



2009 Administration

Higher – Paper 1

Finalised Marking Instructions

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2009

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~~

Section 1 – Case Study

1	Outline the benefits to the organisation of employees receiving Induction Training.	2
<i>More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.</i>		
<p>Allows employees to settle quickly</p> <p>Allows initial training to be carried out (eg working with the equipment)</p> <p>Allows time to introduce employee to organisation’s Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>Allows time to meet fellow workers</p> <p>Allows time for the organisation to introduce new employees to the company objectives</p> <p>Allows the organisation to inform the employee of expectations</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Accept benefits to the employee which will have an impact on the organisation.</p> <p>Accept any reference to initial job training.</p>		

2	Describe 2 selection methods used by the Human Resources Department.	4
<p><i>Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example. No mark for simply naming the selection method.</i></p>		
<p>Sifting through the application forms and CVs – to make up a shortlist – comparison with job description and person specification.</p> <p>An interview where the candidate has a chance to build upon what they have written in the application form – gives the candidate a chance to ask questions and find out more about the job – gives the employer the opportunity to assess whether or not the candidate will be able to do the job – panel, one-to-one, group interviews.</p> <p>Employers use tests to provide additional information about the candidate – aptitude tests, skills tests and psychometric tests</p> <p>References and employment checks from people who know the candidate or previous employers – to confirm that the information given by the candidate is accurate.</p> <p>Use of assessment centres to narrow down potential applicants – to undertake the initial selection process instead of the company.</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Do not award marks for repetition of points within each description.</p> <p>Examples of content within the selection method can be awarded the second mark – the initial outline must be different</p> <p>Mark may be awarded for the example only, even if no initial outline.</p> <p>Accept medical/health checks as an example.</p> <p>Testing only accepted as one method of selection.</p>		

3	Justify why customer satisfaction is important to an organisation.	4
	<i>One mark for each justification.</i>	
	<p>Increased loyalty/Repeat custom</p> <p>Attract new custom</p> <p>Less complaints</p> <p>Less chance of legal action against company</p> <p>Improved reputation</p> <p>Improved profits</p> <p>Increased sales</p> <p>Increased competitiveness</p> <p>Reduced staff turnover</p>	
	<p>Notes:</p> <p>Accept consequences/implications of poor customer satisfaction.</p> <p>Do not accept “flip” points.</p>	

4	Describe features of Presentation Software which may be used to enhance the delivery of a training session.	4
<p><i>Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example. Two features for 4 marks.</i></p>		
<p>Creation of a variety of layouts/slides – eg bulleted list, table, graph. Different types of information lend themselves to different layouts.</p> <p>Master slide allows global changes to be made to the presentation eg use of colour, fonts, styles to emphasise points.</p> <p>Creating and printing notes, handouts relating to training topic – audience do not need to take notes, but could add brief comments to the handout. Speaker and audience notes ...</p> <p>Setting up hyperlink to different media – eg internet site or other document.</p> <p>Animation features allow text and graphics to be introduced <u>in an interesting way</u> – eg transition of slides, entrance of text and graphics ...</p> <p>Sound/audio can be added/embedded <u>for emphasis</u> – this can be on individual slides or running throughout the presentation.</p> <p>Creation and display of eye catching graphs to ease understanding – bars on chart can be customised/animated to emphasise points delivered – step by step overlay of information.</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Impact of the feature can be accepted as an addition to the initial outline. Any impact can only be awarded once.</p> <p>No mark awarded for impact on its own.</p>		

5	Discuss the features of an effective team.	6
<p><i>If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available (3). Minimum of 2 features must be discussed. If no discussion – NO D. If only 1 feature discussed – max 5 marks.</i></p>		
<p>Small teams are more cohesive eg Belbin states that 4-6 members are more effective. Small teams are more cohesive as they find it easier to meet regularly.</p> <p>Important that all members of the team have a clear idea of what they are there to achieve.</p> <p>Believe in their shared goals and objectives.</p> <p>Should be able to support each other.</p> <p>Clear procedures that are known to all members of the team.</p> <p>Composed of people who have different skills and personality traits to contribute to the team dynamics.</p> <p>The strengths and weaknesses within the team are balanced within the team.</p> <p>A leader with an appropriate leadership style that suits the way the team works – good leadership</p> <p>The longer they are together the more effective it is likely to be.</p> <p>Ownership of projects ...</p> <p>Improved communication ...</p> <p>Improved decision making ...</p> <p>Improved problem solving skills ...</p>		
<p>Notes:</p>		

