

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

BUSINESS

05834–05837, 05878

Unit 9 January 2023 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Unit 9 series overview

Unit 9 is a two-hour paper which carries 90 marks. This series the paper comprised of seven questions and 13 part questions. This series has seen a wide spread of marks being achieved by candidates. Marks achieved appear to have depended on the individual candidate's exam preparation, understanding of the command verbs and ability to apply theory to the scenario/context.

Candidates who performed well showed clear evidence of exam preparation, focused in on key words within the question and were able to use HR-specific terminology appropriately. Less successful candidates showed gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the specification and struggled with the use of HR terminology. Areas of weakness included methods of off-the-job training, methods of resolving (rather than preventing) conflict and formal appraisal techniques.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated knowledge and understanding across the specification • applied theory to the context (sole trader in the tertiary sector) • understood the differing requirements of the command verbs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated a lack of knowledge and understanding of the specification • demonstrated a lack of knowledge of key HR terminology • did not recognise the differing requirements of the command verbs • provided responses that were generic and not focused on the scenario.

Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Moments uses 'flexible working' and 'team working' as methods of employee engagement.

Identify **three** other methods of employee engagement that Eve could introduce.

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[3]

Many candidates did not score marks on this question as they identified methods of motivation rather than employee engagement.

Some candidates identified flexible working and team working which were excluded by the question and therefore not awardable.

Assessment for learning



Employee motivation (LO2), e.g. how driven employees are and how hard they are willing to work.

Employee engagement (LO4), e.g. an employee's enthusiasm for their work/workplace.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Using data from **Table 1** and any other relevant information, calculate the labour turnover rate for Moments' sales assistants in 2022.

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..... [3]

Generally, candidates scored either 0 or 3 marks on this question; few candidates scored 1 or 2 marks. Many candidates knew the formula for calculating labour turnover, but did not take into account that there were two shops and therefore ten sales assistants. Some candidates also added the two managers into the calculation, but the question related only sales assistants.

Question 2 (a)

2 (a) Describe **three** monetary rewards that Eve could introduce to motivate Moments' employees.

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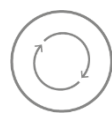
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[6]

The full range of marks was achieved by candidates for this question; from 0 to 6. To achieve marks, candidates needed to identify and describe monetary rewards. The command verb here was describe, however many candidates explained how each reward identified would motivate employees and therefore did not achieve the second mark in each instance.

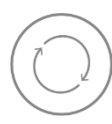
Many candidates also identified non-monetary rewards; 'employee of the month' and 'promotion opportunities' being frequently seen. Some candidates identified 'team working' which Moments already offered and this was therefore not awardable.

Assessment for learning



Make sure that candidates understand the requirements of 'describe' versus 'explain' as command verbs.

Assessment for learning



Encourage candidates to read questions carefully to make sure that they have identified any possible responses that have been excluded by the question.

Question 2 (b)

(b) Evaluate likely benefits to Moments of having motivated employees.

[16]

The majority of candidates made a good attempt at this question.

Candidates who performed well were able to identify benefits of having motivated employees, provide a business facing impact of these benefits and then draw a reasoned conclusion as to which would be the most significant benefit to Moments.

Less successful responses made very general statements about benefits, e.g. 'good customer service' rather than 'improved/better customer service'. This 'movement' needed to be identified for Level 1 marks to be given. Moments may already have had 'good' customer service but having 'improved' customer service is the benefit of having motivated employees.

Many candidates also gave a Level 3 impact as a Level 1 benefit, which was not awardable. For example, a better reputation or improved customer loyalty were awardable as Level 3 impacts but a benefit (Level 1) needed to come before them, e.g. improved customer service (Level 1) will lead to a better reputation (Level 3).

There also had to be a clear link between the Level 1 benefit and the Level 3 impact for the Level 3 mark to be given. Improved quality was not given as a Level 3 following on from improved productivity (Level 1) as it can be argued that quality may fall if work is being produced more quickly.

Question 3

3 Eve uses a democratic management style when dealing with the shop managers.

Explain **three** ways a democratic management style might influence the relationship between Eve and the shop managers.

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[6]

Many candidates did not achieve marks on this question. Often this was due to candidates not having knowledge of specific features of a democratic management style.

Candidates needed to identify a feature of a democratic management style for 1 mark, in each instance, and then state how this would impact the working relationship between Eve and the managers for the second mark.

Question 4 (b)

(b) Explain **three** factors that Eve needs to take into account when planning the recruitment and selection process for the sales assistants required for the third shop.

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[6]

This was a low scoring question. Most candidates stated elements of the recruitment and selection process, e.g. Eve needs to arrange interviews, rather than factors that need to be considered during the planning of a recruitment and selection process, e.g. who will be on the interview panel?

