

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 7096/01

Written paper

General comments

There was quite a large entry for this examination session and there was some further evidence that candidate performance continues to reflect the advice given to Centres in previous reports. However, only a minority of candidates are able to fully demonstrate both an understanding and an appreciation of the international Travel and Tourism industry at a variety of scales. There was some accurate reference being made to developments in a variety of locations but far too many candidates simply rely on quoting evidence and exemplification from their local areas. There were some very good scripts but there is still a wide variation between Centres in terms of the level of candidate performance.

There are still many instances of candidates ignoring the precise wording of individual questions and more specific comment will be made about that in the following sections. However, many candidates still appear to struggle with the actual requirements of particular questions and Centres are now once again encouraged to make the following “**Key Word**” definitions part of their examination preparation sessions.

| Key Words | 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. |
| Discuss (includes 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 thus expected to present an argument, with evidence, to support a particular point of view and thus come to a conclusion . |
| Evaluate (this also includes the ability to analyse) | Judge from available evidence and arrive at a reasoned conclusion . The candidate is expected to present a number of factors or issues and then weigh up their relative significance or importance. |

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 is little evidence that candidates are making an effort to end their answers to the last part of each of the four questions with any form of valid **conclusion**. 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 (5-6 marks).

Most candidates were able to answer all four questions within the time available.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The interpretation of the photographs produced a clear differentiation, with a surprising number of candidates failing to clearly identify the Great Barrier Reef, Ayres Rock and Sydney Harbour Bridge.
- (b) Candidates tended to copy the stimulus material without giving sufficient thought to the precise wording of the question. Essentially candidates were expected to identify three advantages of taking the advertised tour (such as guide, luxury coach and superior accommodation) and then provide an explanatory comment to highlight the appeal of each aspect. The latter was frequently neglected thus limiting the amount of credit that could be awarded.

- (c) (i-iv) Answers to these four low tariff questions clearly showed that most candidates have a rather limited understanding of world climatic zones. Northern Australia, as clearly indicated on Fig. 1, has a tropical climate while Tasmania's is temperate. Many candidates were unaware that local time in Perth will be behind that in Sydney. Few candidates were aware that central Australia is an arid area with desert-like conditions and thus heat and drought will be obvious natural hazards.
- (d) There tended to be more thoughtful answers to this question and candidate performance was frequently better than for part (b). However, candidates frequently repeated themselves and there was too much emphasis given to the role of guides. Very simply, this was a question about environmental impacts and candidates were simply being invited to suggest and explain strategies that might be used in a protected area, such as the one shown in Location B. Higher marks were usually awarded to answers talking about access times, signage, charges and pre-set routes.
- (e) Answers tended to be very limited and the vast majority of candidates were unfamiliar with a known example. This is very surprising because previous examinations have featured the Eastern Orient Express and the Blue Train. Answers lacking precise information could never really offer any real analysis of traveller appeal and it was a struggle for any answer to reach Level 2. To help clarify what was expected, the following account would have warranted a score in Level 3.

The Golden Chariot train tours will appeal to luxury travellers for a variety of reasons. This Indian rail service uses a 5 luxury train and all cabins have LCD TV and access to wi-fi. They are tastefully furnished and guests have every comfort on the tour. The train also has a Spa & Gym. These are leisure facilities associated with the best hotels. The train also has two restaurants and a lounge bar and guests will thus have plenty of choice for rest, relaxation and entertainment as they undertake their tours.*

Question 2

- (a) The vast majority of candidates were able to identify Los Angeles and Hong Kong.
- (b) Many candidates were unaware of what **ground services** involve and many answers scored no credit because of this. Far too many individuals wrote about cabin services and facilities instead of making reference to the chauffeur service, dedicated check-in and lounge access. When these were explained, candidates frequently obtained full marks.
- (c) (i) Many candidates had ideas about why personal presentation was important but few could state clearly that it creates a good impression, meets customer expectations and gives a positive image of the company. However, most candidates managed at least one credit-worthy statement.
- (ii) Again, most candidates had the correct idea but many had difficulty in making sure of maximum credit. Few mentioned this being a customer service issue, meeting a specific customer need and tended to write about communication in more general terms.
- (iii) Few candidates contextualised this in Health and Safety terms but tended to concentrate on dealing with an emergency. However, there were many perceptive comments along the lines of difficulty in finding a hospital at 37,000 feet!
- (d) A very mixed response to this question with the better candidates identifying the more significant features/advantages. Weaker candidates had lots of vague answers and many quoted the 5 features of Air New Zealand i.e. leather armchairs, lie-flat beds, entertainment, wines and cuisine. Credit was awarded to all valid suggestions such as cheaper than hotels, can accommodate several people, stop where and when convenient, no need to book rooms in advance, flexibility, more of country seen etc.
- (e) Marks were most often earned incidentally by candidates being able to name two types of accommodation. A large proportion of candidates did not really understand the question because they tended to describe the different types of board available to guests in serviced and self-catered accommodation rather than the different types of accommodation suppliers available in a chosen destination. Only a minority progressed to Level 2. To help Centres clarify the issues raised by this question, the following account would have warranted a score in Level 3.

