TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

> **Paper 8958/5260**
>
> **Travel and Tourism Core Module**

General comments

The entries for this exam continue to show a general understanding of tourism development and destination management. Candidates are more familiar with the layout of the exam and what is expected from them. Most candidates are able to complete the exam in the given time and have shown evidence of wide ranging revision techniques and underpinning knowledge of the syllabus.

It is essential for Centres to emphasize the layout of the paper and for candidates to be aware of the underpinning knowledge required for **Question 2**. All too often candidates are not applying marketing principles to this section of the paper. Centres are encouraged to ensure that candidates answer **Question 2** solely on the marketing and promotion theories that they have learned.

Candidates continue to have difficulty with the concepts of economic, environmental and social/cultural impacts or benefits. Centres must stress the key differences between these three important principles and candidates should be practised in learning and recognising the key words to enable a better understanding of the questions.

For reference purposes 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 further opportunity to relate to destinations they have studied.	

Candidates are expected to use the information given in the case studies to enhance their answers. There is evidence of candidates learning the assessment criteria and using this as a standard response to questions. This is not rewarded highly as the answers given are rarely in context with the destination and lead to misinterpretation of key information. General answers without specific reference to the case studies have not been credited accordingly.

Overall the paper was answered to a generally high standard and there were very few instances in which candidates did not complete the examination.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)   Generally very well answered with most candidates achieving full marks.

(b)   There were only two in the case study, SARS and bird flu.

(c)   Very few candidates understood the case study and gave all positive impacts for both parts of the question rather than some of the negative ones identified in the case study.

(d)   Generally well answered with many candidates being able to identify at least two impacts on the region created by the new airport. There was little reference to the length of the new runway and the fact that it could take larger aircraft.

(e) This question raised some difficulties with candidates not discussing ways but rather describing or explaining them. This resulted in candidates not achieving the higher mark bands. There was little reference to investments, grants, loans or funding.

Question 2

This question relates to the marketing and promotion techniques of the Thai Tourist board as well as an advertisement for Thai airways. The answers relate to the principles of marketing communication methods and the AIDA principle.

(a) This question should be familiar to those candidates who have revised with past papers and generally good responses were given for the importance of marketing.

(b) Candidates were expected to know a range of marketing communication methods such as media, radio, Internet etc. and apply them accordingly. This was generally well answered.

(c) **(i)** The type of strategy was primary or attacking, however variations and benefits of strategies were awarded if in context with the slogan.

(ii) This was not well answered with candidates being unable to describe how to evaluate the effectiveness of a strategy. Far too much was written about evaluation and the question was only worth 2 marks.

(d) Market segmentation was very well answered.

(e) Candidates are either familiar with the AIDA principle or do not know it at all. For those who did know it the question was very well answered

Question 3

This was quite a detailed article about the activities and facilities that Croatia has to offer as a holiday destination.

(a) This was well answered with many candidates achieving full marks for identifying reasons for travel to Croatia.

(b) Candidates were able to easily identify activities from the case study but were unable in many cases to give reasons for the appeal of these activities, thereby losing marks.

(c) This was a six mark question and was quite clearly the one that gave most problems on the paper. The question asked for disadvantages and there was little understanding of the implications of 'weak' currencies in countries.

(d) This question related to the role of destination management in Croatia. There was evidence in the case study with regard to short breaks, spa holidays, winter holidays etc. but given this information there was limited evaluation of what these methods would do for the country.

Question 4

The final question on the paper was based around the development of tourism in the Antarctic and methods to preserve its natural beauty.

(a)   **(i)**   No comments.

         (ii)   This was very well answered with many candidates using the information from the case study together with their own knowledge of tourism development objectives.

(b)   For those candidates who knew the term 'leakage' the responses given were very good and many scored maximum marks through understanding why this would cause possible conflict.

(c)   This question related to the principles of sustainable tourism and the impact of tourism on the environment. Again there was much explanation but little evaluation of the aims and what would happen if these practices were put into place.

