms of the level of candidate performance.

There are still far too many instances of candidates ignoring the precise wording of individual questions and more specific comments will be made in the following sections. Many candidates appear to struggle with the actual requirements of particular questions and Centres are now once again encouraged to make the following 'Key Word' definitions part of their examination preparation sessions.

Key Words	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.
Discuss (includes 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 thus expected to present arguments and evidence to support particular points of view and to come to a conclusion .
Evaluate (this also includes the ability to analyse)	To judge from available evidence and arrive at a reasoned conclusion . The candidate is expected to present a number of factors or issues and then weigh up their relative significance or importance.

Candidates who are unable to respond in an appropriate way to these command verbs will always have difficulty in obtaining the higher marks for questions that are assessed by means of 'Levels of Response'. There was very little evidence that candidates were attempting to end their answers to the last part of each of the four questions with any form of conclusion. A valid conclusion, based on the previous points made or considered, is clear evidence of evaluation taking place and will thus usually warrant a score in Level 3 (5-6 marks).

Most candidates were able to answer all four questions within the time available.

Comments on the individual questions

Comments on candidate response

Question 1

- (a) (i) The interpretation of the photograph produced a clear differentiation, with some candidates failing to spot obvious features. For example, the shaded children's pool was frequently identified as a Jacuzzi.
- (ii) Most candidates correctly talked about the pollution associated with boats but fewer made reference to the small size of the beach.

- (b) Many candidates made little reference to monitoring and it was only the minority of answers that gave any consideration to the use of surveys, questionnaires, complaint analysis or direct observation by managers.
- (c) Many sound answers, but too many candidates do not understand the term **ancillary service**. Only the better candidates referred to foreign exchange, tour desk, car hire, theatre reservations and concierge advice etc.
- (d) Many candidates achieved either Level 1 or Level 2 by identifying and explaining key socio-cultural impacts. However, far too many individuals tended to list as many impacts as they could think of rather than trying to discuss which were most significant and why. Weaker answers tended to include irrelevant economic and environmental information.

Question 2

- (a) Very straightforward and most answers scored full marks.
- (b) Too many answers relied on copying from Figure 2, using the ideas of clubs and cultural events which tended to show a lack of understanding. There were some very perceptive comments from other candidates that mentioned cost and walking being better suited to younger visitors that gained the appropriate credit.
- (c) Most candidates missed the significance of the tour starting outside a central Prague attraction and ideas of an accessible, well known, central location were never really well explained.
- (d) This was much better attempted and candidates were able to supply a range of appropriate skills and qualities.
- (e) This question could have been done a lot better and many candidates tended to ignore the word **before** and almost all candidates did not attempt to evaluate the sources of information that were identified. Clearly, this question was asking which source is most useful and why.

Question 3

- (a) (i) The vast majority of candidates were able to correctly identify the price.
- (ii) The correct answer was the Airbus 340-500 and a large minority of candidates were unable to state this in full.
- (iii) There were some excellent answers based on fixed timetables and ticket flexibility. However, far too many candidates offered vague statements about taking off on time and comments about cost/price that could apply to any air service.
- (b) (i) Many candidates were able to suggest shopping as being the activity shown on Figure 3.
- (ii) The advantages of using taxis for tourist-related activities were quite well understood and there were frequent references to flexibility and door-to-door travel etc.
- (c) (i) There were many good responses to this but weaker candidates tended to ignore the idea of business passengers. Furthermore, a significant minority tended to copy phrases from Figure 3 that did not really make much sense. Better responses focused on features of business class air travel mentioning check-in speed, lounge access and cabin services appropriate to business travel needs.
- (ii) Frequent valid reference to conference facilities and support services saw many candidates score well in this section. However, other candidates seemed unaware of such services.