Dubai has a range of accommodation options ranging from the Burj Al Arab (the world's first 7 hotel), business hotels such as Emirates Towers to more budget properties with 3* or less. The Burj Al Arab meets the needs of luxury travellers with all rooms being suites and offering butler service. Leisure travellers have plenty of choice along Jumeirah Beach with all hotels being 4 or 5* and these hotels have over 90% occupancy most of the year. They provide beachfront locations, are only 40 minutes from the airport and offer value for money discounts during summer and Ramadan.*

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates were able to identify the four cruise circuits itemised in Fig. 3.
- (b) Most answers obtained credit for quoting that “cabins are external and most have balconies” and a variety of valid points were made by many individuals. However, many candidates did not follow the wording of the question and a common error was the quoting of cruise ship services and features such as spa, pool, Jacuzzi, etc. These were not features of **cabin** accommodation and thus gained no credit.
- (c) Many candidates provided rather muddled responses and far too many individuals seemed to be unaware that the Mediterranean is in the northern hemisphere and that the period from April to October is therefore not winter. However, credit was given for ideas relating to peak season and levels of demand.
- (d) Few candidates could give four correct destinations calling into question the current levels of destination awareness amongst the candidates. This question tested simple locational knowledge and Centres are advised that similar questions will be set in future examinations.
- (e) The question invited the candidates to **discuss** procedures **not** to describe them. This basic misconception explains why so many answers failed to progress beyond Level 1. To help clarify what was expected, the following account would have warranted a score in Level 3.

The agent is expected to interpret customer requirements correctly and check availability and prices of suitable options. Once arrangements are confirmed, the agent will prepare a reservation file and itinerary for the customer and record payment. This forms a contract with the customer which will now be binding once full payment is made. From the customer's point of view the most important aspects are the making of a booking/reservation and the safe receipt of all travel documents.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates were able to identify four positive economic impacts from the information contained in Fig. 4. However, this was not always the case and far too many weaker individuals either just listed a number (presumably for one of the five numbered bullet points) for each response or just simply copied a part of one of the five paragraphs.
- (b) Most answers contained appropriate comment related to leakage. Very few individuals commented on seasonal/part-time work or posts going to foreigners.
- (c) Answers were frequently sound and this was one of the better answers in terms of candidate response indicating that it is both well taught and understood. However, a small minority included economic impacts which did not score credit and candidates penalised themselves by not answering the question properly.
- (d) This question did not suit some candidates and many answers tended to be vague. Even if the chosen festival was appropriate, not many candidates said enough, in terms of the details provided, to earn all four marks available. Some festivals were rather vague e.g. Chinese ceremony. Diwali and Eid were popular choices. The former scored better as there was usually a greater concentration on the appeal to visitors.
- (e) Many answers failed to fully understand the role of national tourist boards in terms of overseas promotion. Far too many candidates chose to write about the provision of services within the home country and thus neglected the overseas dimension required by the question. Answers were again

rather descriptive and this very much limited progression into Levels 2 and 3. To illustrate what was required, the following account would have warranted a score in Level 3.

National Tourist Boards use a variety of marketing and promotion methods. Most have extensive websites which make destination information available to the world thus maximising market potential. Overseas offices make material available to key target markets so they will often run publicity campaigns to promote events and attend travel fairs to showcase tourist facilities etc. However, the fact that most boards host familiarisation visits suggests that these are a very significant part of any marketing and promotion strategy. Such visits will mean that overseas agents will have firsthand experience of the destination and it is they who will advise potential visitors about the destination and influence their choice.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 7096/02

Alternative to Coursework

General comments

The level of understanding by candidates was generally pleasing and most candidates were able to complete all of the questions within the time allowed.

Performance overall varied in line with the range of abilities of the candidature. Most were able to respond at a basic level to all questions, and better performing candidates demonstrated some skill in extended answer writing, where questions required more vocational application rather than factual knowledge.

