2012 Administration

Higher - Paper 1

Finalised Marking Instructions

ANNOTATION

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

① 1

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

Put the total for the whole question in the second
column

2

0 = outline ⎫
A = additional comment ⎬ Describe
⎭

18/20

R = no mark awarded for repetition
J= mark awarded for justification
No D = no discussion

SECTION ONE

1	Outline flexible working practices that an organisation could offer.	4
	More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
	Flexi-time – whereby employees can vary their start and finish times Job share – 2 employees share one full-time job Teleworking – where employees can work away from the office using telecommunications to keep in touch with the office Hot-desking - is an arrangement whereby workers, who work outwith the office, do not have their own desks but work space can be booked according to their needs Career Break: is an extended period of leave from work – the intention is that the employee will return to work at the end of the agreed period – eg a year taken to pursue a further qualification Condensed working hours – an arrangement whereby full-time hours are packed into 4 days a week by working longer hours on these days. Homeworking – when an employee spends some or all of their working week working at home. Part-time Shift work Temporary Fixed term Case loading Touch down areas Outsourcing Non-paid leave	

2	Describe the impact of flexible working on an organisation.	4

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

If flexible working practice is named then do not award a mark for a description of the working practice

Part-time: gives the organisation more opportunity to cover busy times – cheaper to employ part-time workers

Flexitime: extra hours worked can be banked and taken as holidays at a later date – gives the organisation flexibility at times of increased workload

Job Share: 2 people bring two sets of skills and experience to the job – improvements in productivity because people working reduced hours tend to be fresh, energetic and creative.

Hot-desking: less space required resulting in cost savings - employees depersonalise their desks so that they can be used by anyone – the growth of hot-desking is due to the increased cost of providing permanent office space.

Career Break: the intention is that the employee will return to work at the end of the agreed period – eg a year taken to pursue a further qualification - improvements in productivity because people returning to work tend to be fresh, energetic and creative – a good way to retain staff.

Employers can recruit and retain quality staff /this has major cost-savings for the organisation.

Co-ordination and control of staff is difficult for managers so quality of work and service provided to customers may vary/increased stress for managers

Staff working remotely may have communication problems eg where the internet connection is lost/deadlines might be missed

Accept:
Homeworking…….
Shift work
Temporary
Fixed term
Case loading
Touch down areas
Outsourcing
Non-paid leave

Do not accept repetition of points

3	Discuss advantages and disadvantages of using an agency in the recruitment and selection process.	6
	If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. Must be at least one advantage and one disadvantage	
	Advantages Likely to attract a wider range of applicants – leading to a greater chance of getting the best person for the post. An agency is likely to be more effective due to having specialist knowledge and experience - psychometric testing Expertise may not exist in-house Agencies tend to be more efficient in that vacancies can be filled more quickly. Human Resource departments can focus on other activities such as training and staff welfare. Can downsize HRM department and make staff savings Focus on core activities The agency will have a bank of potential candidates who they have previously used **Disadvantage** Using an Agency can be more expensive/may have to pay even if a suitable applicant is not found Lack of internal knowledge of the organisation may lead to inappropriate appointments being made Selection process can be subjective Process may be impersonal and therefor the applicants will not have a feel for the organisation which may be daunting for them prior to starting work.	
	Time – this can be accepted as an advantage or a disadvantage but needs to be explained.	

4	Justify the use of database software to store employee records.	3
	One mark for each justification – gives a good reason for	

More than one user can access data at the same time.

Data is more secure with the use of passwords and access rights

Data validation rules can ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data

Data can be found using queries/*searches*/filters

Sorting of data is easier/quicker than sorting manually

Able to edit the electronic database which ensures that staff always have access to the most up-to-date information whereas paper copies can become messy and difficult to read

Routine calculations can be made in query

Use of forms to allow data entry

Information can be in different tables / limiting access to some tables

Reports can be printed/ presentation is improved

Better quality decisions can be made as data always accurate/up-to-date

can expand the database but not a paper based system

Space – saving on space,

Do not accept:
Sorting is easier/Sorting is faster

5	Compare in-house and external training	3
	One mark is allocated for each complete statement of comparison.	
	Both result in improved staff knowledge/skills Both can lead to increased morale/motivation Both result in a temporary drop in productivity In-house training refers to training which takes place in the workplace whereas external training takes place in a training centre or college. In-house training is usually carried out by a member of staff whereas external is delivered by specialist trainers Atmosphere at in-house training can be relaxed and friendly whereas external training is more formal In-house training will be cost-effective whereas external training will be expensive (cost of course, travel, accommodation) In-house training will be tailored to the needs of the company/employee whereas the external course may be too general	
	If 2 different points made within the one comparison (whereas) then use professional judgement and award 1 mark	