- (d) This tended to be poorly attempted and candidates were quite unfamiliar with the concept of an airport being accessible to the urban area in which it is located. Few answers were able to progress beyond Level 1 because road/rail links were not given much emphasis. Far too many candidates concentrated on air services and the airport's international accessibility – this was not the question. The more able candidates were able to reflect on their local airport and provide some detail as to how travellers were able to make their way there. However, there was little indication as to the relative significance of the methods mentioned and thus Level 3 could not be awarded.

Question 4

- (a) (i) Comparatively few candidates were able to identify the Straits of Malacca from Figure 4.
- (ii) This was correctly answered by the vast majority of candidates.
- (iii) This was also correctly answered by most candidates.
- (b) There were some excellent responses and most candidates were able to correctly identify appropriate facilities and services. However, the level of explanation offered was rather variable.
- (c) There were many full mark answers and most candidates had little difficulty in finding the correct accommodation types. However, some candidates did not really understand the term accommodation and listed general features of the cruise ship.
- (d) There were very few full mark answers and most candidates were unable to talk about the different stages of the booking process as itemised in the syllabus document.
- (e) This tended to be very poorly attempted and few candidates had precise knowledge about a destination that was a cruise ship port of call. Even when an area such as the Caribbean or Mediterranean was correctly identified as a cruise circuit, specific detail of the area's appeal was not supplied. Furthermore, even better candidates could not comment about the relative importance/significance of the factors that were identified. This made it difficult for many candidates to progress above Level 1, let alone approach Level 3.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 8957/5251

Written Paper

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There was quite a large entry for this examination session and it is pleasing to note that candidate performance is starting to reflect the advice given to Centres in previous reports. Candidates are starting to demonstrate both an understanding and an appreciation of the international Travel and Tourism industry at a variety of scales. It was pleasing to see accurate reference being made to developments in a variety of locations, particularly the candidate's own local area. There were some outstanding scripts but there was a very wide variation between Centres in terms of the level of candidate performance.

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TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 8957/5252

Marketing and Promotion

General comments

The cohort for this examination was, on the whole, able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles of marketing and promotion within a travel and tourism context and had been adequately prepared for the demands of the examination paper.

The examination, as is always the case, was divided into 4 questions, each worth 25 marks. Each sub-set of questions within the four main questions is based upon a case study scenario. **Question 1** used the cruise market as a focus. **Question 2** examined communication issues within the marketing process, whilst tourism development in Hong Kong formed the basis for **Question 3**. **Question 4** tested candidates' understanding of the price and place elements of the marketing mix.

There was some evidence to show that candidates were able to transfer knowledge acquired in the classroom, with better performing candidates being able to use it in an applied manner through these case study type questions. Most candidates had sufficient time in which to answer all of the questions within the examination as well as being able to use the space provided in the question paper for their answers, without needing to continue on additional pages.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The scenario for this set of questions related specifically to the cruise market. Candidates were provided with a graph as stimulus material.

- (a)(i) Candidates were asked to identify the way in which the market had been segmented from the data from the table. A good proportion of responses were able to use the correct terminology for the type of segmentation used, although weaker candidates named the dominant segment rather than the segmentation method.
- (ii) This question required candidates to suggest ways in which the information about different target segments could be used by cruise operators.
- (b)(i) Many candidates were able to identify market research techniques, but only a relatively small number were able to describe the techniques they chose.
- (ii) The responses here varied significantly – many candidates merely listed characteristics of any research technique, with only the better performing candidates being able to clearly reference specific advantages of one chosen technique.
- (c) Most responses correctly identified that the cruise market is in growth or maturity, with many answers clearly demonstrating an understanding of popularity as a factor of growth.

