

# IFE Level 4 Certificate in Fire Safety and Fire Science

## Unit 5 – Leadership and Management

### Examiner Report – March 2017

#### Introduction

Candidates generally performed well with 56% of candidates attaining a Pass.

Some candidates focussed on only a word or a phrase in the question and wrote at length on everything they knew about the word or phrase without putting it into the context given. Other candidates failed to consider the allocation of marks and concentrated on answering a part question which did not carry a large number of marks; this was a poor use of time as it meant that candidates lost the opportunity to concentrate on questions carrying a higher number of marks.

Candidates generally performed best on question 1 and least well on question 2.

#### Question 1

*You are a middle manager and have been asked to lead a project to plan and implement a new advice service for the public. Identify and explain the factors you would take into account in order to achieve a satisfactory conclusion to the project. (20 marks)*

#### **Examiner Feedback**

Candidates who attained high marks identified that a large number of factors need to be taken into account when managing a project including: understanding the purpose and scope of the project, ensuring that there is support from senior managers, identifying timelines, identifying the resources needed, identifying and mitigating risks and ensuring effective planning takes place.

Less successful candidates failed to provide sufficient information. Some candidates wrote about the decision making cycle whilst others wrote about actually running an advice service and failed to identify any project management aspects.

#### Question 2

*Most managers are responsible for the effectiveness of a group of employees. Explain the contribution which the following can make towards the achievement of the objectives of a team:*

*a) emotional intelligence. (10 marks)*

*b) gaining the trust of staff. (10 marks)*

## **Examiner Feedback**

In response to part a), few candidates demonstrated understanding of the concept of emotional intelligence and consequently few attained high marks for this element of question. Candidates who were able to explain the concept of emotional intelligence in terms of understanding the effect their behaviour can have on others were able to describe how this could contribute in ways such as helping to control negative moods, understanding the needs of employees and creating a positive working atmosphere for staff.

Candidates generally performed better on part b). Most candidates understood that gaining the trust of staff enables a range of positive outcomes such as successful teamwork, problems being raised and solved at an early stage and staff feeling empowered to find solutions to job-related problems.

## **Question 3**

- a) *“Valuing and promoting equality and diversity are central to the effectiveness of a modern organisation.” Explain the relevance of this statement. (15 marks)*
- b) *Describe the ways in which an organisation can demonstrate a commitment to the ethos of work life balance. (5 marks)*

## **Examiner Feedback**

This question was generally answered well with many candidates attaining 8 marks or more for their response.

There were many good responses to part a) with candidates identifying and explaining examples such as enabling an inclusive work culture, bringing a wider range of skills into the organisation, enabling staff to feel valued and enhancing access to different communities which can be important in terms of preventative work.

There were many possible examples that could have been provided in response to part b). Most candidates identified and described at least two ways. Points that could have covered included publishing policies and enabling practical schemes such as job share, working from home and career breaks.

## **Question 4**

*Organisations need to manage health and safety if they are to control risks and prevent staff and others from being harmed.*

- a) *Describe the key elements that senior managers should include in their health and safety policy and procedures. (12 marks)*
- b) *Describe the ways in which managers can encourage a positive attitude to health and safety. (8 marks)*

## **Examiner Feedback**

Those candidates that appreciated that part a) of the question was asking for the elements that “*senior*” managers should include in policies generally performed well; these candidates recognised that the question required responses that focussed on issues such as communication, allocation of resources, hazard identification and managing out risks. Some candidates pitched their responses at the wrong level and wrote instead about action such as employee responsibilities.

Candidates usually attained at least a few marks for their response to part b). Examples of responses that would have secured marks included: setting a good example, making health and safety a priority, informing staff about safety issues, providing training and protective equipment and dealing with staff who behave irresponsibly or inappropriately.

## **Question 5**

- a) *Explain the difference between training and development. (5 marks)*
- b) *Explain why it is important for employees to take responsibility for their own development. (7 marks)*
- c) *Explain how managers can support team members to enable them to achieve their learning objectives. (8 marks)*

## **Examiner Feedback**

This was a popular option and most candidates demonstrated some understanding.

In response to part a), most candidates understood that training relates to particular skills and that development is more longterm and often career orientated

There were seven marks available for part b) but most candidates provided only a few points. Examples of points that could have covered included keeping up to date with development, demonstrating professionalism, showing commitment to ongoing development and enabling individuals to pursue their careers.

There were many good responses to part c) and most candidates identified several valid points in response to this question. Again, some candidates did not appear to appreciate that the mark allocation was an indication of the number of points expected in responses.

## **Question 6**

- a) *All organisations have risks which are particular to the industry in which they operate. Describe the seven main types of risk and the implications of these risks for an organisation. (14 marks)*
- b) *Explain the role of the risk register in mitigating the risks identified. (6 marks)*

## **Examiner Feedback**

This question was a less popular option but was well answered by those who understood organisational risks.

Candidates who performed well on part a) understood the seven types of risk and the implications these have for organisations. These types of risk are: Human, Environmental, Property, Financial, Political and Reputational, Technological, Operational. Some candidates did not appear to understand the concept of a risk register and instead wrote about carrying out a SWOT or PESTLE analysis or about undertaking a risk assessment.

Part b) was not well answered. Some candidates correctly explained how a risk register provides a structure for collating information which can lead to the identification of consequences, prioritisation and mitigation. However, others wrote about the contents of a risk register and failed to provide the explanation required by the question.

## **Question 7**

*Explain the positive outcomes that can result from effective and efficient communications within an organisation. (20 marks)*

## **Examiner Feedback**

This question was a popular option for candidates. There were many points that could have been made and some candidates attained high scores for their responses.

However, candidates often provided only brief responses (sometimes as lists) and many ignored the requirement to “explain” their points.

## **Question 8**

*Explain how the planning and chairing of meetings can contribute to the development of positive working relationships with colleagues from external organisations. (20 marks)*

## **Examiner Feedback**

There were a number of components to be considered in responses. Candidates who provided good responses recognised the need to think about planning and managing meetings whilst also bearing in mind the impact of actions in building relationships. Relevant points that could have been covered including recognising pressures (including time) on attendees, ensuring that the purpose of the meeting is clear, identifying what each organisation will bring, making colleagues feel welcomed and respected and providing opportunities during the meeting to exchange information and views.

Less successful candidates tended to write about how to organise and chair a meeting without actually applying the information to the context. Some candidates focussed on incident debriefing or on internal meetings.