

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/02
Planning and Managing a Tourism
Event

Key messages

- Candidates should be encouraged to organise a specific travel and tourism event and not just an event that is already organised within school.
- Centres should annotate candidate work
- Candidates should not send flash drives or CDs
- Candidates should work through each assessment objective carefully to ensure that there are no omissions from the coursework.

General Comments

Thank you to all Centres who submitted portfolios on time for this session. It once again very much helped with the smooth running of the moderation process.

It was pleasing to see the range of events organised and the enthusiasm demonstrated by candidates.

On occasion candidates research a large amount of travel and tourism theory, whilst this is good to see, candidates must apply their knowledge to the practical elements of the event and not simply write about theoretical concepts.

Centres should ensure that candidate work is clearly annotated throughout; this helps not only with grading but also for moderation purposes.

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.

Comments on specific tasks

AO1

Some candidates presented clear and logical plans with realistic itineraries and timescales. On occasions, there were some omissions from the plans along with poor organisational skills. Once again it should be noted that the business plan should be completed before the event and therefore should be written in the future tense.

AO2

Candidates made a good attempt to show how they contributed to the event both in terms of planning and execution. The more successful centres saw candidates complete log books to show their involvement along with minutes and agendas to show a record of meetings.

AO3

Many candidates demonstrated good research by assessing at least two feasibility studies. In some cases there was little evidence of financial planning or contingency procedures put forward. Many candidates are now incorporating SWOT analyses and these clearly aid feasibility reasoning. It was pleasing to see that most candidates included bibliographies to show a good range of research books and websites.

AO4

Generally candidates evaluated their event extremely 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. For the top mark band candidates should also have considered an interim evaluation to show real understanding of the success of the whole event.

Candidates should also 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.

Centres should note that there are syllabus changes to this unit for submission from May 2017.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/11
Core Paper

Key messages

- Read the wording of the questions carefully and respond in an appropriate manner
- Make clear and active reference to the stimulus material when appropriate
- Make clearer and more specific use of factual information relating to the named examples with which you are familiar
- Be more precise when explaining the significance of particular factors, avoiding unsubstantiated generalisation

General comments

It was pleasing to see many of the candidates making a positive attempt to address the issues posed by the various questions. The stimulus materials were accessible but they were not always well interpreted. Many candidates rely on a limited range of examples to support their ideas and some of these examples were not fully appropriate to the context of particular questions. It is important that candidates pay close attention to the precise wording of particular questions, as there were several instances where a question was misread.

There is still evidence of weaker exam technique when candidates attempt to answer the open ended questions. Candidates should make a concerted effort to structure their responses and Centres are advised to think in terms of the following 'ladder':

Level 1 (1 to 3 marks) – the candidate **identifies** up to three valid types/features/factors.

Level 2 (4 to 6 marks) – the candidate **analyses** one or two of the valid types/features/factors identified.

Level 3 (7 to 9 marks) – the candidate **evaluates** the valid types/features/factors that have been identified and analysed.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The photograph stimulus materials were used very well and most candidates were able to clearly identify the signs.
- (b) There were many strong responses about the ways in which travel and tourism organisations can make information available to external customers and most candidates were able to clearly demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of this topic. Weaker responses were characterised by a lack of appropriate explanatory comment which tended to limit the amount of credit that could be awarded. Stronger responses clearly explained how the chosen method was appropriate to a tourism organisation. Responses frequently included: websites (and how the internet is accessible twenty-four hours a day for customers), office/information points (to answer customers' questions via face-to-face interaction), call centres (to answer questions), a guide/representative (to update clients) and brochures (which are easily distributed and easy to carry). There were some excellent answers.
- (c) Candidates' responses varied in terms of their ability to write convincingly about the appropriate types of training available to employees in the chosen job role. It was clear that many candidates did not know exactly what jobs particular organisations provided, and many responses made vague generalisations, sometimes only describing a particular job. Such responses were weaker, and

were awarded fewer marks. Precise details of the training made available for the chosen job role were frequently lacking. More thoughtful responses made valid references to ideas such as induction training, shadowing, the availability of particular courses and managerial supervision. Where these ideas were contextualised, the answer was credited more marks. However, the lack of evaluative comments resulted in few individuals obtaining full marks.