- (d) This question posed some difficulty, with few candidates achieving maximum marks. Weaker candidates confused the term 'product/service mix' with the term 'marketing mix' and produced lengthy descriptions of the 4 P's. These responses could not be credited, as they did not answer the question. Some candidates provided detailed descriptions of the characteristics of products and services but were unable to apply this within the context of the product/service mix of the cruise industry. These responses were awarded low-level marks. There was only a small number of instances amongst those who did understand the question, in which more than an extended list of products and services was submitted. The key verb 'discuss' required a more detailed and analytical approach to this question.
- (e) This level of response question is similar to ones regularly appearing on examination papers for this module. However, this was no guarantee of high quality answers. Many candidates continue to list the reasons for marketing and promotion being important to the travel and tourism industries, in the same format as they appear in the assessment objectives for the unit. There is very limited evidence to show that candidates understand what they are writing, and even less evidence of candidates being able to apply this understanding to a specific travel and tourism context such as the cruise industry.

Question 2

The series of questions within this sub-set were based around the concept of marketing communications and the promotion element of the marketing mix.

- (a)(i) Very few candidates understood what 'public relations' are. Most responses were vague – 'relating to the public', which scored no marks. This concept forms an integral part of the syllabus and requires greater teaching, to ensure that more candidates are familiar with this particular marketing tool.
- (ii) Inevitably, because of the difficulties encountered by most candidates in their understanding of the term public relations, many were unable to score any marks here, by providing accurate examples of PR exercises. Better performing candidates understood the connection between PR and the media, but were not always able to articulate this in an appropriate manner.
- (b) Printed publicity materials were understood by the majority of candidates, but relatively few provided good quality answers to this question. At the top end, candidates were able to identify and explain the benefits of printed publicity materials. In the middle range, responses tended to be very general and did not consider why the T&T industry use so many leaflets as a main means of communicating with customers.
- (c) Candidates were offered an opportunity to score 8 marks for their application of the AIDA principle. There were many candidates who were able to score maximum marks for this exercise, but equally there were many candidates who scored only 4 marks out of 8 for the identification of what the acronym AIDA stands for.
- (d) Many candidates answered this question on brand image in a generic fashion, talking more about marketing and advertising of airline companies, rather than focusing on the specific ways in which brand image can play its part, e.g. through the use of logos, company uniforms etc.

Question 3

This question used the Hong Kong Tourism Authority as a focus, requiring candidates to consider SWOT and PEST analyses within a real context, as well as looking at the marketing mix for a given tourism product. The final sub-question in this series examined the characteristics of the total tourism product, which makes it unique from other products.

- (a) The majority of candidates scored maximum marks for this question, which required them to identify the four sections of a PEST analysis.

- (b) This question proved to be the most challenging of all on the question paper for the majority of candidates. It was expected that candidates would select either the weakness or the opportunity from the given stimulus as a priority, however many chose the threat of bird flu and subsequently struggled to answer the question from a marketing and promotion perspective. Of those candidates who did select an appropriate priority, many of the responses were well written in terms of what tourism providers could do to improve tourism provision, but only the better performing candidates were able to consider the issue of partnership working, in order to access the higher grades in Level 3.
- (c) This question required candidates to develop a marketing mix for a chosen product from those identified by the Hong Kong Tourism Authority. It was disappointing to note only a small number of candidates achieving maximum marks for this question – many either identified the four elements of the marketing mix correctly but did not then go on to apply these to their chosen product, or wrote in detail about the product and forgot to mention the other elements of the marketing mix.
- (d)(i) Most candidates were able to correctly identify the characteristics of intangibility, to score either one or two marks out of two for this question.
- (ii) This question caused some difficulty for many candidates. It required them to explain why products and services of the travel and tourism industry are difficult to describe – many focused only on the intangibility aspect to repeat their answer from the previous question.

Question 4

This question was unlike the others for this paper, as it did not have an industry scenario as a focus. Instead, candidates were required to discuss aspects of the price and place elements of the marketing mix.

