TRAVEL AND TOURISM

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Core Paper</td></tr>
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General comments

There was a slightly smaller entry for the second examination session of the new Advanced Level qualification. The introduction of a new specification will have resource and curriculum planning implications for Centres and it is hoped that the following comments, together with those contained in the previous report, will be of practical use to the individual members of staff delivering the Paper 1 Core content. All future examination questions will continue to be based around pieces of stimulus material, derived mainly from travel and tourism industry sources, which will have been selected solely on the basis of their ability to illustrate key aspects of the syllabus content. This second examination was thus typical of what Centres can expect in future sessions.

It is important that candidates understand and appreciate the development of travel and tourism at a variety of scales. This means that they should be aware of developments within their immediate **local** area as well as within their country as a whole. Furthermore, an international perspective is also required. It should be remembered that candidates will obtain credit for providing specific details about facilities and locations that are appropriate to the demands of particular questions. However, there were far too many instances of candidates making very little effort to provide precise details about examples with which they were familiar. Furthermore, there was frequently evidence of candidates ignoring the precise wording of individual questions and specific comment about this will be made in the sections that follow.

Many candidates appear to struggle with the actual requirements of particular questions. Centres are strongly advised to make the following '**Key Word**' definitions part of the examination preparation sessions for this paper.

Key Word(s)	Meaning/expectation
Identify	Simply name, state or list.
Describe	State the characteristic features of something.
Explain	Make the meaning of something clear by providing appropriate valid details.
Outline	Set out the main characteristics describing essentials only.
Discuss (including the ability to *analyse*)	Provide evidence or opinions about something arriving at a balanced conclusion. The candidate is being asked to consider an issue and is expected to present arguments and evidence to support particular points of view and to show where they stand in relation to topic. The candidate is expected to look at different interpretations or approaches to the issue.
Assess (including the ability to *evaluate*)	Judge from available evidence and arrive at a reasoned conclusion. The candidate is expected to present a number of factors or issues and weigh up or appraise their relative significance or importance.
Compare and contrast	Point out similarities and differences and discuss the variations identified.
Justify	Present a reasoned case to show that an idea or statement is true.

Candidates who are unable to respond in an appropriate way to these command verbs will always have difficulty in obtaining the higher marks for questions that are assessed by means of 'Levels of Response'. There was some further evidence that candidates were making an effort to end their answers to the last part of each of the four questions with some form of **conclusion**. This is to be encouraged because a **valid** conclusion, based on the previous points made or considered, is clear evidence of evaluation taking place and will thus usually warrant a score in Level 3 (7-9 marks).

The vast majority of candidates were able to answer all four questions within the time available.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)(i) and (ii) The vast majority of candidates were able to interpret the stimulus material and identify the two points (Number 2 and Number 10) that related to product knowledge and teamwork.

(b) Most candidates were able to interpret the Fig. 1 stimulus material very well and there were many good descriptions of the ways in which waiting staff were able to create good first impressions. Most answers gave attention to appearance (grooming, uniform and equipment), being attentive, having product knowledge, introducing themselves and smiling.

(c) Many valid methods were identified but the degree of analysis provided tended to be very variable and so few answers managed to obtain maximum credit. For example, observation by a manager was a valid point. Candidates were then expected to point out that such observation allowed service shortcomings to be identified and then additional training might be provided to rectify matters.

(d) Most candidates had difficulty with this and many were clearly unsure about **internal** customers, particularly in terms of the Fig. 1 scenario quoted. The question actually specified waiting staff and the more obvious internal contacts would be with kitchen staff (plating up and calling for service), bar staff (ordering and collecting drinks) and reservation staff (setting up for a booking). Many candidates simply did not appreciate or understand what was being asked.

(e) It was pleasing to see that many candidates had made studies of hotel operations and there were many references to particular organisations. However, candidates did not always explain how **improvements** in customer service delivery had come about and there tended to be a marked lack of evaluative comment suggesting what has been most useful and why. Thus, progression into Level 3 was extremely limited. Candidates should have given more attention to identifiable procedures that were followed by particular members of staff, pointing out how following this procedure has produced an improved standard of service delivery and thus enhanced the overall customer experience. The candidates could then have attempted to conclude what had been most significant in bringing about the service improvements within their chosen organisation.

Question 2

(a) Not all candidates were fully aware that travel agencies act as retailers and that tour operators act as wholesalers within the chain of distribution. Thus answers were not always clearly stated and there was often a degree of confusion.

(b) The two brochures were readily identified but candidates did not always state the names in full and thus lost credit.

(c) Far too many individuals denied themselves maximum credit by giving emphasis to advantages to customers rather than to Airmiles. Better answers provided clear details about cost savings (premises and staff), extended opening hours and profitability.