As on previous occasions, the question paper comprised 4 questions each worth 25 marks, each based around travel and tourism related case study material.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The scenario for this set of questions related specifically to the developing ecotourism market in Turkey.

- (a) Candidates were expected to use the results from a situation analysis to complete a PEST table. As has often been the case with this type of question for this module, many candidates identified more than the target number of four influences. The majority of candidates scored at least three out of the four available marks for this question.
- (b)(i) Many candidates experienced some difficulty differentiating between strengths and priorities in this question and many candidates did not seem to realise that the priority they chose had to be **within** the control of Turkish Tourism Authorities.
- (ii) Many candidates were able to identify one of the many threats to ecotourism projects in Turkey, to achieve the mark for this question.
- (c) This question required candidates to demonstrate their understanding of how marketing and promotion can be used to overcome negative influences on the ecotourism projects in Turkey. Many candidates were able to show some understanding of the marketing actions that could be used to this effect in general terms, with some better performing candidates using applied amplification to good effect.
- (d)(i) The majority of candidates were able to produce an accurate representation of the product life cycle with valid labels. Several weaker candidates confused the sequence of the stages or omitted at least one stage, thus reducing their access to marks in this question.
- (ii) Most candidates were able to respond to this question, selecting an appropriate stage of the life cycle model for Turkish ecotourism projects and justifying their choice of stage.
- (e) This question enabled candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the marketing mix within an applied context. Weaker candidates made reference only to the 4 P's of the marketing mix, with little or no attempt to apply these within the context of Turkey. Better performing candidates made an association for each of the 4 P's within the specific context of ecotourism.

Question 2

This series of questions used the product portfolio of 'Global Travel' as its focus.

- (a) (i) Many candidates could define the term brand loyalty although weaker candidates defined only the term brand and thus did not achieve the mark for this question.
- (ii) Although many candidates attempted to give examples of how visitor attractions influences brand loyalty, few candidates achieved full marks for their responses here. Responses tended to be very generalised about good quality customer service, or examples were not specific to the travel and tourism industry as required by the question.
- (b) Brand switching was understood by many of the candidates, and better responses gave good exemplification of the type of techniques used by travel providers in influencing the buying decisions of customers.
- (c) Many candidates did not fully understand how to approach this question. Candidates should have identified four different market segments that 'Global Travel' appeals to through its product/service portfolio. Weaker candidates merely listed the different products but did not make an association with the market segments. Better answers used segments such as business travellers, families etc. or named segmentation characteristics such as lifestyle or geographical to achieve the marks.
- (d) This question required candidates to examine the benefits of online distribution both directly with customers and through a trade only link. The majority of responses provided a good insight into the benefits of online distribution channels from both the customers' perspective and for the provider. Few candidates were able to demonstrate an understanding of the concept of 'trade-only' links within the distribution channel.
- (e) Most candidates achieved good marks for their answer to this question about the effectiveness of e-brochures as a promotional method. There was quite a lot of repetition from the previous question regarding the benefits of being able to book online at the same time, but credit was awarded for the recognition of the cost and time saving advantages that travel providers gain from e-resources compared with printed materials.

Question 3

This question was unlike the others for this paper, as it did not have an industry scenario as a focus. Instead this question used the price element of the marketing mix as its main emphasis.

- (a) (i) Many candidates could accurately describe market skimming as a pricing policy. Weaker candidates chose examples outside the context of the travel and tourism industry, thus limiting their marks here.
- (ii) More candidates were familiar with the concept of variable pricing, giving appropriate examples.
- (b) (i) Answers to this question varied enormously. On the one hand, better performing candidates recognised that value for money is associated with what something is worth, depending on the customer's expectations. On the other hand, weaker candidates confused 'value for money' with 'value of money' and wrote inappropriately about exchange rates etc.
- (ii) This question required candidates to consider how value for money could be achieved through a package holiday and its associated features of the chosen destination. Most candidates attempted an answer but only the better performing candidates were able to score marks, by recognising that value for money links closely to customer satisfaction.
- (c) This question was least well answered out of all of the questions on this paper. Many candidates were able to infer that price makers were those setting a price but many incorrectly thought price takers were customers.
- (d) This question on factors affecting price was generally well answered. Most candidates identified a range of internal or external factors with weaker candidates referring to the more obvious factors such as class of travel, rating of hotel etc. Better answers took into consideration exchange rate fluctuations, fuel costs etc.

- (e) Most candidates were able to score maximum marks for a description of how special offers are used by Travel and Tourism providers.

