

IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety

Unit 5 – Leadership and Management (Zone 1)

Examiner Report – March 2020

Introduction

45% of candidates achieved a Pass. Most the candidates attained a D Grade with only candidate attaining a B grade and 9 attaining a C Grade.

Candidates performed best on questions 4, 5 and 7; the average score achieved for each of these questions was 9. Candidates tended to score least well on question 2 where the average mark attained was 5.

Question 1

a) *Explain how the following contribute to health and safety in the workplace:*

- i) *Safe Person Concept (3 marks)*
- ii) *ALARP principle (3 marks)*

b) *Describe how and why the following contribute to health and safety in the workplace:*

- i) *safety precedence sequence (6 marks)*
- ii) *accident prevention actions (8 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was the least popular option for candidates and few scored high marks. The average mark attained was 6.

Candidates who scored high marks demonstrated some understanding of most parts of the question and could answer it from the perspective of an employer or organisation. However, many candidates failed to consider issues from the employer/organisation and instead answered from an individual's point of view. This meant that many key points were omitted.

In responding to part a), candidates often failed to articulate the organisational responsibility and systems approach in the safe person concept. Although most candidates could state what ALARP stood for, they did not explore what this meant from the organisational perspective.

In responding to part b), many candidates did not appear to understand the safety precedence sequence but most candidates were able to describe accident prevention actions either from an individual perspective or an employer's perspective. In terms of the safety precedence sequence, marks were available for the following points:

The safety precedence sequence:

- eliminates hazards by designing out potential accidents through using alternatives and changing processes so that staff are kept safe
- substitutes safer chemicals for highly toxic chemicals so that staff do not come in contact with toxic materials
- uses barriers to separate the workforce from the risks which could cause harm
- introduces effective safety procedures such as limiting exposure and safe systems of work so that staff are not subject to dangers
- uses warning systems and signs to alert staff to dangers
- issues protective clothing and equipment so that staff can work safely

Question 2

- a) *Explain why human resource policies need to be based on values and principles.* (6 marks)
- b) *Explain what is meant by the term “work-life balance”.* (3 marks)
- c) *Explain how an organisation can demonstrate a commitment to “work-life balance”.* (11 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was a popular option for candidates but was not answered well.

When responding to part a), many candidates failed to make the link between HR policies and the values and principles of the organisation. There were many vague and irrelevant responses. Candidates who were able to score marks included points such as the following in their response:

- HR policies define the philosophies and values of the organisation on how people should be treated; they establish the way that managers are expected to act when dealing with HR matters
- HR policies ensure that managers adopt an approach in line with corporate values
- HR policies help to shape the corporate culture and define ‘the way things are done around here’
- Formalised HR policies can be used in induction, team leader and management training to help participants understand the philosophies and values of the organisation
- The overall policy defines how the organisation fulfils its social responsibilities for its employees and sets out its attitudes towards them.
- HR policies provide frameworks within which consistent decisions are made and promote equity in the way in which people are treated.

In responding to parts b) and c) candidates often wrote from their own perspective or about individuals rather than considering the situation from the organisation perspective. This meant that responses were not pitched in the right way or at the right level.

Question 3

Describe the main features of the following training methods and explain how each one can contribute to the training and development of staff:

- a) *action learning* (3 marks)
- b) *secondment* (5 marks)
- c) *brain storming* (6 marks)
- d) *role play* (6 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Few candidates provided a good response to all parts of the question. It was common for candidates to omit parts of the questions or to appear to guess at answers.

Part a) was often answered poorly as most candidates were unable to explain what is meant by action learning. Candidates should be aware that action learning is a method used to assist individuals in developing team skills and problem solving skills as it involves active/participative learning via a group activity; a group of 4 – 5 managers are brought together to solve a work-related problem with activities such as using a project plan, setting objectives, planning resource usage, initiating action, monitoring progress etc.

Part b) was usually answered well although some candidates confused secondment with shadowing.

Many candidates demonstrated some understanding of brain storming when responding to part c).

Part d) was usually answered well with many candidates demonstrating a good understanding of role play.

