

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/01

Core Paper

General Comments

There was a good entry for this first examination session of the new Advanced Level qualification. All new courses have resource and curriculum planning implications for Centres and it is hoped that the following comments will be of practical use to the individual members of staff delivering the Paper 1 Core content. The examination questions will continue to be based around pieces of stimulus material, derived mainly from travel and tourism industry sources, which will have been selected on the basis of their ability to illustrate key aspects of the syllabus content. The examination was thus typical of what Centres can expect in future sessions.

It is important that candidates understand and appreciate the development of travel and tourism at a variety of scales. This means that they should be aware of developments within their immediate local area as well as within their country as a whole. Furthermore, an international perspective is also required. It should be remembered that candidates will obtain credit for providing specific details about facilities and locations that are appropriate to the particular question. However, there were far too many instances of candidates ignoring the precise wording of individual questions and specific comment will be made in the sections that follow.

Many candidates appeared to struggle with the actual requirements of particular questions. Centres are strongly advised to make the following '**Key Word**' definitions part of the examination preparation sessions for this paper.

Key Word(s)	Meaning/expectation
Identify	Simply name, state or list.
Describe	State the characteristic features of something.
Explain	Make the meaning of something clear by providing appropriate valid details.
Outline	Set out the main characteristics describing essentials only
Discuss (including the ability to analyse)	Provide evidence or opinions about something arriving at a balanced conclusion. The candidate is being asked to consider an issue and is expected to present arguments and evidence to support particular points of view and to show where they stand in relation to topic. The candidate is expected to look at different interpretations or approaches to the issue.
Assess (including the ability to evaluate)	To judge from available evidence and arrive at a reasoned conclusion. The candidate is expected to present a number of factors or issues and weigh up or appraise their relative significance or importance.
Compare and contrast	Point out similarities and differences and discuss the variations identified.
Justify	Present a reasoned case to show that an idea or statement is true.

Candidates who are unable to respond in an appropriate way to these command verbs will always have difficulty in obtaining the higher marks for questions that are assessed my means of 'Levels of Response'. There was some evidence that candidates were making an effort to end their answers to the last part of each of the four questions with some form of conclusion. This is to be encouraged because a *valid* conclusion, based on the previous points made or considered, is clear evidence of evaluation taking place and will thus usually warrant a score in Level 3 (7-9 marks).

The vast majority of candidates were able to answer all four questions within the time available.

Comments on the Individual Questions

Comments on candidate responses

Question 1

- (a) (i) The vast majority of candidates were able to correctly interpret the stimulus material and identify two ways in which the Habtoor Grand Resort and Spa meets the needs of families with young children. The supporting explanations were usually fully appropriate.
- (ii) Most candidates correctly identified two ways in which the resort meets the needs of business travellers but valid reasoning was not always offered. Thus, for example, being only 30 minutes from the airport was not judged to be convenient or accessible in terms of location.
- (b) There were some very good answers to this question and the majority of candidates were aware of profitability, shareholder expectations and the importance of market share.
- (c) Some candidates did not understand the question and simply copied material from the stimulus material about the Habtoor Grand's facilities. Better answers pointed out that Tourist Board Inspectors visited properties, assessed the facilities currently on offer and awarded a grading on a 1-5 benchmarked scale. There were some excellent answers and several candidates pointed out that a grading system can be used for both serviced and non-serviced accommodation.
- (d) There were some poor answers to this question and it appears that a significant minority of candidates do not know an example a purpose-built visitor attraction, let alone have made a study of its visitor appeal. Far too many individuals thought that the Burj Al Arab was built as a visitor attraction rather than as a flagship hotel for Dubai. Even more alarming was the inability of candidates to pinpoint the visitor appeal of precise features of their chosen example. Candidates frequently neglected to examine how the chosen attraction offered a range of facilities to meet a variety of visitor needs and very few offered evaluative comment to indicate their relative significance. To help illustrate what is expected from candidates at this level, the following account (less than 200 words) would have warranted a Level 3 mark:

Visitor attractions such as the Louvre in Paris get visits from people (individuals and groups) on educational trips, holiday excursions, attending an event and other specialised activities. Made up of eight departments, the Louvre now displays 35,000 works in 60,000 square meters of exhibition space. The Louvre has a wide range of aids and amenities to ensure any given visit is fruitful, from floor plans, audio guides, and program listings to cafés, media centres, and a bookstore. The Louvre's libraries and multimedia centres enable visitors to learn about the collections in greater depth. In addition to these, the museum's various curatorial departments have research centres and libraries that contain a wealth of material for the use of researchers, students, and other interested parties. The Musée du Louvre and the Musée Delacroix can provide a prestigious setting for private receptions, gala evenings, prize-giving ceremonies, product launches, concerts, film premieres with dinners, cocktails, and breakfasts. Open to all since 1793, the Louvre has embodied the concept of a truly "universal" institution. Universal in the scope of its collections, it is also universal in its appeal to some 6 million business and leisure visitors every year.