Some candidates identified decisions that Eve would need to make when looking at applications that had been submitted, e.g. do they live close to the new shop?

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be encouraged to take the time to reflect on key words within the question which will impact the focus of their response.

Question 4 (c)

Sales Assistants

We want you!!!! 😊

We are a greetings card and gift business who are opening a new shop. We need experienced sales assistants to serve our customers and ensure that the shop is tidy and provides a pleasant shopping environment.

Send your CV to Eve: Eve.Moments@gmail.com



(c) Evaluate whether the job advertisement shown above is fit for purpose.

[8]

Most candidates were able to identify information/features that are included or missing from the advertisement. Some did not expand on this and therefore were limited to the maximum 2 marks available for identification, no matter how many points they identified.

Many candidates used 'professional/unprofessional' in their development of at least one point. This is too vague (TV) and not awardable.

Few candidates achieved Level 3 as most focused on detailing numerous points rather than developing/analysing fewer points.

A minority of candidates thought that this was either a job description or person specification, but this did not prevent them from achieving Level 1 or Level 2.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be discouraged from using professional/unprofessional in any response.

Question 5 (a)

5 Eve intends to provide training for the manager of the third shop.

(a) Analyse **two** benefits to Moments of providing training for the manager of the third shop.

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[6]

The full range of marks was achieved for this question; from 0 to 6. For the first mark in each instance candidates needed to identify a benefit of providing training for the manager of the third shop. The second and third marks were then available for development and analysis.

Candidates who scored highly were able to identify a specific benefit, e.g. 'improve the manager's understanding of how the shop needs to be run', and then consider a positive impact on Moments.

Candidates who did not perform well provided generic responses that did not relate to the context, e.g. 'the manager will know about the business'.

Question 5 (b)

(b) Describe **three** methods of off-the-job training that could be used to train the manager of the third shop.

[6]

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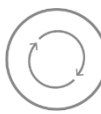
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The full range of marks were achieved for this question; from 0 to 6. There were some candidates who made no attempt to answer the question (NR).

Some candidates confused off-the-job and on-the-job methods of training and therefore did not score highly. Many of those who were able to identify methods went on to explain why the method should be used, rather than describe the method which is what the question said.

Some candidates identified a location for the training, e.g. 'training college', 'another shop', 'classroom', or content of the training, e.g. 'conflict management', rather than a method.

Assessment for learning

 Candidates should know the methods of training as listed in LO8.1 of the specification, and the key features of each method.

Question 6 (a)

6 (a) Identify **two** possible causes of conflict that may occur within the workplace when the third shop is opened.

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[2]

Candidates needed to identify possible causes of conflict when the third shop is opened. Candidates therefore needed to apply theory to the context. Some candidates did this well and used specific details from the scenario. Others stated generic causes and therefore did not achieve marks.

Question 6 (b)

(b) Outline **two** appropriate methods that Eve could use to resolve any conflict that may occur when the third shop is opened.

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[6]

This question was a good differentiator between candidates who knew methods of resolution and those who did not. 'Mediation', 'negotiation', 'disciplinary action' and 'trade union involvement', were common responses for those candidates who showed good knowledge of LO6.3. Common responses which were not awardable were 'having a meeting', 'firing staff' and 'having a social event'.

Candidates should understand the difference between methods of resolving conflict, i.e. it has happened, versus trying to prevent conflict from happening in the first instance.

Also note that responses such as 'giving a disciplinary' were too vague (TV). As this is an HR unit, candidates need to be able to use the correct HR terminology.

Question 7

- 7 Once the third shop is open, Eve wants to introduce a formal appraisal process for all of Moments' sales assistants.

Evaluate formal appraisal techniques that Eve could introduce to monitor the performance of the sales assistants.

[16]

This question assessed knowledge and understanding of LO5.1.

Many candidates were able to identify formal appraisal techniques. Correct HR terminology had to be used to award.

Of those candidates who were able to correctly identify a technique, many did not achieve Level 2 for correct description of the technique as the description was too vague about who would be involved in the appraisal. Words such as 'colleague', 'other employees', 'co-workers', etc were too vague (TV) as candidates need to identify specific people/roles, e.g. for peer appraisal, sales assistants, other employees on the same level or similar were awardable. Self-appraisal was the one technique where most candidates correctly identified that this would be carried out by the employee themselves, therefore achieving Level 2.

To achieve Level 3 candidates needed to provide a business-facing impact of using a specific appraisal technique rather than an impact of introducing an appraisal process in general. Many candidates stated the advantages and disadvantages of the techniques but these often did not lead onto a business-facing impact, e.g. the technique might lead to biased results. What is the business-facing impact of this?

Some candidates were unable to identify formal appraisal techniques. Responses such as 'employee of the month', 'questionnaires', 'probationary period', 'letter' and 'pay' rise, were all seen.

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