- (a)(i) Better performing candidates correctly identified the pricing policy as the going-rate, but many seemed to name any pricing policy they were familiar with, e.g. prestige pricing, market skimming etc.
- (ii) Responses to this question varied. Many candidates were able to demonstrate a basic level of understanding that discount pricing is used to attract more customers, but few went on to elaborate the reason why discount pricing usually occurs in the travel and tourism industry – i.e. when a product has failed to perform well in the market and is close to expiry.
- (b) As has often been the case with this type of question, many responses about external factors affecting the pricing policies used in the travel industry were in basic list format or comprised of many internal factors such as funding, target market etc. There were however, several examples of excellent responses which considered a wide mix of the factors that influenced the pricing decisions of travel providers.
- (c)(i) With only one or two exceptions, candidates did not use the stimulus before this question effectively, to explain the most common chain of distribution for package holidays, developed to respond to the changing needs of customers – i.e. the Internet and online booking systems. Instead, the majority of candidates provided details of the traditional chain of distribution, involving tour operators and travel agents. (These were not always accurately in sequence) with rarely a mention of direct selling. Marks were still awarded for a traditional chain of distribution.
- (ii) The flow diagram should have had the Internet as the medium through which direct selling is achieved, but was rarely in evidence. Instead, the majority of responses showed the chain involving tour operators and travel agents – often replicating exactly what had been written in the preceding answer. The expectation was that **Question 4 (c) (i)** would obtain a description of direct selling, and **Question 4 (c) (ii)** would show the process as a flow diagram. The reality was that duplicate responses were made in both sub-questions.
- (d) This last question on the paper offered candidates a chance to demonstrate their knowledge of locational factors within an applied context. As has often been the case in the past, where similar questions have been set, the majority of responses listed the factors almost directly from the assessment objectives, with few examples of application in evidence. This inevitably restricts the marks that candidates can achieve for a question asking them to ‘evaluate’ – a priority of factors is expected, with justification and reasoning – much more than the basic list.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 8957/5253

Travel Organisation

General comments

The entry was small, with ten Centres entering a total of 71 candidates. However the paper differentiated well, both within and between Centres. Most candidates were able to demonstrate some knowledge and had benefited from studying the module, and from able and well prepared candidates there were some excellent scripts, showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject content. Such candidates wrote fluently, in detail and with confidence. In contrast weaker candidates displayed little knowledge and understanding of the topics tested or demands of the question, producing brief lists of ideas, often poorly expressed with no attempt to fit their answers to the required context.

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 cruises, though in some cases it was limited. In (i) the correct answer, High Seas Cruises, was usually given. The best definitions in (ii) were those where candidates used their own words to define both elements i.e. 'optional' and 'excursion' (e.g. 'a trip ashore which you can choose to go on'). In (iii) many candidates could suggest at least one benefit of taking an optional excursion, though some misunderstood the question and wrote about the benefits of cruises as a type of holiday. **Section (iv)** differentiated well with the focus of correct answer being the benefit of reducing the time taken to get from Canada to the cruise circuits. Well prepared candidates were able to add reasons such as the fact that this will enable passengers to spend longer on the circuit, enjoying the sun and scenery, thus avoiding a long sea journey, in potentially cold and stormy weather. Weak candidates speculated that it would be cheaper as the cruise was shorter, however given the high cost of air travel this was not credited without elaboration. In (v) an extended answer was required for full marks, and few candidates gained full marks. Weak candidates did little more than comment on cruises being all inclusive and/or visiting many destinations in a short time. More perceptive answers included reference to the fact that, as a result of increasing affluence, and a decline in relative cost, such luxurious holidays are now available to far more of the population. There were some well thought out answers to (vi) which included reference to the short time which people would have to see ports of call, and the lack of flexibility in itineraries, though weaker candidates generally tended to make just a single point, often relating to the expense, and a common misconception was that a cruise ship would be overcrowded and noisy.
- (b) This question differentiated well, with most candidates making the logical selection of the cruise to Florida and the Caribbean. This could be justified by reference to ideas such as the fact that they have already travelled extensively in Europe (and they want to visit new places), and this cruise matches their interest in food. The cruise is within their budget and some perceptive candidates argued that the fact that it is shorter than that to the Mediterranean would be an advantage as this is their first cruise and a full 12 nights might be too long for them. Candidates could select the Mediterranean cruise and marks were given for appropriate comments justifying their choice.

