2010 Administration

Higher − Paper 1

Finalised Marking Instructions

2010

Higher Administration

Solution and Marking Guidelines

ANNOTATION

Where you award a mark show it like this
(You may wish to bracket the relevant scoring point)

（1）

Put the total for the question in the first column on the right

2

Put the total for the whole question in the second column

18／20

R = no mark awarded for repetition

J= mark awarded for justification

No D = no discussion

Section 1

1	Outline **3** areas of customer service that a mystery shopper might investigate.	3
	More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidates will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
	- Sample what a potential customer might experience - Assess customer service/quality eg communication, speed of service - Assess any hostility from company's employees - Measure or test that customer needs are satisfied - Investigate if the staff are following company policies/procedures/legal requirements - Sample employee's product knowledge - How a complaint is handled	
	Notes Accept any specific examples relating to customer experience eg cleanliness of store Do not accept quality of product Watch that candidate examples do not merely give repetition of a previous point	

2	Compare the use of a mystery shopper with a customer focus group.	2
	One mark is allocated for each complete statement of comparison.	
	- Customer focus groups are small groups of customers brought together to provide the organisation with feedback on consumer issues whereas a mystery shopper pretends to shop and experiences the service and care the ordinary shopper gets. - Both provide immediate feedback… - Both mystery shopper and focus group can be expensive to run. - In a focus group additional questions can be asked seeking clarification whereas a mystery shopper remains anonymous and cannot delve any deeper. - Mystery shopper is one person's experience whereas in a focus group there are a number of customers who are invited and this gives a wider response. - A mystery shopper may only visit the organisation once whereas the customer focus group is usually made up of regular customers.	
	Notes Can accept 2 "both" statements	

3	Describe **3** consequences, and their implications, of poor customer service.	6
	Award first mark for the consequence and the second mark for the implication.	
	• Decrease in customer loyalty – loss of custom/profits • Bad publicity – loss of custom/profits – difficulty in recruiting staff – legal action • Failure to attract new customers – falling market share – decline in profits • Increase in complaints – bad reputation – loss in custom/profits • Demotivated staff – loss of well trained staff – increased recruitment costs • Loss of competitive edge – loss of market share/custom – loss of profits	
	Notes • Must have a different implication for each consequence • Accept the implication before the consequence • If a mark is awarded for a consequence do not award another mark for the same point as an implication (everything has to be different)	

4	Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of flexible working for an employer.	6

If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. If no discussion please mark "No D". Balance of marks can 5:1.

Advantages

- The organisation may be able to recruit and retain staff who can combine caring for family members and carrying out their job.
- It is more cost effective to retain existing staff than recruit and train new staff.
- There is a larger pool of labour so wider range of available skills.
- Happier staff will increase morale and increase productivity
- In job share, for example, two people bring 2 sets of skills and experience to the job.
- Less absenteeism …
- Helps attract staff …
- It can reduce or eliminate punctuality problems …
- Freeing up of office space …
- Cost efficiencies (needs to be explained)

Disadvantages

- It is difficult to offer training and staff development to all part- time workers
- It is not always easy to ensure health and safety in home environment
- It is harder to control and supervise flexible workers
- Difficulties in communication …
- Technical difficulties for homeworkers when equipment breaks down …
- Communication and hand-over problems between job sharers could cause a problem
- Heavier burden placed on managers as there is more staff to manage
- With homeworking – increased cost of equipment and training

Notes

- Award mark for more than one advantage/disadvantage for any one working practice. Each must be different.
- Must be for employer not employee

