

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2013

Principal Learning Business,
Administration & Finance
Responding to Change (BA308)
Paper 01

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**Principal Examiner Report
BA308 January 2013 series
Unit 8 Responding to Change**

Introduction

This is the seventh time this externally assessed unit has been examined. Nearly all learners managed to complete the paper. Learners have shown reasonable knowledge of the appropriate theorists listed on the specification but a lack of exam technique, particularly on higher mark questions, has meant that some learners have not been able to access the highest marks.

Learners must ensure that they use the appropriate part of the specification when answering questions. This is apparent in the wording of the questions. Those learners that use the correct theory underpin their answers with a good understanding of change management. This provides a foundation from which to analyse and evaluate higher mark questions.

Responses to questions

In this series, candidates attaining a grade E were expected to be able to answer questions 7 and 8a. With some of the other questions, particularly question 6, candidates at this level could still expect to pick up knowledge marks. Learners around this boundary were not expected to do well on questions 8b and 10. At the A*/A boundary, questions 8b and 10 looked for evidence of good understanding, analysis and evaluation.

Q6a - Most learners were able to develop an argument as to how increased mechanisation affected the Royal Mail. Many learners discussed how machinery could speed up the delivery process and reduce the number of workers. Answers must show the development of a line of argument. This might entail one relevant point developed analytically through two steps.

Q6b - A good understanding of how changes in government policy affected the Royal Mail, with most learners applying their answers to the business.

Q6c - This question was accessible to most learners but centres must ensure that learners understand all terminology within the specification. Trade liberalisation is in the specification and is the sort of term that allows for differentiation between learners.

Q7 - In general, a well answered question. However, learners must ensure that they answer the question set. This asked for the impact on the way the Royal Mail managed its workforce rather than the impact on the workforce itself. Learners must spend time looking at key words in the question. It is advisable to keep referring back to the question to help focus when writing an answer.

Q8a - Most learners were able to provide at least reasonable answers to this question, mainly based on feedback from customers suggesting whether they were happy with the Royal Mail's service or not.

Q8b - It is apparent that some centres are looking to develop exam technique with learner's answers. A number of learners were able to develop a strong analytical line of argument in looking at the ways in which becoming well informed about the reasons for change could be used by an employee to manage their own responses to change. Learners that used the correct part of the specification to answer this question achieved a good mark. It is important that learners regularly practice developing a line of argument in order to access the higher analytical marks.

Q9 - Generally well answered with some good explanation of ways that can be used to overcome employee resistance to change at the Royal Mail. Again, this should focus on the specific area of the specification. Those learners that do not understand this are losing marks unnecessarily.

Q10 - A number of learners had some understanding of Lewin's Force Field Analysis. Of these, some discussed the theory without reference to the Royal Mail. A minority did not know the theory and could not answer the question. Again, learners must have a full understanding of the specification. If they do not know what is on the specification they cannot answer the question. As guidance, it should be noted that there will be an evaluative question on one of Gleicher, Lewin or Kubler-Ross in each exam.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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