(d) This question seemed to confuse some candidates and several responses were not very clear as to how destinations might benefit from cruise ship arrivals. There were, however, several very good responses clearly explaining how an increased amount of visitor spend would support jobs, stimulate local demand and result in improvements to the local infrastructure.

(e) This was a very topical question and it was pleasing to see active reference being made to the Beijing Olympics and South Africa World Cup. Furthermore, most candidates made a positive attempt to relate hosting a sporting event to tourism development objectives and some valid exemplification was usually offered. However, it was comparatively rare for any evaluation to be attempted and most candidates were lacking an opinion as to how the sporting event aided diversification of the total tourism product or how difficult it might be to bring benefits to destinations away from host venues. There were only a few answers that warranted a score in Level 3.

Question 3

(a) All candidates correctly identified the three Chinese cities with direct flights to Los Angeles.

(b) This question confused many candidates and many suggested TIC type services that would not really be provided in such an **overseas** context. However, credit was scored for suggesting things like destination information, supplying of brochures/guides/maps, visa advice, attraction information etc.

(c) Not all candidates were able to interpret information from Fig. 3 and analyse it in terms of the question. Very simply, candidates were expected to see that China is a growing market and that Los Angeles has much scope for VFR-related travel. There tended to be too much simple copying of the stimulus material rather than attempting an explanation of China's market potential.

(d) Most candidates were aware of Public Sector tourism objectives but there was only very brief analysis and virtually no concluding comment as to which were likely to be most significant and why this might be the case. Answers were simple and descriptive rather than analytical and this tended to limit progression beyond half marks.

(e) This was the problem question for most candidates. The concept of business tourism was not really understood. Centres are reminded that candidates are expected to have made a study of **one** destination and that business tourism facilities will be one component of that destination's total appeal. Most candidates struggled with this and very little attempt was made to examine the provision made for business visitors within a known destination. To help clarify what was expected, the following account would have scored a mark in Level 3 (7-9 marks).

Over the last ten years there has been a 53% growth in all business trips, exceeding the overall tourism growth rate. The conference and incentive travel segments are predicted to grow at a faster rate than any other tourism sector to the year 2010. Revenues from international business tourism are estimated to account for approximately 36% of total international tourism revenue by 2010.

Dubai is well established as the leading exhibition centre in the Middle East and it was recently voted the world's best conference venue. The city combines the facilities and services of one of the world's major international business centres with all the attractions of a top destination. This means that organisers and delegates alike can count on effective and successful events staged in a luxurious environment offering an outstanding range of recreational opportunities. The city now hosts more than 60 major exhibitions annually as well as numerous conferences, seminars, in-house corporate meetings and the like. This demand is serviced by a range of business facilities including:

- *Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry conference venue*
- *Major hotel venues, such as Jumeirah's Emirates Towers and Burj Al Arab properties*
- *Dubai World Trade Centre's 36,000 square metres exhibition hall*
- *Dubai Airport Exhibition Centre*
- *Other special interest venues e.g. Nad Al Sheba racecourse.*

The business sector is supported by major local companies such as Net Tours and Arabian Adventures that are well-equipped with a full destination management service covering hotel bookings, airport transfers, ground transport and a daily programme of tours and activities with multi-lingual guides. They also offer the required expertise for organising business-related travel, including original and exciting incentive programmes. However, the key factor in Dubai's recent expansion is the fact that it is an accessible location with an extensive range of 5* facilities.

Question 4

(a) Most candidates were able to identify valid negative environmental impacts but there were far too many instances of vague and ill-founded statements. For example, pollution might occur but to receive credit the candidate needs to specify the type. Furthermore, the question clearly contextualised the development work shown on Fig. 4(c) and so answers needed to fit this particular case.

(b) Some candidates missed the point of this question and neglected to emphasise the appeal to **foreign** owners. Better candidates were quick to latch on to the Tunisian context and spoke about cost/exchange rates as well as more obvious ideas of view, location and climate.

(c) Candidates were able to write about positive/negative socio-economic impacts without restriction as long as the focus was on the local community. This was not always the case and there was often some confusion. This tended to limit the amount of credit that could be awarded. Furthermore, the amount of explanation provided tended to be rather variable. However, it was quite common to read about impacts such as the Demonstration Effect, decline of traditional employment, increased cost of living, social problems and the loss of cultural identity. When these were clearly explained, several individuals scored full marks.