5	More than 40,000 mystery shoppers' personal details are stored on one company's database. Outline **3** principles of good information handling which this company should follow.	3
	More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.	
	- The company should comply with the data protection act - Information should not be retained for any longer than is necessary - Information should be obtained fairly and lawfully - Information should only be processed for limited purposes - Information should be processed in accordance with individual's rights - Information should **up-to-date** and **accurate**, the latest information available *(max one mark available for this principle)* - Information should be **adequate**, **relevant** and **not excessive** *(max one mark available for this principle)* - Information should not be passed to a third party without permission - Information should be held securely … - Information should be backed up … - Organisation should have appropriate file management systems in place …	
	Notes Do not accept cost effective unless related to information handling Do not accept reference to paper based information handling If features of good information grouped within a sentence – max one mark *(information must be accurate, it must be relevant and it must be concise)*	

Section 2

1	(a)	Identify **2** examples of items that would be included in a person specification and justify the purpose of this document in the interview process.	4
		One mark for each suggestion (2) and one mark for each justification (2).	
		• Qualifications • Experience • Essential Skills • Desirable Skills • Personal effectiveness attributes Justifications: • Used to shortlist candidates for interview • Can be used to set up appropriate questions for use during the interview • Every candidate is measured against the same criteria • Helps to ensure you get the right person for the job	
		Notes Award only one mark for justification for matching of skills/qualities No mark for stating job title Must be interview process therefore do not accept recruitment points	

1	(b)	In addition to the interview, discuss the need for additional selection processes to ensure the best person is appointed.	6

If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. If no discussion, please mark "No D".

Tests *(no marks for just naming the type of test – must be outlined)*

- Employers often use selection tests to provide useful additional information about the candidate.
- Skills tests are used to ascertain existing skill levels and to find out if the candidate has the ability to do the job.
- Personality/Psychometric tests are used to explore a candidate's personality traits – obtain a profile of their personality. Only properly qualified staff should analyse personality tests to avoid misleading results.
- Aptitude tests are designed to measure an individual's level of verbal, numerical diagrammatic reasoning.
- Medical tests are used by some professions to ensure candidates are physically able to carry out the activities required in the post.
- A problem associated with testing is that tests can make people feel quite nervous and as a result candidates may not perform well.

Reference/employment checks

- These should confirm that the information given by the candidate in the application form is accurate.
- However, some references may be biased …

Assessment Centres

- Some employers use assessment centres to undertake the process of initial selection on their behalf. Assessment Centres narrow down the potential leet of candidates thus saving the organisation time and money

The Application Form/CV

- Information about the candidate is in standardised format.
- It enables candidates to give full information about themselves
- Organisation can match each completed application form with the person specification and job description to ascertain the candidate's suitability for the job.

Notes

Accept "justifications" of additional methods without naming.
Accept probationary period …
Accept negative points regarding interviews as part of discussion, award accordingly

1	(c)	Outline **4** benefits of good leadership.	4
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers*	
		- All team members will feel more motivated and gain more job satisfaction - Good relationship within the team making it more productive - Good use of delegation making employees more motivated - Improved communication leading to better decision making - Keeping the team on track so that they meet their targets - Everyone knows what the team has to do and also their individual roles - Good leadership encourages team members to support each other - Better career prospects because individual has developed due to good leadership - Good leadership can lead to a successful organisation	
		Notes	

1	(d)	Describe **3** ways in which an organisation can inform employees of changes to procedures.	6
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example. No marks for simply naming the method.	
		- By holding a staff meeting to allow employees to ask questions – allows many staff to gain information at the same time – not everyone has the confidence to ask questions – difficult to retain verbal information - By placing posters/notices *about the changes* throughout the organisation/in a place that is likely to be seen – these notices should be eye-catching – and be a constant reminder. - E-mail each member of staff their own copy *informing them of the changes* – this will allow staff to read the document in their own time – and can refer back to the document at a later stage – all staff can be emailed in one go as part of a group – can be sent instantly if urgent … - By placing the information on the intranet all staff will have access – this can be stored in a folder for this purpose – more than one person can access it at the same time - Training Sessions allow small group participation … - Video/Role Playing exemplifies and encourages good practice … - Memo/Letter/Report etc is a written method …	
		Notes	