(d)   Very few candidates gave an accurate example of an organisation. Tourism Concern and WWF were the two most popular but there was a range of organisations that were not in the voluntary sector.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

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│ **Paper 8955/5261**   │
│ **Travel and Tourism Core Module** │
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TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

> **Paper 8958/5262**
>
> **Ecotourism**

General comments

The work was appropriately presented and bound with 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 again 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 unit.

The level of achievement rates for this module remains high 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 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 address 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 role of Ecotourism organisations and made reference to the roles of the Ecotourism organisations they did mention in connection with the destination under investigation. 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 is still being 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 at higher levels is to be achieved

Candidates need to address and meet all of the assessment objectives. It was still sometimes the case that candidates lost sight of the assessment objectives and included unnecessary information. Clear assignment briefs provided by teachers 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. Candidates should understand that work provided directly from websites is often found to be 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.

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TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

> **Paper 8958/5263**
>
> **Business and Executive Travel**

Most of the assignments seen tended to have very similar shortcomings:

- The reports were not always of the standard expected at this level
- The work did not always contain a proper assignment brief
- The work was not always structured to best effect

Once again 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 simply be used 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.

It is suggested that candidates 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
- Methods – there is a system of data collection/information gathering that the candidate fully understands and can then justify/evaluate (i.e. how and why certain information was 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 has the investigation 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, 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.

There are still too few pieces of work that are worthy of merit/distinction grades and Centres would be well 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 also locally, if appropriate
2.1 Comparison of business and leisure traveller needs	Active comparison differentiates, thus 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/inclusion and can be shown on map(s) and/or table(s) to reduce word count constraint
3.2 Evaluate one destination	Evaluation differentiates, thus 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. This will clearly differentiate in terms of performance.

Additional guidance/information

In the UK, business tourism is the most lucrative, highest growing, highest quality and highest yielding component of overall tourism. It is worth over £15 billion annually, nearly a quarter of all tourism, of which £4 billion is inbound and £11 billion domestic. Business tourism represents 29% of all inbound tourism visits and 32% of inbound expenditures. However, the UK global market share is declining as international competition grows.

Business tourism is resilient, sustainable and creates quality employment opportunities. It regenerates urban and resort areas – 40% of business visitors return with their families on leisure trips. It stimulates inward investment and facilitates significant export earnings. Over the last ten years there has been a 53% growth in all business trips, exceeding the overall tourism growth rate. The conference and incentive travel segments are predicted to grow at a faster rate than any other tourism sector to the year 2010. Revenues from international business tourism are estimated to account for approximately 36% of total international tourism revenue by 2010. Currently in the UK:

- Congresses and conferences are worth £6.6 billion annually
- Exhibitions and trade fairs are worth £1.8 billion annually
- Incentive travel estimated to be worth £165 million annually
- Corporate hospitality is estimated to be worth £700 million annually
- Individual business travel is estimated to be worth £6 billion annually

Conferences, exhibitions and trade fairs are important components of the tourism economy of many international destinations. It is to be expected that many destinations will try and maximise their business tourism receipts. In England's Merseyside region for example, Mersey Tourism has responded to the opportunities presented by a growing business tourism market through the services provided by the Mersey Conference Bureau. Merseyside is now able to supply the conference organiser with a specialist customer service package that gives attention to:

- Help with the choice of venues appropriate to the scale of the event
- Supporting visual material (e.g. promotional leaflets/brochures to help sell the destination/venue)
- Costed bids (to help secure a booking)
- Range of accommodation options, if required
- Transport/transfers to make visitor/delegate movement easier
- Audio-visual and stage/set quotations arranged to meet organiser's specification
- Arrange social and partners programmes to ensure visitors/delegates enjoy the venue and will want to return
- Provide support services (e.g. business and communication facilities)

This approach to the conference business market has resulted in an increasing number of bookings and the value of Merseyside business tourism generated through the Bureau is £1.4 million. An example of the important events arranged by the Bureau in the city was a British Council Conference held at the Liverpool Crowne Plaza Hotel which attracted delegates from every corner of the world.