Section 2

1a	Outline 2 features of a Mission Statement and justify the importance of this statement to the organisation.	4
<p><i>More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.</i></p> <p><i>One mark for each justification. No justification – NO J.</i></p>		
<p>It sets out the aims of the organisation.</p> <p>It explains how an organisation will achieve its aims.</p> <p>A cross between a slogan and a summary of the organisation's aims.</p> <p>Most mission statements are short/brief.</p> <p>It contains the values of the organisation.</p> <p>Importance – a mission statement will attract custom.</p> <p>Importance – a mission statement will provide direction for the organisation.</p> <p>Importance – a mission statement will help with employee motivation.</p> <p>Importance – will help the image of the organisation.</p>		
<p>Notes:</p>		

1b	Outline 4 factors to be considered to ensure internal customer satisfaction.	4
<p><i>More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidates will not be expected to develop their answers but must refer to internal customers.</i></p>		
<p>Involve employees in the decision making process</p> <p>Provide good training (CPD)</p> <p>Have service level agreements in place</p> <p>Have a complaints system in place for internal customers</p> <p>Have procedures in place to support staff</p> <p>Show commitment to your workforce</p> <p>Use a variety of methods to test internal customer satisfaction</p> <p>Include internal customer satisfaction in the company objectives</p> <p>Always be on the look out for ways to improve internal customer satisfaction</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Accept a named method of testing satisfaction eg surveys.</p> <p>Accept factors relating to customer satisfaction unless clearly indicating external customers.</p>		

1c	Discuss the strategies used by senior administrative assistants to improve their efficiency in task management.	8
<p><i>If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. If no discussion – NO D. Minimum 2 strategies for 8 marks. If only 1 strategy – max 7 marks.</i></p>		
<p>Prioritise your tasks</p> <p>Allow time to reflect on the work in hand</p> <p>Make use of delegation</p> <p>Make use of planning aids</p> <p>Organisation of resources that will be needed in order to complete tasks in hand</p> <p>Minimise time wasting activities (time stealers) <i>max 2 marks</i></p> <p>Make sure you do the most difficult tasks in your prime time when you are at your best</p> <p>Setting targets</p> <p>Using e-diary ...</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Do not accept PDPs as strategies for task management</p> <p>Do not accept “flip” side to strategies however, marks can be awarded for a negative point which is an extension of the strategy.</p>		

1d	Identify 2 time stealers and for each suggest how these can be avoided.	4
	<i>One mark for each time stealer identified and one mark for each suggestion of how to avoid them.</i>	
	<p>Meetings that take longer than necessary (face-to-face or on telephone) – set time limits</p> <p>Taking on too much work – delegate more tasks, learn to say NO – be assertive</p> <p>Frequent interruptions whether telephone/visitors – learn to control time or protect time</p> <p>Unexpected visits by colleagues – be polite but firm especially if the person is just looking for a chat</p> <p>Unable to find the information you require – ensure you have an appropriate filing system</p> <p>Crisis management – have plans in place rather than acting hastily</p> <p>Procrastination – prioritise your tasks – if tasks prove too difficult, seek help</p>	
	<p>Notes:</p> <p>Do not just accept “telephone calls or visitors”. However the solution mark could still be awarded.</p>	

2a	<p>Outline the benefits of a career break to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i the organisation ii the employee 	4
<p><i>More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers. Two each.</i></p>		
<p>The organisation</p> <p>They allow organisations to keep valuable staff who might otherwise leave</p> <p>Avoids employee ‘burnout’</p> <p>Save costs relating to recruitment/training</p> <p>Better return on money invested in training as staff are being retained</p> <p>Improved motivation in the workforce</p> <p>The employee</p> <p>The flexibility of combining family and other commitments with work</p> <p>Less stress</p> <p>Better health</p> <p>Improved motivation</p> <p>Happier workforce</p> <p>Job security</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Accept motivation once only.</p> <p>Accept stress once only.</p>		

2b	Discuss ways in which flexible working practices can improve the work/life balance of employees.	8
<i>If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. No discussion - NO D.</i>		
<p>Employees can access work and training when they otherwise may not have been able to</p> <p>Employees can balance work with other commitments eg childcare, hobbies etc</p> <p>Stress levels are reduced</p> <p>Employee energy is increased</p> <p>Employee motivation is increased</p> <p>Employee commitment is increased</p> <p>Less resentment towards management</p> <p>Improved morale</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Watch for description of working practices – answers should be focused on improvement to work/life balance.</p>		