Question 4

This question used the Tourism Authority in Tasmania as a stimulus.

- (a) This simple question asking for a research technique caused many candidates difficulty. There was much confusion between a technique (an interview or survey) and a method (primary research or field research).
- (b) Most candidates seemed to understand the benefits of multi-choice questions although few made reference to the difference between open and closed questions and how they can be used, which was the expected response for this question. Several weaker candidates wrote generalised responses to this question focusing on interviews rather than multi-choice questions and therefore could not achieve the marks here.
- (c) Many candidates were able to score well here, recognising that sections on a questionnaire entitled 'about you' would result in a customer profile. Weaker responses made generalised statements about recognising customer wants and needs but still accessed lower level marks.
- (d)(i) This easy three-mark question was quite badly answered. Many candidates seemed unsure of what promotional materials were and chose inaccurate responses.
- (ii) Responses here depended largely upon the promotional materials selected in the previous question. This question required a simple comparison of two promotional materials in terms of cost, availability and target audience. Better performing candidates were able to access these marks well but weaker performing candidates often did not attempt a response here.
- (e) This question was answered well. Candidates have come to recognise this type of question from previous sessions and understand that they need to consider the full range of functions from the assessment objectives. Weaker candidates merely listed these and scored low marks; better performing candidates were able to offer amplification within the applied context of Tasmania.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 7096/03

Coursework

General comments

This module comprises the coursework component as an alternative to the examination module, through which candidates have an opportunity to produce an in-depth investigation into the provision of visitor services in a destination of their choice. Candidates are required to produce an individual, written report of up to 3000 words based on their research findings. This coursework is then assessed internally by Centre staff, and submitted for external moderation by CIE Examiners.

The number of entries for this module is beginning to grow and as a result more variation was evident in the standards achieved by candidates across the ability range. Centres are preparing candidates effectively to undertake the research element of their coursework investigations based on the learning content delivered prior to the start of the coursework itself. Generally, candidates demonstrated clear understanding of the assessment objectives for this module and most candidates were able to use appropriate research techniques in order to gather data and information for their project.

Secondary research sources tend to be easily identified by candidates with wide-ranging supporting evidence in the form of print-outs, marketing literature etc. The majority of these materials were well source-referenced, although as has been the case in previous examination sessions, these sources were not always utilised as fully as they might have been, appearing on occasions as appendix materials but not referenced by the candidate in any other way. As has been noted previously, good practice would be to incorporate relevant examples from such source materials within the main body of the report, but ensuring that candidates extract relevant information and represent this in their own words, thus avoiding issues such as plagiarism.

The majority of coursework investigations provide interesting overviews of visitor service provision in a chosen locality, including the range of products and services offered by a variety of providers. Most of the investigations tend to examine the breadth of visitor service provision offered by one provider such as a hotel, a travel organisation, a tour organiser or a guiding service provider in a chosen locality. As on previous occasions, many candidates were able to convey a satisfactory level of understanding of targeted products and services within the travel and tourism industry, and could use some applied examples from their selected destination. Many candidates were also able to differentiate between the provision of business and leisure travel services, although this is often evidenced generically through the use of an events guide.

Most of the submitted assignments adhered closely to the guidelines from the syllabus regarding good practice for report generation. The reports were mainly professionally presented, well organised and some of the assessment evidence had been clearly referenced by candidates, which assists in both the internal assessment process and that of external moderation.

Candidates selected a wide range of assignment focuses, the majority of which provided very good opportunities for candidates to examine in detail tourism providers within a chosen locality. Some candidates were able to communicate the purpose of their investigation and were able to present data in a meaningful way.

Centres generally implemented the assessment arrangements for this coursework module effectively, and many tutors made good use of the assessment grid from the syllabus, in order to record their internal assessment decisions against each of the identified assessment objectives. As on previous occasions, it is pleasing to note the honesty and accuracy of the assessment decisions made in Centres. Not all Centres used annotations on individual candidate assessment records, which would assist the external moderation process, by pinpointing specific page number references for each of the assessment criteria, i.e. writing, for example, 2B, Level 1 in the right hand margin at the point within the report which denotes the collection of primary and/or secondary research data.

Given the still relatively small number of entries for this module, there has been limited evidence of internal moderation of these coursework investigations. However, it is again worth emphasising the need for Centres to use internal moderation where more than one tutor has been involved in the teaching and assessment process, in order to ensure that candidates receive equality of opportunity and that all assessment decisions are reached fairly and to the same standard.