



Level 1 and Level 2 Certificate

Preparation for Working Life 4800

Report on the Examination

2010 examination - June series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © **2010** AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX

Level 1 / 2 Certificate in Preparation for Working Life

Written Paper (4800/W)

It was pleasing to see another increase in candidate numbers this year. The pattern of candidate performance was broadly in line with that of previous years and the questions were accessible to the vast majority of candidates. It was clear that most candidates had been well prepared for the examination and there was no evidence to suggest that candidates had difficulties in completing the paper in the time allowed.

Section A

Candidates tended to score well on the questions dealing with the role of the Managing Director, first aid, emotions, the hazard warning sign and the role of fats in a balanced diet. Candidates were less secure in their knowledge and understanding of net pay, salary, piecework, the P60 and the role of a referee in supporting job applications.

Section B

Question 11

Relatively few candidates gained full marks on this question, although a significant number gained two of the three marks available. These were usually for explanations covering the protection from transfer of micro organisms and either the possible method of transfer to the food or the consequence of food poisoning.

Question 12

This question proved challenging to many candidates. The most common error was to suggest that the tax code indicates tax to be paid rather than tax free allowance. Consequently many candidates suggested in part (b) that Zoe's net pay would decrease. Some candidates suggested that net pay is unaffected by tax code changes.

Question 13

Just over a third of the candidates gained full marks here for successfully identifying the emotional and intellectual aspects.

Question 14

Candidates tended to gain the mark for the advantage of e-mail in terms of speed in part (a) but found the disadvantage in part (b) slightly more challenging. The mark here was most commonly gained for system failure responses.

Question 15

Just over one third of the candidates successfully identified CAD – Computer Aided Design to gain the mark here.

Question 16

This was the first time that this format of question had been used on this paper and it proved to be successful in differentiating between the candidates. Side-stepping was generally well known with mentoring and appraisal a little less so.

Question 17

Most candidates gained at least one of the two marks available here, but weaker candidates tended to focus on the effects or basis for the bullying and discrimination rather than explaining what they mean.

Question 18

Relatively few candidates were able to gain both marks on this question with many becoming confused between blood flow from veins and arteries and oxygenation being a result of exposure of the blood to the external air.

Question 19

The majority of candidates successfully calculated Wayne's gross weekly pay with the most common error, as might be expected, being £145 which results from subtraction rather than addition of the relevant amounts.

Question 20

Overall candidates' knowledge of the minimum wage tended to be better than their knowledge of fixed term contracts. A common error in part (a) was suggesting that 'fixed term' meant that the terms of the contract could not be changed.

Section C

Question 21

As on previous papers candidates scored well on this hazard and risk question. Where marks were not gained this tended to be the result of the lack of an accurate description of the hazard, which prevented access to the risk marks. Many candidates failed to recognise that the rake was upturned and others suggested that the ladder needed to be supported rather than the problem being the man leaning over to one side.

Question 22

The majority of candidates scored at least one of the two marks available in part (a) successfully suggesting an aspect the enterprise plan should cover. Candidates tended to score well in part (b) demonstrating a sound understanding of relevant skills, attitudes and qualities needed to make enterprise activities successful. Part (c) was a little more challenging with the weaker candidates sometimes failing to realise that the evaluation takes place after, rather than before, the enterprise activity.

Question 23

This question was very well answered by a large majority of the candidates, who demonstrated a sound knowledge of how to prepare for a job interview and use body language in an interview for good effect.

Question 24

Candidates found part (c) of this question to be rather more challenging than parts (a) and (b). Knowledge and understanding of the risks associated with smoking ten cigarettes a day over a long period of time and of not having enough rest and sleep were generally sound. Significant numbers of candidates considered having lots of friends that they see regularly as a negative rather than a positive effect in part (c).

Question 25

Many candidates found part (a) to be challenging, as a result they scored only one or two of the five marks available, usually for answers focussing on the financial aspects of redundancy only. Part (b) proved even more challenging for many candidates with very few candidates gaining both marks available. When marks were gained these tended to be for job centre and counselling service answers.

Question 26

There were a good range of candidate responses on this last question but weaker candidates tended to list budget items only, rather than explaining why it is important for Louise to plan her budget carefully. Higher ability candidates considered the financial consequences of planning carefully or not and linked this to physical, intellectual, emotional and social aspects of Louise's well-being.

Coursework (4800/C)

General

Overall the moderation process was reasonably smooth and I would like to congratulate the large majority of centres that dealt with the coursework in this qualification with efficiency, integrity and professionalism.