Question 2

- (a) The Fig. 2 image showed a visitor information centre (this is *not* a standard TIC) and most candidates were able to identify and explain two services appropriate to the sporting venue context. Site information, directions, timings and lost and found were frequently quoted ideas but they were not always explained in terms of their visitor use.
- (b) (i) This was very well understood by the vast majority of candidates.
- (b) (ii) The importance of teamwork was similarly well known and appreciated.
- (c) The concept of the mystery shopper was not understood by some candidates but the majority were able to suggest two ways in which such an exercise might help monitor the venue's operation. However, full reasoning was not always provided thus limiting the amount of credit that could be awarded.

- (d) Many candidates were unaware of what is usually provided for guests enjoying corporate hospitality at a sporting venue. Ideas about a private box/reserved seating, food & beverage package, car park access, complimentary programme etc. were few and far between. This is a significant topic as business tourism is growing at a faster rate than leisure tourism and, perhaps more significantly, the average delegate spends some 2.5 times more than the average holiday visitor. It is to be expected that many destinations will try and maximise their business tourism receipts.
- (e) A large number of candidates had difficulty with this question. Centres are directed to pages 12 and 13 of the syllabus, which state:

Candidates should investigate the delivery of customer service in at least one travel and tourism organisation. Candidates may select any appropriate example such as a local attraction, airport or hotel. Candidates must explain how quality service is delivered by three different staff roles within one chosen outlet with which they are familiar.

Candidates will be expected to explain and justify three types of customer service procedures with which they are familiar.

Very simply, most candidates could not describe particular *procedures* very well. Many could not identify a procedure let alone attempt a justification. To help illustrate what is expected from candidates at this level, the following account would have warranted a Level 3 mark:

In most hotels there are housekeeping procedures to follow. Hygiene is important, as are safe working methods when using cleaning materials, equipment, and when lifting or moving. Cleaning and servicing tasks vary according to whether the room has been vacated, or the guests are staying another night. At regular intervals, special cleaning tasks have to be done, such as shampooing furniture and carpets, or damp dusting high surfaces.

High standards of cleanliness are much valued by guests. A methodical approach is essential and helps avoid spreading bacteria from dirty surfaces to those just cleaned. This is why the staff often work in teams, so that one person strips the beds, another cleans the bathrooms and beds are made together. For example, it may take an hour or longer to service a luxury suite, with a sunken Jacuzzi, while standard rooms take less time. When finished, the room must look exactly right and welcoming to the guest: everything in place, supplies of soap, drink making items replenished, the mini-bar restocked and so forth. Self-checking may operate, which means individuals are responsible for checking their own rooms (subject to spot checks by the floor or head housekeeper). This is an efficient use of resources. In many ways, the major concern is security: for the attendant, the guests, the property of guests and the hotel. Room attendants have a key or key card to let them into all the guest rooms in their area, and they are expected to keep this with them at all times to prevent loss or fraudulent use.

Question 3

- (a) Usually well done although a large minority of candidates thought Canada was in Europe.
- (b) Correctly identified by all.
- (c) Many answers lacked focus and the health/security idea was not related to visitor need/expectation thus reducing the amount of credit that could be awarded.
- (d) Many candidates failed to answer the question and could not itemise the appeal of staying at an 'all-inclusive' resort apart from the convenience of the one-off payment. For example, room quality, resort facilities, choice of food & beverages could all have been illustrated from a known example to show how they attract and appeal to different types of guest.
- (e) This was well understood and socio-economic impacts were frequently related to the Cuban context. However, there was little evaluation and thus progression into Level 3 was rather limited.

Question 4

- (a) (i, ii & iii) All three terms clearly understood by virtually all candidates.
- (b) (i, ii & iii) All three statistics were readily identified by the vast majority of candidates.
- (c) There were many good suggestions and credit was awarded to a range of ideas including seasonality, special events, exchange rates, natural disasters, terrorism and changes in taste. However, the degree of explanation offered was rather variable.
- (d) Many candidates understand the Butler Model but found difficulty in answering this question. Essentially, Hawaii's visitors are reducing and this suggests that the destination is starting to stagnate. Candidates did not always quote values from Fig. 4 and thus lost the opportunity to argue where they thought Hawaii should be placed using evidence to support their view.
- (e) The vast majority of candidates did not answer the question properly and too much attention was given to changes in particular destinations rather than to an evaluation of the *threats* to international travel. This was surprising because valid ideas had sometimes been suggested when answering part (c).

The WTO give emphasis to the following threats:

- Terrorism
- Natural disasters
- Health scares
- Oil price rises
- Economic and political uncertainties.