- (d) It was clear that many candidates had not read this question carefully enough. Candidates were expected to consider the feedback methods used by a specific organisation to gather feedback from external customers, and therefore, responses that suggested mystery shoppers as one such method were not credited. However, there were plenty of strong answers and many candidates were able to make a series of valid comments about different types of survey, comment cards, focus groups and the handling of complaints. Many answers obtained some marks but, as with **Question 1 (c)**, there tended to be a lack of evaluation and therefore many responses did not obtain full marks. Most candidates, however, have a very thorough knowledge and understanding of customer feedback.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates struggled to identify the features of a fine dining restaurant. This was surprising considering that the image used in Fig. 1 was representative of such a venue. Many candidates provided suggestions that might have been equally applicable to a café or a bistro, and therefore were not credited. The stronger responses highlighted more appropriate characteristic features such as formal place settings, signature dishes, a range of glassware, linen tablecloths and napkins, an a la carte menu and formally qualified staff.
- (b) There were some thoughtful responses and most candidates were able to offer some valid comments about the economic impact of a food fair. The key point for this question was 'within a destination' and a significant minority of candidates chose to write about the national economy rather than the more local context stated in the question. However, credit was awarded for all valid statements which linked a particular positive economic impact with the food fair. Stronger responses clearly suggested that the food fair would attract additional tourists and therefore visitor spend would increase, profits for local traders would rise with increased sales, jobs (both direct and indirect) would be created, and there would be a significant multiplier effect as visitors consume additional local services.
- (c) Candidates frequently made a positive attempt to answer the question and there were many valid comments made about experiencing the traditional culture of a destination. However, there were often issues with the description of how a visiting tourist might experience a given culture. Stronger responses noted that tourists could visit a museum or historic site to see displays of traditional cultural artefacts, attend folklore shows to see performers singing and dancing in traditional costumes, or go to a local market to see traditional arts and crafts on sale. Weaker responses tended to simply list aspects of a culture without clearly stating what the tourist experience involved specifically.
- (d) Candidates are clearly aware of how and why web-based technologies could be used in travel and tourism and there were many very good responses to this question. There were some outstanding answers. Responses frequently referenced the internet's worldwide access, the use of social media, the ease of posting and updating website information, the opportunities for direct communication and the cost effectiveness of digital media. Many candidates wrote well, clearly highlighting relative advantages.

Question 3

- (a) There were some significant difficulties with this particular question. Many candidates made the mistake of quoting aspects of Sierra Leone's attractions rather than stating factors which might influence travel from the tourist's place of residence. Very few candidates mentioned appropriate factors such as the cost of transport, accessibility (availability of routes), disposable income levels, exchange rates, levels of car ownership and similar socio-economic factors. Consequently, the result was that many answers did not receive full credit.
- (b) The Fig. 2 stimulus material was not always used well and many candidates failed to make sufficient reference to the data contained therein to support their various ideas. Furthermore, some candidates had only a superficial knowledge of the Butler model's development stage. At the

development stage, visitor numbers rise rapidly with an increase in both foreign owned facilities and the expansion and upgrading of the local infrastructure. Marks were credited for ideas such as:

- local suppliers and providers of tourist products and services become increasingly involved in the development process
- the area becomes established as a tourist destination with a defined market
- as visitors continue to come to the destination, more businesses enter the market as it becomes profitable
- package holidays are developed and the destination sees the marked expansion with the arrival of foreign operators and investors
- as the country becomes more popular and the infrastructure begins to take shape, more tour operators become interested and organise package tours to the country

It was expected that candidates would use Fig. 2 for evidence to support such ideas, however only a minority of responses attempted to do so, resulting in candidates obtaining fewer marks.

- (c) This question was not always well attempted and some candidates were unsure about the concept of perishability. Perishability refers to travel and tourism service products which, unlike other products such as manufactured goods, cannot be stored for sale on a future occasion. Many responses made some valid reference to the fact that organisations will have to devise pricing and promotion policies such as 'BOGOF' in an attempt to sell during periods of low demand, such as 'off-season'. Similarly, careful monitoring of bookings via computerised reservation systems is needed in order to forecast the need for further action if demand is believed to be below expected levels. Weaker responses tended to repeat the promotional aspect and lacked explanatory development which could have been provided. It was this lack of fully developed ideas which tended to limit that amount of credit that could be awarded.
- (d) There were some very thoughtful responses to this question and many candidates were able to make reference to a variety of natural disasters. The key point was that the answer itemised appropriate risks and hazards and then provided valid explanatory comments about the disruption caused. Stronger responses talked about issues such as volcanic eruptions with ash clouds disrupting flights, tsunamis and their associated floods cutting off whole areas, ruining local economies and resulting in no visitors. There were some strong comments about hurricanes laying waste to tropical and sub-tropical destinations and disease outbreaks causing travel restrictions.