This is the third occasion on which coursework has been part of the qualification. Centres are becoming increasingly proficient in this component but improvements are still possible. It is hoped that the following comments will enable centres to continue to improve their performance and that of their students.

The letter of Application

Many students scored well in this element but marks could be improved if careful attention was paid to the following points:

- Ensure that all letters end with a signature, including those that have been word processed.
- Ensure that an appropriate and compatible opening and closure are used.
- Ensure that a date is recorded.

The majority of candidates scored well for content and reference to the position for which they were applying.

It is worth mentioning that some candidates wrote too much in their letter and this often resulted in them being penalised for poor communication. If they had kept their letter short and to the point then they may well have not incurred this penalty.

Some centres also marked their candidates' letters as though all of the content marks were for spelling, grammar and so on. This is not the case and credit is given for the nature of the content and not just its technical accuracy.

Centres must also be careful not to over-direct their students. In some cases centres had gone beyond the bounds of a template and produced little more than a 'fill in the blanks' exercise. This is not acceptable as the work ceases to be that of the student.

The Curriculum Vitae

Once again many students scored well in this element and followed an appropriate format that they could use and build upon in the years ahead. However some common errors were identifiable and centres should emphasise these to future cohorts:

- In the 'Qualifications' section, students should record the subjects they have taken/ are going to take **plus** either the level (e.g. GCSE) or a grade/predicted grade.

- In the 'Work Experience' section, candidates should **indicate what they did** rather than just the name of an employer, which may well mean very little to an external assessor.
- In the 'Referees' section, students should name **two referees** and their position **plus** their contact details (any one of address, telephone number or email address).

Interview Preparation Notes

This element was by far the most problematic for candidates and centres to deal with effectively. It was also the most effective differentiator between Level 1 and Level 2 candidates once external moderation had taken place. The following points are worthy of note for those centres that wish to improve their students' performance next year:

- The work submitted must be the written work of the candidates. It is not acceptable to send witness statements from mock interviews, photographic records of mock interviews or any material produced by third parties. The specification makes this very clear (page 11) and a number of centres' marks were substantially reduced for failing to satisfy this criterion.
- In order to reach the higher level marks for this element, students must explain why they would adopt certain strategies at an interview rather than simply saying what they would do.
- The work submitted must be the candidate's own work. There was some evidence of Internet downloads and over-direction by teachers resulting in identical or near identical submissions by candidates.
- Candidates would find it easier to access more marks and, in particular, the marks awarded for 'specific interview preparation', if they related their work to an employment/college advertisement – either real or simulated. If the latter is the case (i.e. simulated) then candidates will benefit from the provision of greater levels of detail in the advertisement. The inclusion of this advertisement with the portfolios would also make the moderation process more meaningful.

As mentioned above, this element ultimately proved to be the most effective differentiator once moderation had taken place. It was clear, however, that a few centres did not appreciate the standard of work required to gain the highest marks. This qualification and, therefore, the coursework component must be able to demonstrate its ability to differentiate between candidates at different levels of attainment. The highest marks within this element can only be gained by those candidates who can identify what and justify why certain attitudes and approaches should be adopted at interviews. In addition the highest attaining candidates must demonstrate this for both generic and specific interview preparation.

Administration

Whilst most centres demonstrated efficient administration procedures, there were a number of areas where some centres could ensure more thorough checks are made. It would be appreciated if the following could be assured:

- The meeting of the deadline for the submission of coursework portfolios (7th May) unless AQA have granted permission for the deadline to be extended.
- Full and accurate completion of the Centre Declaration Sheet and the Candidate Record Forms. The moderation process was delayed in many cases due to the failure to complete these documents either accurately or not at all.
- The submission of coursework portfolios in the format requested by the specification. Work should not be in plastic wallets, nor stapled nor held together with paper clips. Treasury tags are the preferred means of securing work.

- The inclusion of teacher comments/annotations is very helpful to the moderation process. If moderators can see clearly where and why marks have been awarded it is much easier to complete an accurate moderation of centre marks.

The other area of concern affects some of those centres where more than one member of staff is responsible for marking the coursework component. These centres must ensure that **appropriate internal standardisation procedures** are in place. It was clear from some centre submissions that this had not been the case resulting in requests for additional work from particular centres and particular teachers.

Mark Ranges and Award of Levels

Level boundaries and cumulative percentage levels are available on the www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html page of the AQA website.