

IFE Level 4 Certificate in Fire Science and Fire Safety

Unit 5 – Leadership and Management

Examiner Report – March 2020

Introduction

Candidates performed well this year with 70% of those who sat the examination achieving a Pass. As in previous years, there were few very high scores with most candidates who passed achieving between 40% and 50% of the marks available.

Candidates generally performed well on most questions with the average mark attained for questions 1, 2, 4, and 8 being 9, the average mark for questions 3 and 7 being 8, the average mark for question 6 being 10 and the least well answered question, question 5, showing an average mark of 6.

Question 1

- a) *Describe the role played by Departmental Plans in the achievement of organisational objectives.* (10 marks)
- b) *Explain how a problem that an organisation is facing can be resolved through a systematic approach.* (10 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Part a) was generally answered well with candidates demonstrating that they understood the way in which department plans contribute to the achievement of organisational objectives. Candidates who provided a good response included explanations of the role of different departments, the way that the work of one department affects the work of another and the link between, department, team and individual plans.

In responding to part b), some candidates concentrated on the identification of problems without considering other stages of problem solving in order to reach a resolution.

Question 2

Explain the relevance to managers of the theoretical knowledge provided by Mayo (in the Hawthorne Studies), Maslow, Herzberg and McGregor. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was the least popular option for candidates but was generally answered well by those that attempted it.

Candidates who were familiar with the theories and who could explain how their application improved motivation were able to secure high marks. Some candidates were able to provide a basic description of one or more of the theories but without showing an understanding of the application they were unable to score high marks.

Question 3

- a) *Explain the benefits of introducing a grievance procedure to an organisation that does not have such a procedure in place.* (10 marks)
- b) *Explain how the procedure could be operated to ensure fairness.* (10 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Candidates who secured high marks demonstrated that they understood how the procedure gave staff a route for voicing concerns, provided a consistent approach and could help to improve organisational practices.

Part b) was generally less well answered than part a). Many candidates failed to mention the benefits of a transparent staged approach.

Question 4

Explain why possession of the following hard skills is important for managers:

- a) *planning skills* (8 marks)
- b) *controlling skills* (6 marks)
- c) *organising skills* (6 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Most candidates were able to recognise the importance of each of the hard skills but responses often failed to provide sufficient consideration and assessment of the value of the skills in order to secure very high marks.

Issues that could have been covered in relation to planning skills included setting goals, setting targets and identifying resource needs. Issues that could have been covered in relation to controlling skills included measuring results, taking corrective action and successfully managing daily activities. Issues that could have been covered in relation to organising skills included putting people and resources in place to make things happen, allocating work and using own time effectively.

Question 5

Describe how managers can overcome barriers to communication that organisations may face when trying to achieve their objectives. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was the least well answered question on the examination paper.

The question provided the opportunity for candidates to explore a wide range of communication issues and to demonstrate their understanding of the breadth of solutions available. However, candidates often provided only narrow responses covering only one or two factors.

Candidates who scored high marks understood that a manager has to overcome a number of barriers and reflect this through exploring approaches including, using downwards, upwards and lateral communication, developing trust and using appropriate methods for the different circumstances and audiences.

Question 6

- a) *Describe the benefits which the delegating of tasks to a subordinate by a manager can bring to an organisation. (7 marks)*
- b) *Describe the situations where it may not be beneficial for a manager to delegate tasks to subordinates. (4 marks)*
- c) *Explain how a manager can ensure that an individual employee benefits from carrying out delegated tasks. (9 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was the most popular option for candidates with all but two of the candidates who sat the paper providing responses. It was also the highest scoring question on the examination paper with candidates demonstrating a good understanding of the issues connected to delegation of tasks.

Most candidates were able to identify the benefits of delegation such as releasing the time of managers and developing staff and were able to explain that delegation is unsuitable where staff lack the necessary skills or where the risks are too great. Part c) was less well answered in that candidates were often unable to expand their explanations beyond a few basic points and this limited the marks they could secure.

Question 7

- a) *Describe the role that the systematic training cycle can play in enabling managers to meet organisational objectives. (14 marks)*
- b) *Explain why health and safety training may have to be a priority when money is limited. (6 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

Part a) was usually answered well as candidates appeared to be familiar with the systematic training cycle. Most understood that the cycle involves the identification of training needs,

planning of training, delivery of training and evaluation of training provided. Some candidates concentrated only on the identification of training needs and therefore were unable to attain the marks available for describing the other aspects of the cycle.

Part b) was less well answered and some candidates failed to appreciate the importance of health and safety training in terms of keeping staff (and members of the public) safe and also in ensuring that legal and moral responsibilities were met.

Question 8

- a) *Describe the benefits which can arise when colleagues are regarded as customers or suppliers.* (3 marks)
- b) *Explain why it is important to develop positive relationships with managerial colleagues at a similar level to your own in your organisation.* (3 marks)
- c) *Within your organisation, another team's performance is undermining the effectiveness of your own team. Explain how you would ensure constructive discussions with the manager of the other team in order to rectify this situation.* (14 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Candidates generally performed well on parts a) and b) with many scoring full marks for these two sections. In responding to part a), most candidates understood that customers and suppliers have needs that can be identified and met. In responding to part b), most candidates understood that working together is important, prevents silos and enables efficient working toward company objectives.

Part c) was less well answered. Some candidates understood the complexities of the situation and considered the need to draw on factual information, the need to look for a way forward and the need to take a non-confrontational approach which would ensure that future relationships and arrangements were positive. Some candidates were unable to provide more than a few basic points and some failed to recognise that this was an issue being dealt with between colleagues who were at the same level in the organisation.

Date issued: July 2020