- (c) This question was well answered by most candidates, who referred to the speed and/or efficiency of using computerised reservations, along with the opportunity to check availability and confirm bookings instantly. A small minority wrongly assumed the question was asking about the advantages of customers booking on line, therefore answers relating to booking from the comfort of home were not relevant.
- (d) Touch screens and the Internet were common correct answers, and most candidates were able to identify at least one of these. As the question asked about other electronic information sources, answers such as brochures were not correct, nor were references to the telephone or named computer reservation systems.

Question 2

- (a) This was well answered with many candidates gaining full marks by referring to any three of telephone, fax, email and surface mail. Some candidates suggested a personal visit to Griswald's office, however the address provided was a PO Box, so this answer was not accepted.
- (b) This differentiated well, there were some excellent answers to both parts, and even weaker candidates were able to suggest a limited number of ideas. Typically answers related to the need for vaccinations and courses of tablets (e.g. for malaria), along with the need to have an up to date passport and check visa requirements, and well prepared candidates usually developed these ideas fully and introduced other issues such as the need for sun screen and/or advice relating to drinking bottled water.
- (c) Most candidates were able to give two types of water-borne transport in (i) and identify one or more advantage of travelling by train in (ii). Brief observations, such as 'it is fast', 'it is cheap' or 'it travels through areas of scenic beauty' were common answers. The best answers were those which explained the points they made fully (e.g. 'it is faster than travelling by road as trains are not held up in traffic congestion on the roads').
- (d) This was a familiar topic for candidates, and many were well prepared to give excellent, detailed answers. The key to success was in developing points made beyond simple statements. The answers which follow exemplify the qualities of answer expected at levels 1 and 2. For level 3 candidates needed to give a balanced response by considering, in detail, both the advantages and disadvantages of using the Internet for travel and tourism product, rather than a travel agent.

Level 1

Advantages such as:

You can book from the comfort of home.

You can get cheaper prices.

You can be competitive and shop around.

Disadvantages such as:

You cannot ask for help face to face.

Some people may not trust paying over the Internet.

Level 2

Advantages such as:

You can easily access a vast amount of detail giving you the opportunity to shop around and get the best deal, all from the comfort of home.

It means you get instant results with no waiting around or holding over the telephone while a travel agent deals with your request.

Discounts are offered by many organisations for booking online, this is an incentive to travellers as it would mean extra spending money.

Using the Internet takes away all the hassle – you can get instant results and responses from the touch of a button.

You can put together your own 'package' and get the best deal to suit your individual needs.

Or disadvantages such as:

Some people, particularly the old may not be able to use the technology required/access the Internet and may not be able/willing to pay using a credit card over the Internet

You cannot discuss requirements face to face with an expert and ask their direct advice, etc.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates were familiar with the idea of a short break and were able to define the term by using their own words such as 'a holiday/vacation of between 2 and 5 days'. Weaker candidates lost marks by repeating the word 'short' or 'break' rather than defining the full term.
- (b) 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 passengers were required not their full first names, and the name of the cardholder needed to be in capitals. A significant number of candidates did not calculate the details of payment correctly, including the single room supplements which would be required by two of the party. 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.
- (c) This question required candidates to consider why it is important to provide tour organisers with details of the specific needs of passengers, with particular reference to the elderly aunt and 14 year old daughter who were included in the booking, and it produced the full range of answers. At worst candidates merely repeated the information given in the question that 'it would help them to provide a better service', basic responses explained that 'it would help them to meet the needs of their customers better as they could provide them with what they wanted', however those candidates who developed their answers, explaining fully by reference to the examples produced impressive answers:
- e.g. 'They can ensure their customers' needs are met which will ensure an enjoyable, hassle free holiday which might also bring about repeat business or recommendation. In relation to the aunt the family will need to inform the coach company of the aunt's disability and dependence on a wheelchair so that the company can ensure enough room is left in the hold for the wheelchair. The company will also ensure there is assistance for the Aunt. They could also consider the hire of mobility aids. They will need to ensure the hotel is disabled friendly with a lift and wide doors for access, and low level access to washbasins. In relation to the daughter the family must inform the hotel that she is a vegetarian in order that the chef can order appropriate ingredients to prepare a varied menu for her and they will be able to pre book appropriate meals for her on the outbound and inbound journeys.
- (d) Most candidates could identify some of the advantages of hiring a car, such as the flexibility and independence which it offers, and many were able to develop these points and/or exemplify them in relation to the family considering the short break to Germany. In particular there were some well thought out responses relating to the convenience of hiring a car for a passenger with a wheelchair, rather than having to struggle on public transport.