2	(a)	Suggest and justify **2** methods of ensuring the security and confidentiality of electronic information.	4
		One mark for each suggestion (2) and one mark for each justification (2)	
		- Passwords – these passwords are individual to the user therefore no one else should know them. - Access levels – this means that there are various levels of access and only those people with the particular level of access can access the information - Use screen savers – so that information can be hidden from passers by or when employees are not at their desks – this will make sure that sensitive information cannot be seen by anyone just passing - Back-up procedures – to prevent accidental loss or damage - Software barrier or firewall – to protect your system from intrusion - Anti virus – to stop viruses entering your system and corrupting data - Restrict access to drives, folders or files – to prevent unauthorised access - Read only files – files cannot be edited/changed/altered - Automatic lock on files if password is entered inaccurately on a number of successive occasions – will restrict any success at hacking - Lock screen/automatic lock of screen - Encryption … - Lock the room that the computers are stored in …	
		Notes	

2	(b)	Describe **2** key responsibilities employers have with regards to Display Screen Equipment regulations.	4
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.	
		- Ensure that all staff receive the necessary training so that staff know how to use the equipment – to ensure that equipment is being safely handled - this would prevent RSI, back pain etc … - Ensure that safety equipment is provided for staff using a PC – eg wrist rests etc - Ensure equipment is maintained by carrying out regular checks - to prevent possible injury – and therefore no legal action - Provide eye tests on request … - Provide regular breaks/job rotation …	
		Notes Do not award a second mark for examples of the same key responsibility (training, safety equipment and maintenance)	

2	(c)	Outline the following IT terms. - One-to-many relationship - Conditional formatting - Master slide - Cross-referencing	4
		Not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers	
		One-to-many relationship – each record in one table is linked to many records in another table **Conditional formatting** – the appearance of a spreadsheet cell changes when certain criteria met **Master slide** – this is when you design your slide template for all slides in your presentation – each new slide inserted into the presentation will have the same layout **Cross-referencing** – this allows you to link different areas of a document – it allows you to jump quickly to another area of the document	
		Notes If the candidate gives a valid example to clarify the point, award the mark	

2	(d)	Discuss an organisation's decision to encourage a programme of staff development and lifelong learning.	8
		If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available.	
		- Need to keep employees skills up-to-date – so that the business can remain competitive - If employees are continually improving their skills then they feel valued. - A good programme of life-long learning can make employees more motivated. - Allows employees to gain promotion within the organisation - Can help to retain staff - Can create a good image for the company - Can help to increase productivity - Can help to improve profits - Competitive edge - Can be expensive - Staff may be reluctant to participate	
		Notes Accept both positive and negative points in the discussion	

3	(a)	Outline **3** features of an operational decision.	3
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
		• Structured decisions • Be repetitive in that they occur regularly • Have an impact on the organisation which is short-term • Have an immediate effect • Have a nearly guaranteed outcome/low risk • Short-term decisions • Deal with day to day operations • Aimed at controlling operations • Made by first line managers *(accept all staff)*	
		Notes Some candidates may have 2 scoring points within the one sentence – please award marks	

3	(b)	Discuss the information required to make effective decisions.	8
		If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. *If no discussion, please mark "No D". Marks may be awarded for development points.*	
		• Primary, secondary, internal, external, qualitative, quantitative, visual, oral and written information • Features of good information: accurate, up-to-date, cost effective, timely, relevant, sufficient/concise, appropriate and available.	
		Notes If examples are used effectively to explain the points above – award marks appropriately: *(staff appraisal … express views to improve the business)* Do not award individual marks for simply identifying features of good information.	

3	(c) i	Describe **3** time management techniques.	6

Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.