SECTION 2

1	(a)	Outline ways in which an employee's targets can be monitored	4
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
		Line manager checks at regular intervals that work is progressing as expected Sample checks when some but not all tasks will be examined An appraisal system can be used to meet with employee to discuss progress towards target Set regular meetings and ask for updates from staff Buddy systems when an employee is paired with someone with more experience for help and advice Gantt chart compares planned and actual progress and identifies if set milestones have been achieved Targets can be monitored through formal Personal Development Plan review meetings where an employee and their line manager meet to discuss progress	
		Mentor Accept self-checking – action plans, to-do-lists,	

1	(b)	Describe how developments in ICT have had an impact on workflow.	6
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.	
		Information is stored centrally using networks – and is then available to the whole organisation – this saves time as information is not duplicated. Software applications enable effective and efficient processing of information – this can lead to increased productivity – easy to access vast amounts of information Information can be transmitted quickly using email – this can help with speedy decision making. The use of templates ensures that information is presented in a standardised form – helps other users to access and understand the information Reduced need for movement of people - so less likelihood of timewasting (timestealer) Reduced need to accommodate people in specific areas – staff can work where best suited to their needs which will improve productivity There is a need to constantly up-grade equipment and software – staff will have to undergo continual training Staff might be under pressure – productivity decreases	

Ensure that answers infer to workflow – do not accept financial costs

Accept general answers and ones which mention a specific piece of ICT

A piece of ICT can be used more than once

Watch for repetition of the advantage/impact, eg *saves time*

1	(c)	One potential disadvantage of a network is that viruses can spread very quickly. Discuss the consequences and implications of an organisation failing to protect their network.	8

If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available.

Time and money spent to recover the data - can have an impact on staff morale

Loss of sensitive data – could result in company losing its competitive edge and losing customers

Data could be accessed by unauthorised personnel – breaching Data Protection Act and could result in a fine – negative publicity

Network failure – leading to loss of productivity/loss of sales/loss of profits

Allowing hackers to access their files – leading to details being stolen

Data corrupted and the files could contain errors – results in poor or flawed decision making

Virus cannot be a consequence but can be developed

1	(d)	Justify the need for the Senior Administrative Assistant to have excellent IT skills.	2
		One mark for each justification.	
		In order to be able to troubleshoot problems that other staff have In order to train others To be able to coordinate/monitor the work of others In order to suggest the best way to present particular information Level of work required by senior managers will be more sophisticated/complex	

Needs to be some inference of seniority and not just being able to use ICT

2	(a)	Outline the following meeting terms: • Point of order • Amendment • Adjournment • Verbatim	4
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
		Point of Order -This is a query regarding procedures or the way the meeting is conducted. **Amendment -** A change to a proposed motion/proposal **Adjournment -**This is when a meeting has to be stopped because it has run out of time or more information is required. (To be resumed at a late date) **Verbatim -**This is a 'word for word' account of the meeting	

Amendment – do not accept resolution
Adjournment – do not accept the normal end of the meeting

2	(b)	Discuss the role of both the secretary and the chair in planning and organising a meeting	8
		If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. *Can be one and 7 points for either the chair or the secretary.*	
		The Chairperson will decide a suitable date and time for a meeting – this is normally agreed at the previous meeting when all members are present. The Chairperson is responsible for compiling the Agenda items Liaise with the secretary on the preparation of the draft minutes The Secretary will be responsible for booking the accommodation – arranging any necessary equipment – arranging catering The Secretary will also be responsible for preparing and distributing the Agenda The Secretary will also prepare the Chairperson's Agenda The Secretary will also prepare the minutes of previous meeting Make a note of any apologies received On the day of the meeting the Secretary will inform reception where the meeting is being held and give the names of those expected to attend Secretary will: Check the room is ready Check that refreshments are in place Check that equipment is in place Prepare the Attendance Register	

Do not award marks to any tasks carried out during the meeting
Do not accept chair signing the previous minutes

2	(c)	Justify the expense of training Administrative Assistants in customer care.	2
		One mark for each justification	
		Good training in customer care will allow the organisation to benefit from: Increased sales Fewer customer complaints A good reputation Increased customer loyalty Achieving customer satisfaction Increased competitiveness The Administrative Assistant is often the first point of contact so should create a positive impression Allows the Administrative Assistant to deal with complaints in line with company policy`	
Accept negative points			

2	(d)	Describe ergonomic features that would ensure a good working environment.	6
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.	
		Premises and décor – Dark colours can be demotivating – different colours can affect individuals' needs – eg blue, lemon and green are seen as restful Lighting/Heating – should be comfortable for the majority of workers - comply with legal requirements Noise – too much noise can add to stress levels – keep noisy machinery away from where people are working Layout – Open plan layout aids communication – cellular can aid privacy Furniture – design has to be suitable for task – can be adjusted for personal needs – condition of furniture Equipment – design/shape of keyboard and mouse – poorly designed items can cause health issues Overcrowding – people or items – can cause stress, lead to anxiety	
Watch for repetitive statements regarding "sore …"			