2c	Describe i 2 methods of voting at meetings ii 2 documents relating to a formal meeting.	4 4
<p><i>Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.</i></p>		
<p>Voting</p> <p><u>Ballot</u> - a written vote - which is usually taken in secret</p> <p><u>Show of hands</u> – where those eligible to vote say yes or no by raising their hand – public vote, not secret – voters may be intimidated to vote one way or another.</p> <p><u>Go into division</u> – where those eligible to vote go to an allocated place eg one side of the room – often used in parliament</p> <p><u>Casting vote</u> taken by the Chairman – if there are an equal number of votes for and against a motion</p> <p><u>Proxy vote</u> for people who cannot attend a meeting – a substitute person can be arranged to vote in their place</p> <p><i>Also accept postal vote ...</i></p> <p>There is a maximum of one mark if method not named but candidate has given an outline of a method.</p>		

	<p>Documents</p> <p>Notice of Meeting</p> <p>Tells those eligible to attend the meeting where the meeting is to be held, the date and the time – often combined with an agenda – a set period of notice has to be given between issuing the Notice and the meeting.</p> <p>Agenda</p> <p>An agenda is a list of the items which will be discussed – listed in the order of discussion – some of the items are called ‘standard items’</p> <p>Chairperson’s Agenda</p> <p>Separate agenda prepared for the chairperson – basically the same as a normal agenda with space on the right hand side for the chairperson to make notes as the meeting progresses</p> <p>Minutes of Meeting</p> <p>Minutes are the official record of the meeting – normally written in the past tense and third person – a record is not made of everything that was said at the meeting – minutes usually recorded in the same order as the items appear on the agenda.</p> <p>Action Minutes</p> <p>Action minutes do not record as much information as formal meetings – three key areas, what has to be done, who is responsible for doing it and when it has to be done by.</p>
	<p>Notes:</p> <p>Voting methods must be named but no mark for just naming. Voting method must be named to gain 2 marks.</p> <p>Documents must be named but no mark for just naming. Document must be named to gain 2 marks.</p>

3a	<p>Outline ways in which an organisation can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i monitor email ii limit access to internet sites 	4
<p><i>More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers. Two each.</i></p>		
<p>Monitor email</p> <p>Have software which will quarantine prohibited material contained in the emails or flag to administrators issues within the email</p> <p>Random checking of employee emails</p> <p>Limit access to internet sites</p> <p>Limit personal use of the Internet to break times</p> <p>Have an internet policy which will stipulate quite clearly what is and is not permissible</p> <p>Provide training for employees to ensure that they are aware of policy and procedures.</p> <p>Have a block on certain sites or parts of sites</p> <p>Permit “quota time” for access to certain sites – prevents prolonged use of some websites.</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Do not accept “access to email” – must show how it is monitored.</p>		

3b	Describe features of a good e-commerce website.	6
<i>Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.</i>		
<p>Have a good navigation system – use of search box and hyperlinks to move quickly and efficiently through the website.</p> <p>Secure systems in place – so customers know they are safe when purchasing online eg paypal ...</p> <p>Checkout/basket to hold goods – while continuing shopping and then moving to checkout – allows final check before moving to purchase</p> <p>Presentation of information: pictures, video, zoom and tilt functions ...</p> <p>Reviews and rating eg customer comments and star rating system.</p> <p>Links to related website – to allow comparison or more detailed information.</p> <p>Incorporate customer profiling – so that products similar to previous purchases can be suggested to the customer.</p> <p>Contact details, helpline ...</p> <p>Real time, stock availability ...</p> <p>Tracking and delivery details ...</p> <p>FAQs ...</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Do not accept 24/7 access.</p>		

3c	Email is an important method of communication. Discuss the impact of email on the organisation.	6
<p><i>If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available.</i> <i>No discussion – NO D.</i></p>		
<p>Fast way of sending information <u>therefore speeds up communication</u></p> <p>Information does not have to be printed out <u>therefore saving printing and material costs</u></p> <p>Facilitates the sending of information through attachments</p> <p>There is a record of who has been contacted ...</p> <p>Can be accessed anywhere with an internet connection eg homeworkers</p> <p>Same message can be sent to many people saving time and money</p> <p>Good when working across timezones – allows 24/7 communication</p> <p>Electronic storage does not take up as much space</p> <p>People can access email at a time that suits them</p> <p>Personal emails can be a time stealer and you can be less productive</p> <p>Large amounts of junk mail</p> <p>Possible introduction of viruses to the computer system</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Marks are awarded for the impact not the feature.</p>		

