

IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety

Unit 5 – Leadership and Management (Zone 2)

Examiner Report – March 2020

Introduction

45% of the candidates that sat the examination achieved a Pass. Four candidates achieved a Grade A and eight candidates achieved a Grade B.

Those candidates who were unsuccessful in the examination generally failed to provide sufficient detail to attain the marks available and/or demonstrated only basic knowledge of subjects without demonstrating that they could apply their understanding.

Candidates generally performed best on question 7 (the average mark attained was 10) and on question 6 (the average mark attained was 9). Candidates performed least well on questions 2 and 8 (the average mark attained for these questions 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 a popular option for candidates. Candidates often performed well and the average mark attained was 8.

Candidates generally performed better on part a) than on part b). When responding to part a), candidates usually appeared to be familiar with the terms set out in the question. However, responses sometimes lacked sufficient detail to score full marks as some candidates presented points only from the point of view of the individual and omitted to consider the organisational responsibility and/or the systems approach required.

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:

The safety precedence sequence:

- eliminates hazards by the designing out of 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 into 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 organisations use job evaluation as an integral part of their human resource management. (6 marks)*
- b) *In relation to job evaluation, describe six of the factors that are taken into account in implementing a points rating scheme. (6 marks)*
- c) *Describe the human resource and employee relations issues that may be encountered in implementing a job evaluation scheme. (8 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was the least popular option for candidates and those candidates that did attempt the question often attained only a few marks – the average mark attained for this question was 5.

Many candidates confused job evaluation with job analysis. This meant that they started the question from the wrong place and responses were not sufficiently relevant to score marks. A few candidates assumed that the question was about recruitment and therefore provided irrelevant answers.

Candidates who provided good responses to part a), provided explanations as to reasons that job evaluation is used that covered factors such as:

- it assesses jobs not individuals so that personalities are not taken into account
- it identifies the relative value of jobs within an organisational structure and so can be seen as fair
- it can be used to determine pay and grading structures by linking pay to the requirements of the job
- it can help to identify the appropriate rate of pay for specific jobs
- it can help to identify the need for more or less skilled workers and so can be a valuable part of human resource planning

Part b) required specific understanding of the use of a points rating scheme. This part of the question was often omitted and, where it was answered, candidates often appeared to guess at the answer.

Candidates also appeared to guess when responding to part c). Examples of points that would have scored marks include:

- staff can view the scheme as evaluating them as an individual rather than their role which can cause ‘upset’
- a large-scale evaluation may involve all roles in an organisation and can therefore take time and has the potential to cause largescale uncertainty and distrust.
- staff may not agree with the weighting allocated to different factors which can lead to bad feeling and time spent explaining/supporting staff through the process.
- it is not always easy to identify all of the factors that make up a job and staff may feel that important aspects have been ignored.
- where a role is going to be downgraded, or where staff feel the evaluation was incorrect, there needs to some form of appeals process
- a complex scheme will need very detailed job descriptions to be drawn up which can use a great deal of staff time, if there are a large number of different jobs

Question 3

a) *Explain why organisations make use of targets to achieve objectives.* (4 marks)

b) *Describe the characteristics of effective targets.* (16 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was one of the most popular options for candidates and many candidates scored good marks. The average mark attained was 8.

Whilst most candidates could explain why organisations use targets as required by part a) of the question, responses to part b) generally lacked sufficient detail to score high marks. When responding to part b), it was common for candidates to state characteristics without going into sufficient detail to describe what made them effective; many simply regurgitated the acronym SMART without demonstrating depth of understanding.

Question 4

Describe the following different styles of learning and explain how understanding these learning styles can enable managers to identify the learning strengths and weaknesses of team members:

a) *active* (5 marks)

b) *pragmatic* (5 marks)

c) *theoretical* (5 marks)

d) *reflective* (5 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Many candidates were unable to describe all four of the learning styles and it common for candidates to repeat the same points for one or more styles. The least well understood style was “pragmatic”; this style was sometimes omitted from responses and sometimes candidates appeared to use guesswork.

Candidates often described the learning styles without considering the second requirement in the question ie to explain how understanding these learning styles can enable managers to identify the learning strengths and weaknesses of team members. Candidates who failed to apply their knowledge in this way were unable to attain all of the marks available.

Question 5

a) *Describe, with the aid of diagrams, the characteristics of the following types of organisational structure:*

- i) *functional* (4 marks)
- ii) *geographical* (4 marks)
- iii) *matrix* (4 marks)

b) *Explain how organisational structures may affect communication.* (8 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Most candidates were able to demonstrate understanding of function and geographical structure. However, some candidates were less familiar with matrix structures.

Part b) was sometimes omitted from responses. Candidates who did attempt the question often failed to demonstrate the understanding and analytical skills required at this level. Candidates who considered the flow of information up and down the hierarchy and between departments in different structures and reflected on how this could affect efficiently, clarity of requirements from different roles/departments and relationships were able to score high marks.

Question 6

a) *Explain how a manager can ensure that a team member feels able to participate effectively in a formal appraisal meeting.* (10 marks)

b) *Explain, with the aid of a diagram, how a manager can ensure that their team members understand the links between individual, team and organisational objectives.* (10 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was the most popular option for candidates and those candidates that answered the question generally scored good marks – the average mark attained was 10.

Part b) was often answered well and the subject area appeared to be generally well understood.

Question 7

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 often answered well. The average mark obtained was 9.

Part a) was usually answered well with most candidates able to attain all of the marks available. Although candidates attained marks for part b), few candidates provided sufficient detail to score high marks – again, candidates often demonstrated basic knowledge but failed to apply it.

In responding to part c), almost all candidates were able to describe the differences between McGregor's Theory X and Y employees. However, part d) was less well answered as few candidates were able to apply their knowledge sufficiently well to score marks.

Question 8

- a) *Explain how effective knowledge management can improve the performance of an organisation.* (17 marks)
- b) *Describe three different knowledge management systems that organisations can use to share information with staff.* (3 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Few candidates scored good marks for this question – the average mark attained was 5.

Candidates generally performed better on part b) than on part a). Some candidates attempted only part b). Candidates often attained all three marks available for this question.

When responding to part a), few candidates understood the benefits of knowledge management systems in improving performance. Answers were often brief which meant that candidates generally provided insufficient information to secure marks. Some candidates confused knowledge management with management information systems. Examples of the points that would have scored marks include:

- the knowledge gathered and shared can help to mitigate organisational risks

- the gathering of information can assist in spotting problems before they arise/get out of control
- staff who feel their knowledge and experience are valued are likely to be motivated and engaged
- enables an organisation to make best use of knowledge, skills and expertise of staff
- improves decision making, management processes and plans, as more factors are taken into account which in turn promotes organisational efficiency
- promotes organisational and individual learning which improves performance
- helps to ensure that best practice can be identified and implemented.
- encourages staff to put ideas forward, which can lead to improvements in organisational performance
- encourages frontline staff and those working with partners to be information collectors and horizon scanners

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