Conferences, exhibitions and events can all be staged in a variety of venues. It is now quite common to find several types of host venue trying to attract these types of business tourism. Examples of such providers include:

- Purpose built conference centres
- Hotel facilities
- Sports venues
- Civic buildings
- Stately homes
- University and academic institution facilities

Many destinations have a range of providers and it should be possible to investigate any location in terms of the following:

● To identify and illustrate the main users and providers of conference and exhibition/event facilities
● To describe the main locations used and indicate their relative importance
● To examine in detail the facilities available in a typical venue servicing the local conference and event market
● To describe the range of services that are available in a locality to support and maintain the attractiveness of the venues operating within the conference and event marketplace

It is important to remember that conferences range in size from smaller meetings to international events. They are organised by particular bodies to spread information to interested parties and they are used by many different public, private and voluntary organisations. A trade fair is an example of an exhibition where companies show their products and services to the trade and/or the public. Other examples are more general displays of public interest revolving around a particular theme e.g. The Ideal Homes Exhibition or the World Travel Market.

The mixing of leisure and business tourism environments in Dubai illustrates a growing trend particularly well. Dubai is well established as the leading exhibition centre in the Middle East and it was recently voted the world's best conference venue. The city combines the facilities and services of one of the world's major international business centres with all the attractions of a top destination. This means that organisers and delegates alike can count on effective and successful events staged in a luxurious environment offering an outstanding range of recreational opportunities. The city now hosts more than 60 major exhibitions annually as well as numerous conferences, seminars, in-house corporate meetings and the like. This demand is serviced by a range of business facilities including:

● Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry conference venue
● Major hotel venues, such as Jumeirah International's Emirates Towers and Burj Al Arab properties
● Dubai World Trade Centre's 36,000 square metres exhibition hall
● Dubai Airport Exhibition Centre
● Other special interest venues e.g. Nad Al Sheba racecourse

The business sector is supported by major local companies that are well-equipped with a full destination management service covering hotel bookings, airport transfers, ground transport and a daily programme of tours and activities with multi-lingual guides. They also offer the required expertise for organising business-related travel, including original and exciting incentive programmes.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

> **Paper 8958/5264**
>
> **Event Planning and Promotion**

General comments

The majority of work was appropriately presented and bound with 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.

The majority of candidates this year achieved a pass with some merits, but not many distinctions. 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, 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. It should be noted that theory should be related 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 are explained and the key processes involved in staging a successful event are 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, this could be 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 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. This is an advanced level qualification and work must be completed to an advanced standard. One line of writing on an Assessment Objective is not sufficient.

Centres should advise candidates 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 in order for them to obtain a pass or higher.

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TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVANCED LEVEL

Paper 8958/5265

Applied Customer Service

There were few entries for this and most of the work seen was quite well tailored to the demands of the module. However, certain improvements need to be made before candidates can be awarded the higher levels of attainment.

Centres are strongly advised to carefully follow the guidance provided on pages 57-60 of the Syllabus document. One of the assessment objectives clearly states that candidates must have had real or simulated workplace experience and three pieces of evidence relating to this hands-on delivery of customer service are required. Centres must therefore make sure that each candidate has had suitable opportunity to have first hand experience of working within an appropriate travel and tourism front line environment. It is suggested that any or all of the following should be made use of:

● The individual candidate's own part-time employment
● A work placement arranged by the Centre
● A period of work-shadowing arranged by either the candidate or the Centre
● Participation in a Centre-based simulation exercise

If witness statements are used it must be quite clear what exactly the individual candidate has done to warrant the demonstration of excellent customer service.

In order to achieve the higher grades for this Module, it is expected that candidates will have done the following:

● Produced a clearly structured portfolio/report with precise information relating to each of the assessment objectives.
● Provided a clear explanation of the importance of customer service to all travel and tourism organisations.
● The work will have included full details of the products and services made available to the customers of two clearly identifiable travel and tourism organisations and there will have been appropriate comment to show how these products and services meet the needs of different customer types.
● There will have been a clear explanation of the ways in which one organisation uses new technology to provide improved customer service.
● The candidate will have provided detailed evidence to demonstrate their delivery of excellent customer service and there will be clear evaluative comment to support the three aspects.
● The information sheet relevant to AO5 will have been carefully and thoughtfully produced and be supported with a wide variety of comments to justify the content.
● A variety of methods used to assess customer satisfaction will have been investigated and evaluative comments about each will have been provided.