However, candidates could validly consider any combination of the following as well:

- Rising costs of accommodation, transport and destination costs
- Over-commercialisation
- Crime & social problems
- Negative media coverage
- Negative tourism management
- Water, air & noise hazards

Some candidates might have recognised that the above sets of factors operate at different geographical scales, the former being global while the latter are mainly national/regional. However, regardless of anything else, candidates should have emphasised how each of their chosen threats would influence the numbers of international travellers moving between destinations. They could then have come to a conclusion that some threats were more significant than others.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/02

Planning and Managing a Tourism Event

Many Centres submitted portfolios for the June session on time and this very much helped with the smooth running of the moderation process.

Where a small number of Centres were scaled downwards this was generally applied because a Centre had marked too leniently across the bands and in some instances key evidence was missing.

It was pleasing to see candidate work submitted by Centres that had clearly followed the guidance notes. These portfolios were generally well structured and presented in a clear and logical format. It was good to see the range of events organised and the enthusiasm demonstrated by candidates.

It should be noted that it is not necessary for candidates to submit work in expensive bindings.

Some Centres omitted the clear documentation from their packs – MS1 should be completed both by the underlining of the correct marks and writing the corresponding number.

A01 – Some candidates presented clear and logical plans with realistic itineraries and timescales. On occasions, there were large omissions from the plans along with poor organisational skills.

A02 – Candidates made a good attempt to show how they contributed to the event both in terms of planning and execution. It should be noted that the moderator will not be in a position to watch DVDs and assessors should include witness statements for verification of tasks completed.

A03 – Some candidates failed to consider at least two feasibility studies. In some cases there was little evidence of risk assessments or contingency plans put forward and some candidates did not use a SWOT analysis to aid their reasoning.

A04 – Generally candidates evaluated their event well. There were occasions where candidates simply produced a running commentary of what they had done rather than actually evaluate and draw conclusions from the results of the customer feedback and offer suitable options/recommendations for improvements. It should be noted that all candidates should include at least one detailed witness statement from an independent observer or participant. This will provide evidence of customer service skills during event planning and implementation. This will help the candidate to further evaluate their performance.

Some assessors failed to annotate candidate work. Centres should ensure that they clearly annotate where the candidate has progressed through the mark bands, this will aid with both marking and moderating.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/03

International Business and Leisure Travel Services

General comments

It was pleasing to see entries from a range of International Centres for the first examination session for this newly launched qualification. Despite this being a relatively small cohort of entries, the performance of candidates was spread across the ability range. On the whole, candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of this key vocational area and had been adequately prepared for the demands of the examination paper.

The examination was divided into 4 questions, each worth 25 marks. Each sub-set of questions within the four main questions is based upon vocationally specific stimulus material. Question 1 used the new International airport at Bangkok as a focus. **Question 2** examined tourism issues relating to coach travel whilst the Business Tourism product portfolio of a hotel in Spain formed the basis for **Question 3**. The ferry service between the North and South Islands of New Zealand tested candidates' knowledge and understanding in **Question 4**.

There was good evidence to show that many candidates were able to transfer knowledge acquired in the classroom and use it in an applied manner through this approach using unseen stimulus material. The majority of candidates, who sat this examination, appeared to have sufficient time in which to answer all of the questions. It was also pleasing to note that the majority of candidates were able to use the space provided in the question paper for their answers, without needing to continue on additional pages. Certainly the intention is that the space allowed should act as a guide to candidates as to the expected length of response.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The stimulus for this set of questions centred upon the Suvarnabhumi airport in Bangkok, including a picture of its e-check-in facilities.

- (a) (i) Candidates were asked to identify two airport facilities targeted at business travellers. The majority of candidates scored both marks here.
- (ii) As in the previous question, candidates were confident in providing examples of the airport facilities that leisure travellers would use.
- (b) This question required candidates to explain the reasons why airports provide e-check-in facilities. Most responses correctly identified the reasons from the perspective of customer satisfaction – reducing queues at the check-in counters etc., but only the better performing candidates were able to consider the benefits to the airport itself in terms of efficiency of service provision and reduced risk of ticket fraud.
- (c) This question required candidates to explain the advantages of scheduled flights with chartered flights for the customer. Many responses provided a comparison of the features of each type of flight, without specifically considering the advantages of one type over the other.
- (d) This Level of Response question was attempted well by the majority of candidates. The concept of passenger carrying capacity was generally well understood and although most responses lacked the depth of evaluative language that this extended answer question should trigger, vocational understanding was conveyed at an acceptable level.

Question 2

The series of questions within this sub-set were based around stimulus material on the Global Passenger Network – an organisation regulating the quality of worldwide coach travel provision.