Question 4

- (a) All candidates made an attempt to complete the travel itinerary, and there were many 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.

- (b) In (i) almost all candidates knew the difference between a domestic and internal flight, and could define the terms, some giving examples to accompany the definitions. In (ii) 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 the cost of flights. It is not true that all scheduled services are expensive, candidates should be familiar with budget airlines which run scheduled services, and not all provide in flight meals and entertainment. In (iii) credit was given for reference to any of the check-in procedures which passengers go through at the airport (e.g. the need to arrive in advance, checking of tickets and passports, weighing and tagging of luggage, and issuing of boarding cards). However this did not include the security procedures which passengers undergo beyond the check in desk. There were some excellent, detailed responses, though others included irrelevant information.
- (c) Most candidates showed their awareness of what is meant by the term 'stopover', and many could at least briefly comment on the advantages and disadvantages. The key to success was in developing points made beyond simple statements. The answers which follow exemplify the qualities of answer expected at levels 1 and 2. For level 3 candidates needed to give a balanced response by considering, in detail, both the advantages and disadvantages of having a stopover, with an evaluation being attempted.

Level 1

Advantages such as:

It would give the men a chance to rest between their long flights;
and to see somewhere they may not have been before;

Disadvantages such as:

it would cost more;
it would delay their return home

Level 2

Advantages such as:

The men would have the opportunity of visiting an extra country before they return home and being active and very energetic they would probably enjoy the extra adventure

It enables them to rest in a hotel bed which helps reduce the likelihood of jet lag.

Disadvantages such as:

They will probably be very tired so unable to sightsee/will only be able to rest in their hotel rooms.
It makes the journey back longer and extends the time away.
It would cost more as rooms would need to be booked.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 8957/5254

Visitor Services

General comments

There have been a relatively small number of entries for this module as is to be expected, as the qualification draws to a conclusion. Candidates from those Centres which have submitted assessment evidence for this module, have been well prepared and have been able to demonstrate a good level of understanding of the specified learning content in Visitor Services. Assignments are generally professionally presented, using standard report conventions and are appropriately source-referenced. Centre staff usually complete the relevant Candidate Assessment Records (SAR's) for each submitted assignment to the required standard. It is particularly helpful, where the Assignment Content sheet is used, to indicate page references against individual assessment objectives.

Candidates, for the most part, have selected relevant case studies on which to focus their assignment evidence and are able to demonstrate effective primary and secondary research skills in collecting and collating the necessary research evidence. The majority of assignments fall within the prescribed length of 1800 – 2500 words.

Comments on Assessment Objectives

1.0 Describe how Visitor Services operate within a chosen destination.

Most candidates are able to provide detailed descriptions of a range of Visitor Service providers within their selected point of study. These are often at a national or regional level, which is pleasing. The descriptions are usually accompanied by a flow diagram depicting the inter-relationship of the organisations involved in the delivery of Visitor Services. Descriptions also usually include brief information about sources of funding and scale of operation.

2.0 Explain the role and function of different organisations involved in the provision of Visitor Services within the chosen destination.

Candidates often use this as the main section of their reports, providing detailed explanations of the functional areas of market research, marketing, promotion, and quality standards as a minimum. Better performing candidates will additionally include details of sales and advice, although this remains variable. There is often quite a large overlap in the evidence presented for 1.0 and 2.0.