3d	Compare web based and paper based sources of information in the organisation of a business trip.	4
<p><i>One mark is allocated for each complete statement of comparison.</i></p>		
<p>Web based may be more up-to-date than paper based as it is difficult to constantly update a publication.</p> <p>Web based can filter information to give you choice whereas with paper based this may take a long time to find the required information.</p> <p>Web based information is accessible 24/7 – not all paper based information is available throughout the day.</p> <p>Both web and paper based sources contain a wide variety of information to choose from.</p> <p>Both web and paper based can be accessed anywhere – by using personal digital assistants, mobile phones and wireless technology as well as hard copies.</p> <p>Web based can be customised eg AA route finder whereas paper based relies on the user to adapt the information.</p> <p>Web based can have additional features such as booking and paying online whereas paper based requires follow up action to be carried out.</p> <p>Web based is relatively cheap to access compared to the purchase of a hard copy eg atlas</p> <p>However</p> <p>With web based you do not always know the accuracy of the information ...</p> <p>With web based it is easy to get distracted ...</p> <p>With web based you can suffer from connection problems or equipment failure ...</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Do not accept a simple negative in the second part of the comparison.</p>		

4a	Outline decisions taken by an organisation to minimise Sick Building Syndrome.	4
<p><i>More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.</i></p>		
<p>Introduce better lighting</p> <p>Introduce better air conditioning</p> <p>Ensure good natural light</p> <p>Repaint with pastel colours</p> <p>Remove airborne and chemical pollutants</p> <p>Establish non smoking policies</p> <p>Introduce ergonomic features such as layout of rooms, furniture etc ...</p>		
<p>Notes:</p>		

4b	Describe 2 possible consequences for the employee moving from a cellular to an open plan layout.	4
<p><i>Award one mark for initial consequence plus one for additional comment, illustration or example (might be an implication).</i></p>		
<p>Improved communication with colleagues – leading to greater efficiency</p> <p>May improve teamwork – as employees are working in a more open environment</p> <p>May not allow privacy for confidential discussions – therefore a danger of others hearing private conversations</p> <p>Papers left on desks are more likely to be seen by other employees and visitors to the organisation – again endangering privacy</p> <p>Increased distraction or interruption by other employees – leading to decreased efficiency</p> <p>Increased background noise – distracting others working and therefore lowering productivity and efficiency</p> <p>Infections and illnesses can be more easily spread – deadlines and targets not met leading to stress</p> <p>Employees might suffer from sick building syndrome ...</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>If initial consequences leads to the same implication, award implication mark once only.</p> <p>Accept loss of status ...</p>		

4c	Staff welfare is important in supporting staff. Discuss the support systems which may be provided by Human Resources.	8
<p><i>If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. No discussion – NO D. Minimum 2 support systems. If only one support system discussed max 7 marks.</i></p>		
<p>Family friendly policies – flexible working/paid or unpaid paternity leave/duvet days</p> <p>Advice – access to written company policies and procedures/advice of rights, grievance and disciplinary procedures</p> <p>Return-to-work interviews – employee is invited to meet with their line manager after a period of absence</p> <p>Counselling by a trained member of staff or by an external specialist/counselling on work and non-work issues</p> <p>Staff benefits – subsidized canteen/nursery care/health club membership</p> <p>Employee wellbeing – healthy eating, massage, gym ...</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Do not accept detailed info about flexible working practices unless linked to advice.</p>		