- (a) (i) Candidates encountered no difficulty in identifying members of the organisation from the text to score maximum marks for this question.
- (ii) Similarly, most candidates recognised the main functions of the organisation to gain accreditation in this question.
- (b) There was some good vocational understanding demonstrated by the better performing candidates for this question. The concept of industry standards is quite difficult to explain, but many candidates offered some explanation linked to consumer protection to score some of the available marks.
- (c) (i) Identification of the key components of a coach holiday provided the majority of candidates with three marks.
- (ii) Ancillary services were generally correctly identified and better performing candidates were able to offer valid reasons for coach travel providers offering such services.
- (d) This extended answer question required candidates to assess factors that have prompted product development for the grey market. Weaker candidates struggled to understand the term 'grey market' and thus did not score well in this question. Better performing candidates demonstrated good vocational understanding and offered valid reasons such as increased leisure time and an ageing population as the main contributing factors for such a market segment.

Question 3

This question used an extract from a hotel's e-brochure as its stimulus.

- (a) (i) All candidates were able to correctly identify two features of the business incentive package from the stimulus.
- (ii) Few candidates were able to explain why a hotel offers single occupancy of double rooms (i.e. at a supplement – a money generating scheme).
- (b) Most candidates scored highly in this question which required a close examination of the stimulus material to explain the appeal of the hotel to customers. Responses here were generally vocationally relevant.
- (c) Responses to this question on reasons why hotels develop specific business packages were generally disappointing. Many candidates missed the point about business tourism being one of the industry's biggest growth areas and failed to consider the diversification aspect of a provider's product portfolio, which were anticipated responses.
- (d) This Level of Response question tested candidates' understanding of the benefits of using specialist tour operator services within a business tourism context. The majority of candidates made a good attempt to answer this question, using appropriate vocational exemplification.

Question 4

This question used information about the Interislander Ferry Service in New Zealand as its stimulus.

- (a) (i) Candidates were generally able to state two valid features of a ferry service from their knowledge.
- (ii) All candidates correctly identified the main ports serving this ferry service from the stimulus material.
- (b) Candidates scored well in explaining the appeal of the ferry service to families, accessing details from the stimulus material.

- (c)** Candidates clearly understood the differences in booking methods that customers could use. However, it was only the better performing candidates who used comparative language and accessed the Level 2 marks for their responses.
- (d)** This last question on the paper required candidates evaluate having a range of transport methods available for tourists' use as part of the total tourism product for island destinations. This question successfully differentiated the weak candidates from the better performing ones. At the bottom end, candidates tended to list potential transport options available but were unable to take this further. At the top end, Level 3 was awarded for those responses which offered evaluative comments as to why transport plays such an important role in the overall tourism experience of long haul visitors to destinations such as New Zealand.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/04
Specialised Tourism

General comments

This was the first paper in this series. There were two case studies for candidates to read, **Question one** covered an article on Aboriginal tourism, and **Question two** was based on mountain biking holidays along the Inca Trail, Peru. Candidates were provided with an answer booklet for responses. There appeared to be no problems of timing issues for candidates as all answers were completed in the 1.5 hr duration. Generally, the standard of entry was very pleasing, it was clear that many Centres had studied relevant case studies of eco, adventure and cultural tourism as candidates gave interesting and appropriate examples when requested. It should be noted, that it is not necessary for candidates to repeat the question at the start of their answer, as this will severely limit the space for the written response. Candidates should try and avoid repetition within answers particularly those relating to the impacts of tourism. Weaker responses were unable to access the higher marks for extended answers if they were unable to 'analyse' 'discuss' or 'evaluate' where asked. It would help candidates if they were clearer about the difference between such command words and were able to make clear and concise judgements or conclusions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Very well answered, most candidates were able to give three examples of Aboriginal tourism experience.
- (b) Well answered, many candidates were able to gain good marks explaining three economic benefits to Australia of developing new indigenous tourism businesses. Most responses covered new jobs, community benefits through infrastructure and stimulating the economy.
- (c) Reasonably well answered. Some candidates were unable to explain two reasons why it is important to preserve local customs. Many were able to identify but not explain clearly their answers. Most common responses included: to prevent loss of culture and identity and strengthen the community.
- (d) Some very good examples were given for this answer. Candidates were asked to evaluate how the altering of the tourism product may affect the host population. Good examples of the anglicising of Spanish and Cyprus resorts were cited. Some of the weaker candidates were unable to use specific examples and could not 'evaluate'. These candidates would, therefore only gain Level 1 or Level 2 marks.

Question 2

- (a) Very well answered, most candidates gained the full four marks here.
- (b) Very well answered, most candidates were able to explain three positive impacts of adventure tourism to the Cusco community. On occasion, some candidates failed to read the question properly and gave negative impacts.
- (c) Very well answered, most candidates gave environmental impacts here.

- (d)** A question that clearly differentiated. Some higher level candidates were able to discuss adventure tourism in relation to eco-tourism principles; however, weaker candidates seemed unsure of principles and simply discussed benefits of tourism.