3.0 Investigate the range of products and services offered by Visitor Service providers in the selected destination.

Candidates find this section relatively difficult to evidence – there are many instances of a list being provided, which closely resembles the bullet points of the Assessment Objectives. However, there have been some examples of excellent practice, in which candidates have been able to access the actual products and services and include extracts from guidebooks, exemplar booking forms, exit surveys etc.

4.0 Explain how tourist organisations promote tourism products, services, facilities and events within a selected destination.

There is often excellent evidence to support this section of candidates' assignments. Most provide clear information relating to the type of publicity materials available both at a national and a local level. There is also good reference to the Internet, with appropriate source references to specific websites used as a main point of reference for Visitor Services. Many candidates now also include details of events and trade fairs

held within their chosen destination. Advertisements used, or references to displays and public relations tend to be less well evidenced.

5.0 Investigate how Visitor Service providers contribute to business travel services within the chosen destination.

This section has become better resourced as this qualification has advanced reflecting the growth in this essential aspect of the tourism industry as a whole. Candidates are generally able to find detailed information on corporate packages and conferences at a local level and conventions at a national and international level.

6.0 Investigate how Visitor Service providers contribute to leisure travel services within the chosen destination.

Candidates continue to provide extensive evidence of the available leisure packages for their chosen destination as these have traditionally been readily accessed through Visitor Service providers. A small number of candidates additionally provide evidence of a Calendar of Events and special events although these tend to be less well evidenced.

7.0 Explain how quality control measures are used within the selected destination.

Candidates largely cross reference evidence from 2.0 for this section. Information relating to accommodation classification systems is usually readily available and there is growing evidence of awareness of accredited staff training – this is sometimes still limited to in-house training programmes and not always relevant to Visitor Services as such. It would be helpful if candidates could consider training for Guides such as the Blue Badge Scheme which has been adopted in some countries.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM STANDARD LEVEL

Paper 8957/5255

The Hospitality Sector

General comments

This module seeks to introduce candidates to the variety of tourism hospitality provision available in their local region. The intention is that Centres should guide candidates in their selection of an area to study. It is not assumed that all Centres will have equal provision in their local area and so it is not expected that all candidates will be able to identify the full range of possible providers. However, it is expected that a variety of provision will be identified and that products and services will be examined in an appropriate fashion.

The approach adopted by several Centres for the delivery of this module was very impressive. However, a significant minority of candidates were unable to provide evidence that met the stated requirements of AO4. There are additional areas that should receive attention in order to ensure more positive outcomes in the future and thus lead to an overall increase in the standard of performance.

AO1 was usually done quite well and the use of images and diagrams provided very clear contextualisation.

AO2 was also attempted quite well although some candidates neglected to consider the full range of services offered by their chosen hospitality providers. To obtain the higher grades, candidates must make a positive attempt to **explain** the products and services that they identify.

AO3 was rather variable and the amount of detail provided about particular job roles determines the amount of credit that can be awarded. Some candidates adopted a thorough approach and it was clear that they had a sound appreciation of hotel work.

AO4 was the main problem area because candidates often neglect to provide any evidence of them, as individuals, being able to **demonstrate** delivery of excellent hospitality customer service. To secure the higher levels of attainment it is suggested that individual candidates must devote attention to explaining the particular customer service procedures that they *actually performed*.

Regardless of the hospitality service environment, candidates should be encouraged to reflect on the specific staff/customer situation and provide a detailed evaluative account of their performance in that particular situation. At present, there is little evidence to support what the candidates are able to do in terms of skills performed in a given hospitality situation. Some use should be made of witness testimony, to support this reflective evaluation of individual customer service performance. The use of feedback forms would be an excellent idea and then individual candidates can make use of them when explaining their delivery of excellent customer service. Furthermore, the use of photographs to illustrate their chosen job role (either in real life or a simulation) would help in this respect.