Question 4

- a) *Describe the benefits of downwards communication within an organisation. (6 marks)*
- b) *Describe the key considerations for managers in preparing and delivering effective presentations to their team. (14 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was the most popular option for candidates and all but four of the candidates who sat the paper attempted this question. Responses were generally good with the average mark attained being 9.

Part a) was less well answered than part b) as many candidates described downward communication in general rather than describing the benefits of this type of communication as required by the question.

Most candidates provided good responses to part b) and were able to demonstrate that they were able to consider a situation and apply their understanding to the context effectively. Some candidates attained a high proportion of the marks available for this part of the question.

Question 5

The motivation of staff is an important part of a manager's role.

- a) *Draw a diagram to illustrate Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.* (4 marks)
- b) *Explain how knowledge of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs can help managers to motivate their team members.* (9 marks)
- c) *Explain briefly why a manager who believes in McGregor's Theory X is unlikely to motivate staff.* (2 marks)
- d) *Explain how knowledge of McGregor's Theory Y can help managers to motivate their team members.* (5 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was not a popular option for candidates but those candidates that did answer the question often attained 9 marks or above.

Most candidates who attempted the question were able to answer parts a) and b) well and many gained most, if not all of their marks for this question, on these parts. It was common for candidates to score full marks on part a). However, few candidates provided sufficient detail to score high marks in responding to part b).

In responding to part c). almost all candidates were able to describe the differences between McGregor's Theory X and Y employees. However, few were able to apply this understanding when responding to part d)

Question 6

- a) *Explain how managers can ensure that their team members know what is required of them in the following situations:*
 - i) *in a new role.* (5 marks)
 - ii) *in relation to the ongoing work role.* (5 marks)
- b) *Describe the benefits to an organisation of a manager giving informal feedback to an individual employee about their work performance.* (10 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was a popular option for candidates. However, it was not always answered well with candidates generally scoring seven or fewer marks for their responses. Part b) was often answered better than part a).

When responding to part a)i), many candidates often omitted to consider the use of a job description and in responding to part a)ii) candidates often provided appraisal as a way of ensuring that candidates understood their job role. Candidates should be aware that appraisal considers how someone has performed in relation to their job whereas the question asked how individuals were made aware of what was required of them in order to ensure that they knew what they would be assessed against.

In responding to part b), candidates often failed to appreciate that the question was focussed on “informal” feedback and again went directly to the appraisal process which is a formal process.

Question 7

You have been asked to organise and chair a meeting.

- a) State the organisational arrangements that you would ensure are in place before the meeting is held. (5 marks)*
- b) Explain the role of the Chair in the running of a successful meeting. (15 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was usually answered well with the average mark scored being 9.

There were 15 marks available for part b) but candidates sometimes provided only brief responses which limited the marks that could be attained. Some candidates provided irrelevant information as they chose to focus on the content of the meeting (which was not in scope of the question) instead of focussing on how the Chair could manage the running of the meeting eg via timekeeping, providing opportunities for people to speak, ensuring the minute taker was clear on the notes needed, ensuring agenda items were covered, including good discipline etc

Question 8

- a) Explain why organisations set up management information systems. (3 marks)*
- b) Describe the characteristics of an effective management information system. (17 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was not a popular option for candidates and responses from candidates were mixed. The average mark attained was 7.

Part a) was not answered well as candidates often described MISs rather explaining why organisations would set up such systems. Marks were available where candidates included reasons such as

- effective information is needed to set performance standards
- to see if targets are being met
- to see if policies are actually working
- to highlight deviations and issues that might suggest problems
- to highlight problems areas such as high staff turnover or accidents and near misses

In responding to part b), candidates often provided only a few points and often failed to provide more than brief lists; a fuller description was required to secure all of the marks. The types of characteristics which could have been considered and described included:

- the system needs to be fit for purpose so that it collects the right information and those who will use the information understand how they will access it and use it
- the system needs to be appropriate for the work of the organisation reflecting performance objectives and targets that need to be monitored
- the system needs to secure organisation-wide buy-in so that everyone sees how it adds value
- the system needs to be robust so that it can survive changes in personnel and changes in the structure of the organisation
- the system needs to be cost effective

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