(d) There were some very perceptive answers to this question and it was very pleasing to read details about current travel industry trends. It was a shame that more precise details about declining destinations were not always forthcoming but the topic as a whole was clearly understood. Better answers were often set in the context of the Butler Model of destination evolution and key factors such as over-development, congestion and competition were commented on. However, as with other questions, there were comparatively few attempts at evaluative comment and thus progression into Level 3 was somewhat limited. Candidates should have made more use of their knowledge and understanding to offer some personal evaluation of the reasons why particular older mass market destinations are now under threat and subject to decline. They would then have been in a position to judge the most significant factors influencing the destinations under consideration.

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Many Centres submitted portfolios for the November session on time and this very much helped with the smooth running of the moderation process.

Where a small number of Centres were scaled downwards this was generally applied because a Centre had marked too leniently across the bands and in some instances key evidence was missing.

It was pleasing to see candidate work submitted by Centres that had clearly followed the guidance notes. These portfolios were generally well structured and presented in a clear and logical format. It was good to see the range of events organised and the enthusiasm demonstrated by candidates.

It should be noted that it is not necessary for candidates to submit work in expensive bindings.

Some Centres omitted the clear documentation from their packs – MS1 should be completed both by the underlining of the correct marks and writing the corresponding number.

A01 – Some candidates presented clear and logical plans with realistic itineraries and timescales. On occasions, there were large omissions from the plans along with poor organisational skills.

A02 – Candidates made a good attempt to show how they contributed to the event both in terms of planning and execution. It should be noted that the Moderator does not have the facility to watch DVDs and assessors should include witness statements for verification of tasks completed.

A03 – Some candidates failed to consider at least two feasibility studies. In some cases there was little evidence of risk assessments or contingency plans put forward and some candidates did not use a SWOT analysis to aid their reasoning.

A04 – Generally candidates evaluated their event well. There were occasions where candidates simply produced a running commentary of what they had done rather than actually evaluate and draw conclusions from the results of the customer feedback and offer suitable options/recommendations for improvements. It should be noted that all candidates should include at least one detailed witness statement from an independent observer or participant. This will provide evidence of customer service skills during event planning and implementation. This will help the candidate to further evaluate their performance.

Some assessors fail to annotate candidate work. Centres should ensure that they clearly annotate where the candidate has progressed through the mark bands, this will aid with both marking and moderating.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

General comments

It was pleasing to see an increase in the number of entries for this paper in the second examination session for this newly launched syllabus The performance of candidates was spread across the ability range and candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of this key vocational area and had been adequately prepared for the demands of the examination paper.

The examination was divided into 4 questions, each worth 25 marks. Each sub-set of questions within the four main questions is based upon vocationally-specific stimulus material. **Question 1** used the International Civil Aviation Organisation as its focus and **Question 2** examined candidates' understanding of tour packages through a City Tours in Japan scenario. PeruRail and its products and services formed the basis for **Question 3** whilst an advertisement about the Queen Mary 2 cruise ship tested candidates' knowledge of cruise holidays for **Question 4**.

Many candidates were able to transfer knowledge acquired in the classroom and use it in an applied manner through this approach using unseen stimulus material. The majority of candidates, who sat this examination, appeared to have sufficient time in which to answer all of the questions. It was also pleasing to note that the majority of candidates were able to use the space provided in the question paper for their answers, without needing to continue on additional pages. Certainly the intention is that the space allowed should act as a guide to candidates to the expected length of response.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The stimulus for this set of questions centred on an extract about the aims and objectives of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)

(a) (i)   Candidates were asked to identify two objectives of the ICAO with passenger needs as a focus. Most candidates were able to use the stimulus material effectively to identify at least one passenger need objective.

(ii)   As in the previous question, candidates were generally confident in describing the purpose of the 'Simplifying Passenger Travel' initiative to score the marks for this question.

(iii)   Most candidates were able to identify reasons why it is important to create an efficient and attractive transportation product in the airline industry, but few responses scored maximum marks here, as there was limited explanation of these reasons.

(b)   This question required candidates to discuss how airlines can cater to the needs of business travellers. Many candidates were able to list examples of possible products and services that airlines might offer, but only the better performing candidates accessed the higher level marks for explaining how these products and services would meet business travellers' needs.

(c)   This question required candidates to evaluate the impact of business tourism on destinations. Many candidates made a good attempt to provide both positive and negative impacts of tourism on destinations in general terms and better performing candidates were able to exemplify this in terms of the specific impacts of business tourism.

Question 2

The questions within this sub-set were based around stimulus material on City Tours in Japan and information about Guiding Services of the Japan National Tourist Organisation (JNTO).

(a) (i)   Candidates encountered no difficulty in four components of the advertised holiday package.

(ii)   Surprisingly, some candidates found it difficult to differentiate the package, despite clues in the Notes to the advertisement regarding alternative destinations, upgraded flights and accommodation etc.