3	(a)	Outline **4** rights of the individual as outlined in the Data Protection Act.	4
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
		Individuals can find out what is held on computer about them Individuals can ask a data controller not to process their information Individuals can ask that their data is not used for direct marketing Individuals can claim compensation for damage or distress if the Act is breached Individuals have the right to request that inaccurate data be corrected or deleted Individuals expect their data to be held securely Individuals expect that the information is accurate and up-to-date	

3	(b)	Describe **3** methods of researching customer satisfaction levels	6
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example. Method must be named but no mark awarded for the name.	
		Written survey: such as a pre-printed form or questionnaire with a series of questions – which is posted out to the customer with a reply-paid envelope – permanent record created Telephone Survey: telephoning the customer and asking a series of pre-set questions – have become more popular with the increase in call centres – response rates are poor Online Survey – a questionnaire containing a series of questions which is completed online – people find this quick and simple to use – sometimes people don't always read the questions properly Comment Cards – Cards containing pre-set questions with boxes to tick -cards are placed in suggestion boxes – some people don't take it seriously and make inappropriate comments Interview/Informal discussion – customers are interviewed on a one-to-one basis/face to face – this can be time-consuming – expensive process Customer focus group – a meeting of a representative sample of customers – can provide in-depth discussion – feedback is immediate – can be expensive to run	
The outline should be a description of the method and the additional comment can be advantage/disadvantage			

3	(c)	Discuss ways in which an organisation can deal with an employee who breaches the conditions of their employment.	8
		If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available.	
		Firstly the employee will receive a verbal warning – this should be noted in their record.	
		Should their conduct not improve then they would receive a written warning	
		Following this any further recurrence will result in a final written warning	
		Some serious breaches may merit instant dismissal	
		Some breaches may be of a criminal nature in which case the employee may be prosecuted.	
		Other consequences could be suspension which will result in being banned from the workplace for a period of time.	
		A fine could be levied - A fine could result in financial hardship	
		Member of staff might be demoted - which will also result in reduced pay and loss of status	

Do not award just naming/identifying – there should be some additional comment on the step.
Do not need to define the step

Put "ID" beside the step to help clarify – this is not worth a mark

3	(d)	Justify the need for both qualitative and quantitative information.	2
		One mark for each justification.	
		The 2 different types of information compliment one another Gives a more overall/meaningful view of the subject being researched Both are extremely valuable to provide the whole picture There is a need for both (they provide 2 different types of information, numerical and opinions)	

Accept a justification for each type of information eg:

Quantitative information is usually concerned with figures and numbers this is useful <mark>as it allows raw comparisons to be made</mark>

Qualitative information is concerned with opinions and judgements and <mark>is essential to find out customers think about products/service</mark> – to help managers make decisions

4	(a)	Integrity of data is about keeping data secure from human error or malicious intent. Outline 3 ways of ensuring data integrity.	3
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
		Using anti-virus software to prevent the threat and spread of viruses Train staff on the proper practice with regard to transferring and downloading data Use read only files so that data cannot be changed Data validation rules in database software can be used to prevent human error Use of passwords to check the identity of the person logging on Restricting access to those people who are authorised to use the data Back-up of files taken so that correct information is available Computer set to lock if not used for a set period of time	

Do not accept reference to paper-based information

4	(b)	Justify the decision to introduce an e-commerce facility.	3
		One mark for each justification	
		Organisation Available 24/7 so increases volume of traffic Global customer base for your products – worldwide market Increased sales revenue Provides opportunity to decrease overheads for staff and rent Market research and customer profiling becomes very straightforward Security/staffing issues in dealing with cash **Individual** Have access to a worldwide base of suppliers Buy when you are most relaxed Buy when you want – 24/7 Buy without having to travel Having the goods delivered	

Accept reference to points that could relate to websites and e-commerce

On-line offers or cheaper prices/discount - from either individual or the organisation

Accept increased profit

4	(c)	Describe **3** types of decisions taken by different levels of management.	6
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.	
		Strategic Decisions Decisions taken by Senior Managers – will affect the organisation in the long term – will have a high risk factor – can take a long time to implement – costly to correct – decisions relate to the organisation's strategic objectives – unstructured and complex decisions – Example of a strategic decision will be whether to change the structure of the organisation Tactical Decisions Decisions are taken by middle managers – these decisions impact the organisation over a period of weeks – they have a medium-risk factor – Example of a tactical decision will be………. Operational Decisions Decisions taken by junior management – they are day-to-day decisions – they have an immediate effect – they have a low-risk factor – Example of an operational decision will be……	
	Needs to be named		

4	(d)	Discuss the support systems which may be provided by Human Resources to enhance staff welfare.	8

| | | *If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available.* |

Counselling

Whereby employees can speak in confidence to a counsellor about issues such as stress or health and wellbeing. Use of external agencies.