- At the end of each day compile a to-do list for the next day – giving each job a priority – trying to note how long you expect to spend on each job.
- Try to prioritise your tasks, develop your own code for prioritising tasks – if tasks prove too difficult, seek help.
- At the end of each day try to clear your desk, so that when you come in the next day you have a clear space to work in – this will allow other people access to any files you have been using.
- Try to handle papers or tasks only once – read them, take any actions needed, and file them – if you deal with things promptly there is less chance of a backlog of work building up.
- Try to avoid being interrupted – be firm with colleagues who just want to chat – learn to control time or protect time *(phone or face to face)*
- Try not to take on too much work – delegate more tasks – learn to say NO
- Try to make sure that meetings take no longer than necessary – set time limits
- Gannt chart …
- Action plan …
- Diaries (electronic or paper) …

Notes

Accept "interruptions" only once
Do not accept personal development plan
Accept good file management techniques

3	(c) ii	Justify the need for employees to develop good time management skills.	3
		One mark for each justification.	
		- Greater productivity - Better quality of work - Poor time management can be expensive to an organisation - To prevent/reduce customer dissatisfaction/complaints - Employee feels more in control of their workload - Employee likely to find working less stressful - More deadlines are met - Targets being achieved	
		Notes	

4	(a)	Outline **2** standard items in an agenda and justify their inclusion.	4

Item must be identified accurately (no mark) and outlined − more than naming, but not a detailed description. (2) Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers. One mark for each justification (2) be aware of consequentiality

- Apologies: people who cannot attend let the secretary know in advance – this allows the secretary to minute this – will allow the secretary to forward documents issued during the meeting to those absent – allows the chairperson to establish whether a quorum is present
- Minutes of Previous Meeting: record of previous discussion and actions agreed – gives those attending the meeting the opportunity to discuss the accuracy of the previous minutes and make amendments - signed by the chair.
- Matters Arising: revisits previous discussion and actions agreed - this item gives those attending the meeting the opportunity to find out about the up-to-date position since the last meeting
- Any Other Business: placed usually at the end of a meeting to allow discussion on topics not included in the agenda – this allows people to raise matters of general relevance but may not merit a great deal of discussion
- Date of Next Meeting: agreement is made for the date of the next meeting – this ensures that general agreement is reached about an appropriate date for the next meeting
- Correspondence …

Notes

Award one mark for general justification for standing items

4	(b)	Discuss the use of an e-diary in the planning and organisation of a meeting.	6
		If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. *If no discussion – please mark "No D".*	
		- E-diary can be used to check availability of people who will be attending the meeting – this can save time and effort phoning around. - Able to send automatic invites via email and get instant decline/accept. However this relies on the receiver regularly checking their mail system. - It can be used to set dates for recurring meetings – this is more efficient saving the admin assistant time. - It can be used to set reminders of the date of the meetings – this should lead to no one missing a meeting. Alarm facility – an alarm can sound to remind you that a meeting is pending - Set a reminder of the date documentation relating to the meeting has to be sent out – this means those attending the meeting will have the documentation in good time. - Memo sections – where reminder notes about meetings can be entered - To do lists – enables a number of tasks to be listed and prioritised. - Double-booking blocks – the system will alert the user to any appointments that when entered would result in a double booking.	
		Notes Do not accept an electronic diary will not allow double bookings Discussion needs to link to e-diary not just negatives of paper diary	

4	(c) i	Justify the use of Action Minutes	2
		One mark for each justification.	
		- The extra column allows identifying the action which has to be taken - Easier to keep track of tasks that are to be carried out - Easy to identify who is responsible for carrying out the task - - Provides for good accountability - The target date by which the task is to be completed is identified - Quicker to produce as they only detail key points	
		Notes	

4	(c) ii	Select and outline **2** of the meeting terms given below: • Abstain • Casting vote • Ballot • Unanimous	2
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
		Abstain • Refrain from voting • When a person neither votes for or against the motion • If a person eligible to vote decides not to vote he/she is said to abstain **Casting Vote** • A second or additional vote held by the chairperson and used when there is deadlock • If there are an equal number of votes for and against a motion then the chairperson will have an extra vote **Ballot** • This is a process of voting • Could be a secret ballot where votes will be placed in a sealed box and counted. • It might be a show of hands. **Unanimous** • This is where everyone votes the same way for or against the motion.	
		Notes	