(b)   There was limited vocational understanding demonstrated by candidates for this question. Many relied heavily on the stimulus material for information about guiding services, despite this being studied under the ancillary services offered by most tourism authorities.

(c)   Responses to this question varied – some candidates had good understanding of the products and services of national tourism organisations, whilst weaker candidates clearly had no knowledge of the type of work undertaken by such organisations.

Question 3

This question used an extract from PeruRail's online booking information as its stimulus.

(a) (i)   Definitions of the term *adventure-seeking leisure traveller* were generally disappointing. Weaker candidates made incorrect reference to lost cost or comfort, taken directly from the stimulus material.

(ii)   All candidates were able to identify features of the rail service.

(iii)   Many candidates identified reasons for the popularity of rail travel but were unable to develop their answers fully enough to access the full marks available for this question.

(b)   Candidates generally found this question difficult. Most candidates were able to explain the difference between an off-peak and a peak tariff but many were not able to assess benefits of using seasonal tariffs for customers or transport providers.

(c)   Responses to this question on using CRS as a distribution channel were good. Most candidates were able to use vocationally specific examples to assess the advantages to customers and travel providers. Only better performing candidates offered any negative comments in their evaluation of the use of this type of technology.

Question 4

This question used an advertisement about the Queen Mary 2 cruise ship as its stimulus.

(a) (i)   All candidates correctly identified examples of products and services from the stimulus material.

(ii)   Most candidates could identify aspects of the appeal of a cruise ship such as the QM2, but only better performing candidates could develop their answer sufficiently to access the second marks for each identification.

(b)   It was disappointing to note the lack of understanding with this question. Candidates should have studied ancillary services of a travel agency – expected responses here would have been currency exchange, travel insurance etc. Many weaker candidates identified products and services of the cruise ship here again. Better performing candidates identified correct products but could not often offer a valid reason for a travel agency to offer these types of services.

(c)   This question proved a good differentiator – better candidates were able to consider the socio-economic and environmental impacts of increased ship size on ports of call. Weaker candidates tended to describe the facilities required in a port irrespective of ship size.

(d) This last question on the paper required candidates to evaluate the reasons for the growth in popularity of all-inclusive holidays. Most candidates chose to answer this within the context of a cruise holiday, and better performing candidates were able to provide good vocational understanding of why cruise holidays are popular within the all-inclusive market. Weaker responses tended to list only the products and services offered by a cruise holiday, making little or no reference to the question posed.

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General comments

This was the second paper in this series. There were two case studies for candidates to refer to, **Question 1** covered an article on a Bedouin Sheikh and English woman working in partnership in Egypt, and **Question 2** was based on ski and snowboarding in Switzerland. Candidates were provided with an answer booklet for responses. There appeared to be no problems of timing issues for candidates as all answers were completed in the 1.5 hr duration. Generally, the standard of entry was very pleasing, it was clear that many Centres had studied relevant case studies of eco-, adventure and cultural tourism as candidates gave interesting and appropriate examples when requested. It should be noted that it is not necessary for candidates to repeat the question at the start of their answer as this will severely limit the space for the written response. Candidates should try and avoid repetition within answers particularly those relating to the impacts of tourism. Weaker candidates were unable to access the higher marks for extended answers if they were unable to 'analyse' 'discuss' or 'evaluate' where asked. It would help candidates if Centres explained the difference between such command words and encouraged candidates to make clear and concise judgements or conclusions.

In general the standard of this session was very pleasing.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Very well answered, most candidates were able to give three economic benefits of the Bedouin tourism project.

(b) Well answered, many candidates were able to gain both marks for identification of how the project supported responsible tourism such as recycling, energy efficiency and composting.

(c) Reasonably well answered. Some candidates were unable to discuss positive and negative cultural impacts that the redevelopment of Sheikh Salem House may have had on the Bedouin community – sometimes candidates confuse 'economic' impacts with cultural ones.

(d) Some very good examples were given for this answer. However, weaker candidates struggled to attain higher marks if they did not discuss in relation to an ecotourism project. The question required candidates to assess how the public, private and voluntary sectors supported such a project. It therefore required more than just a description of what each element of the sector does.

Question 2

(a) Very well answered, most candidates gained the full three marks here.

(b) Very well answered, most candidates were able to explain three environmental impacts caused by adventure tourism.

(c) Very well answered, most candidates gave suggestions such as – education, habitat replacement and introducing fees.

(d)   A question that clearly differentiated. Once again it was necessary for candidates to discuss in relation to adventure tourism activities. Some candidates were able to do so and give sound references. Weaker candidates struggled to link to specific activities and simply described cultural traditions and lifestyles in relation to impacts only.