Grievance procedures

Employees can formally raise concerns regarding issues such as unfair treatment at work. HR can provide advice on the process.

Disciplinary procedures

Anyone who has been disciplined may be offered advice and support to ensure that the matter is resolved

Work-life balance initiatives

Family friendly policies are used to encourage a better work-life balance – eg flexible working packages ranging from condensed working hours to career breaks

Absence management

Employees returning to work after a long-term absence will receive support in the form of a phased return. Return to work interview, phased return

Other services

These include health club membership, cinema passes and discounts at various outlets – aimed at improving morale and reducing turnover. Health promotion initiatives.

Health and Safety

Employers and employees have responsibilities to ensure that health and safety regulations are complied with.

Buddy systems

The answer should not be solely a description of the measure but should show how it enhances welfare

Training – accept if tied to stress, emotional issues

5	(a)	Outline the qualities required of an Administrative Assistant when dealing with external customers.	4
		More than naming, but not a detailed description. *Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.*	
		Good communication skills, both oral and written Have the ability to express themselves clearly Good interpersonal skills/approachability Being enthusiastic, friendly, polite and helpful to ensure that the customer feels valued Knowledge of systems and procedures Have the ability to demonstrate confidence Be able to evaluate problems Be able to reach decisions Be able to prioritise Being organised so that things can be dealt with promptly Appropriate behaviour Honesty and trust	

5	(b)	Describe the areas that might be covered by Customer Service Strategy.	6
		Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.	
		Customer care strategy – statement about the standards that a customer can expect from an organisation – a good strategy can improve an organisation's reputation and – lead to an increase in sales Customer service level agreement – states what, how and when the organisation intends to deliver – states what happens if the organisation fails to deliver – the services provided and those not provided – the standard of service – responsibilities of both parties Complaints procedures – outlining how customers can complain – the time limits for acknowledging a complaint – time limits for communicating outcomes to the customer Loyalty scheme – when a customer buys goods and services they gain points on their card – these points can be put towards the purchase of more goods and services – organisations use these cards to gather very valuable information on the spending habits of their customers - Eg Tesco Methods of evaluating – systems for researching customer satisfaction, eg focus groups, comment cards, etc	

Service level agreements – may be mentioned several times eg Returns policy, waiting times,

5	(c)	Discuss the advantages and disadvantages to an individual of working as part of a team.	8

If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available.
Can be one and 7 of either

Advantages

More likely to take risks, as these are shared

Increased motivation and morale

Being able to share knowledge and increase skills by learning from others

There is a sense of being valued and belonging

Greater job satisfaction

Individual team members will benefit in terms of support they receive from other team members

Team members could have a greater chance of promotion as a result of gaining a greater range of skills from working within a team

Disadvantages

If they are not comfortable within the team, individuals could suffer from stress

Conflict can result from personality clashes within the team

Strong personalities may not allow other individuals to flourish

5	(d)	Justify the use of remote meetings.	2
		One mark for each justification	
		Money is saved because staff are not required to travel Time is saved as a result of staff being able to remain in their usual working environment Meeting can be recorded and reviewed at a later date Allows face-to-face communication to take place more frequently with remote locations Allows interaction between participants who are in different locations`	

CS2	**Describe** the impact of flexible working practices on the organisation	4

The staff would feel more motivated[o]. With higher motivated staff work will be more productive.[a] Instead of the organisation recruiting and training new staff they can keep current employees[o] that need to care for family as well as their job. It would be difficult to train all flexible staff.[o]

1b	Describe how developments in ICT have had an impact on workflow.	6

Video-conferencing is where videoing equipment must be provided to set up a video call. This is through the use of a webcam where video calls can be made in a meeting with an employee who is outside of the country or too far away to travel to attend the meeting[o]. This helps to save a lot of time travelling and travel costs of employees have far to travel to attend meetings[a]. This means that those that cannot be in the meeting can join in with discussion without missing important information.[a] 2/2

Emails allow fast and easy communication between employees. Attachments of documents can be sent with an email which saves a lot of paper documents being printed and saves printing costs[o]. Emails can be sent in groups which saves a lot of time sending individual emails[a]. They can be sent out worldwide and to specific people so you know exactly who has received and read your email. 2/2

Ediaries have reminders in advance of the meeting so that employees have time to look over the topics going to be discussed or prepare any documents that need to be provided[o]. ~~1/2~~

Ediaries are useful as they allow and administration assistant to look through employees diaries and search for a free date and time they have for meetings[o]. This is a lot quicker and easier to access as paper documents do not have to be looked through[a]. 2/2

6/6