4	(d)	Describe **3** features of an effective team	6
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.	
		- It is important all members have **a clear idea** of what they are there to achieve – they will have clear goals - Believe in **shared goals** – therefore will have a common direction - Team members **support one another** when working on projects together – leads to better decision making/more risks taken **Shared knowledge** … means there is better coverage of any absences - It is important to have people who have **different skills and personalities** – leads to better productivity - Strong/Open **communication** between team members - team members should be encouraged to express their opinions -suggesting ideas and being prepared to compromise - Team should have a **good leader** with effective leadership skills helping and supporting others with their tasks - The longer the team is together the more effective it is likely to be – a team will work as a **cohesive group**, pulling together - targets being met – more deadlines are met - An effective team is normally **small** – Belbin states 4-6 people	
		Notes Accept Belbin's team roles but max of one description (2 marks)	

5	(a)	Outline the benefits of an organisation's decision to change from a traditional cellular office layout to an open plan layout.	4
		Must be a benefit outlined ie more than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.	
		- Easy to supervise - Savings in space and equipment mean that there are cost savings - Flexibility of layout - Minimises movement of staff and documents - Communication between staff is easier - Morale of staff is improved by the pleasant, spacious appearance of the office – feel valued as working part of a team - A more sociable atmosphere is created because artificial barriers between people working at different levels in the organisation are removed – staff will feel less isolated	
		Notes	

5	(b)	Justify the need for monitoring staff absences.	4
		One mark for each justification.	
		- Sick leave costs companies a lot of money - Disruption of the flow of work - Dissatisfaction amongst other workers - Additional workload of staff who are at work - Need to make sure staff are not abusing the system *(accept a variety of examples to illustrate this point)* - Need to make sure staff are not absent from work due to work related issues eg stress – to identify problems early and to resolve issues - To reward employees with good/perfect attendance - Used as evidence in disciplinary procedures - Used for references - Used as part of staff appraisal procedure	
		Notes	

5	(c)	Discuss the use of the Internet as a source of business information.	8

If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. If no discussion, please mark "No D".

Advantages

- It saves time as you do not have to leave your desk to find the information
- It operates 24/7 so you do not need to wait until information sources are open to find out information
- There is a lot of information to choose from
- It can be accessed anywhere
- Finding information is quicker than using paper based sources
- Finding information is relatively inexpensive
- You can print/save the information, if needed

Disadvantages

- Do not always know the accuracy/reliability of the source of information
- Information is not always well organised and therefore it may take some time to find the correct information
- It is easy to get distracted
- You can suffer from equipment or software problems

- Blogs − where thoughts and opinions can be displayed
- Wikis – a collection of articles that users can add to and edit freely online
- Discussion Groups – allowing for posting of messages which can be read and answered. Usually for people interested in the same topic.
- Instant messaging – allows conversations in real time

Notes

Accept specific examples illustrating how the Internet is used as a <u>source</u> of information.

Be aware of repetitive statements eg the Internet can be used to find information regarding flights/accommodation/currency …

5	(d)	Describe **2** ways of facilitating remote meetings.	4
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.	
		- Audio conferencing is usually conducted by telephones on loud speakers – where a group of people sit around a telephone, communicating with other groups of people in other locations. - Video conferencing usually consists of a large television/plasma screen, a computer network and video conferencing software – the link allows people in different parts of the country to meet and discuss business without having the problems of travel and accommodation – this saves time and money - Video Phones enables anyone to be linked to another phone or a meeting with visual images – it is likely to be for a short time only – the field of vision is likely to be small – not usually used for group to group but rather for one to meet with many. - Internet and network meetings – instant messaging and the use of web cams and chat rooms/discussion groups has resulted in communication to be made almost instantaneously.	
		Notes	

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]