4d	Outline and justify 2 ways of making sure employees are aware of new legislation or changes to legislation affecting the office environment.	4
<p><i>More than naming, but not a detailed description. Candidate will not be expected to develop their answers.</i></p>		
<p>Role play- staff can practice situations such as fire drills. This encourages good practice amongst staff – useful for health and safety training</p> <p>Notices to highlight specific policies. These can provide information, procedures and warnings to staff in an eye-catching manner. They are also constantly on display to staff for reference purposes. Examples of posters what to do in the event of a fire etc – must be current and relevant</p> <p>Talks from relevant officials eg Health and Safety, Fire Brigade – used when big issues need to be discussed and it is important to give information quickly.</p> <p>Staff Meetings - used when big issues need to be discussed and it is important to give information quickly. Staff can ask questions to clarify any misunderstandings</p> <p>Company intranet containing all relevant policies and procedures – can be easily updated and referred to at any time.</p> <p>Staff development training – used when practical activities need to be observed and demonstrated.</p> <p>Newsletters to bring issues to the attention of staff – can be made interesting, personal and motivating</p> <p>DVDs, videos for training purposes or simply for information – can be set up in reception areas to reinforce knowledge</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Accept the use of email to inform staff of new legislation.</p>		

5a	Identify possible areas of development for an employee which may follow an appraisal meeting.	4
<i>One mark for each area identified.</i>		
<p>Job performance</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>IT skills</p> <p>Customer service skills</p> <p>Future training and development</p> <p>Personal goals and targets eg time keeping</p> <p>Career objectives</p>		
Notes:		

5b	Discuss the importance of Continual Professional Development to ensure staff IT skills and administrative knowledge are kept up to date.	6
<p><i>If no attempt at discussion then only 50% of the marks available. If no discussion – NO D.</i></p>		
<p>CPD helps to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment of staff Improved performance Satisfied customers Motivated employees Job security Staff more efficient at their job Job satisfaction Further promotion Increase in salary Enhancement of current skills <p>Staff keep up to date with ever changing technology – however staff may leave and go to another organisation.</p> <p>Reduction of stress – however may be stressful for the employee to continually keep up to date with training requirements.</p> <p>However, CPD may be expensive and the employee may have to incur the costs personally.</p>		
<p>Notes:</p>		

5c	Describe 3 methods of monitoring and controlling targets.	6
<i>Award one mark for outline plus one for additional comment, illustration or example.</i>		
<p>Buddy system</p> <p>Where an employee is paired with a more experienced person for help and advice – usually someone at the same level – usually someone who is familiar with all the details of the job and the organisation.</p> <p>Mentoring system</p> <p>A more senior member of staff is assigned to an employee – the more senior member has a good knowledge of the job and the organisation.</p> <p>Line manager reviews/meetings</p> <p>The line manager can carry out periodic checks on progress – line manager works closely with the employee and will be a good line of support and advice.</p> <p>Internal audits</p> <p>Many organisations use some type of quality system to check that organisational standards and targets are being met - these internal audits are usually carried out by someone external to the department but internal to the organisation.</p> <p>Action plans</p> <p>An action plan can be part of the personal development plan or for a project as a whole – this is where task responsibilities, deadlines and resources are given.</p> <p>Appraisal</p> <p>One way to review current performance and help identify and evaluate the training and development needs of staff and thus improve work performance – can be open or closed – appraises current strengths and weaknesses – assesses their career development.</p> <p>Personal Development Plans</p> <p>Is all about setting your own targets – these targets have to match with those of the organisation and the department – however development does not have to be work related – it looks at broad long-term development – PDPs should be written in a structured way and should be reviewed.</p> <p>Gantt Chart</p> <p>Used by managers to show comparisons between work planned and work accomplished - looks like a bar graph – key target dates will be marked on the chart – these are called milestones.</p>		

Notes:

Method must be named but no marks awarded. However must be named to gain 2 marks.

First mark can be awarded for the outline of the method and the second mark could be given for how the method is used to monitor and control targets.

Accept e-diary and priorities lists.

5d	Compare the use of a database and a spreadsheet for storing and analysing information.	4
<p><i>One mark is allocated for each complete statement of comparison.</i></p>		
<p>Both spreadsheet and database can produce graphs</p> <p>Very simple to produce graphs within a spreadsheet whereas the database is a much more complex process</p> <p>Both spreadsheet and database can carry out calculations</p> <p>Both spreadsheet and database can be dynamically linked to other applications</p> <p>A spreadsheet stores information in sheets whereas a database stores data in tables.</p> <p>Both spreadsheet and database can summarise data/information</p> <p>In a spreadsheet you can use formulae or subtotals to summarise information whilst in a database you would create a calculated field or query (search/filter).</p>		
<p>Notes:</p> <p>There may be an opportunity to gain a further comparison mark if greater detail is given (see above).</p> <p>Do not accept mail merge unless related to storing and analysing information.</p>		

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]