Question 4

- (a) This question was generally answered well, and most candidates had a good understanding of the public and private sectors. Stronger responses acknowledged that the term public sector refers to services provided for the population that are financed from public money and that public sector bodies are not primarily concerned with making a profit, and tend to have much wider social and economic aims, such as creating jobs through tourism and improving tourist facilities for visitors and local people. Similarly, candidates were aware that the private sector is made up of commercial enterprises that are in business to make money and generate a profit. Many responses obtained full marks.
- (b) Some candidates did not offer an appropriate consideration of all the stated aspects of sustainable destination management when considering the 'Go Eco Phuket' clean-up event. Many candidates failed to look methodically at the definition and then attempt to match this up with details from the Fig. 3 stimulus material. Some candidates made a fair attempt to do this. Weaker responses were characterised by candidates copying out Fig. 3 text without much thought being given to precisely what the question required of candidates. It was expected that candidates mentioned the following:
- **visitor impact** - the accumulation of waste
 - **destination's economy** - the local diving industry may be disrupted
 - **physical environment** - land and water pollution
 - **benefits everybody** - the campaign is a clear illustration of the VICE principle (Visitors, Industry, Community and Environment) supported by national tourist organisation (TAT)
- (c) There was a positive attempt made to address each issue but a large number of candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with the concept of over-commercialisation. For example, in locations such as Spain's Costa Brava there is now comparatively little traditional Spanish culture. There are

too many English dominated facilities, high rise blocks and a congested beachfront which causes a decline in its popularity. Most candidates were aware that the events of 9/11 in New York changed the tourism landscape and that all terrorist events now immediately bring travel warnings effectively turning certain destinations into 'no go' areas. Similarly, crime and social problems exert a negative impact on tourist arrivals, and stronger responses provided valid examples of this, such as shooting incidents in the USA and elsewhere.

- (d) Candidates performed well on this question if they chose an appropriate attraction however, this was not always the case. The weakest responses selected resort hotels which were not considered appropriate visitor attractions, nor were shopping mall complexes. Where inappropriate choices were made, the response was marked to the candidate's advantage, but such responses struggled to obtain higher marks. Stronger responses tended to focus on a particular natural or built attraction that offered services to, and met the needs of, different types of visitor (families, school groups, business tourists, special needs, etc.). When a precise visitor attraction was offered alongside its suitability for a particular type of tourist, the answer was credited.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/12
Core Paper

Key messages

- Read the wording of the questions carefully and respond in an appropriate manner
- Make clear and active reference to the stimulus material when appropriate
- Make clearer and more specific use of factual information relating to the named examples with which you are familiar
- Be more precise when explaining the significance of particular factors, avoiding unsubstantiated generalisation

General comments

It was pleasing to see many of the candidates making a positive attempt to address the issues posed by the various questions. The stimulus materials were accessible but they were not always well interpreted. Many candidates rely on a limited range of examples to support their ideas and some of these examples were not fully appropriate to the context of particular questions. It is important that candidates pay close attention to the precise wording of particular questions, as there were several instances where a question was misread.

There is still evidence of weaker exam technique when candidates attempt to answer the open ended questions. Candidates should make a concerted effort to structure their responses and Centres are advised to think in terms of the following 'ladder':

Level 1 (1 to 3 marks) – the candidate **identifies** up to three valid types/features/factors.

Level 2 (4 to 6 marks) – the candidate **analyses** one or two of the valid types/features/factors identified.

Level 3 (7 to 9 marks) – the candidate **evaluates** the valid types/features/factors that have been identified and analysed.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The photograph stimulus materials were used very well and most candidates were able to clearly identify the signs.
- (b) There were many strong responses about the ways in which travel and tourism organisations can make information available to external customers and most candidates were able to clearly demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of this topic. Weaker responses were characterised by a lack of appropriate explanatory comment which tended to limit the amount of credit that could be awarded. Stronger responses clearly explained how the chosen method was appropriate to a tourism organisation. Responses frequently included: websites (and how the internet is accessible twenty-four hours a day for customers), office/information points (to answer customers' questions via face-to-face interaction), call centres (to answer questions), a guide/representative (to update clients) and brochures (which are easily distributed and easy to carry). There were some excellent answers.
- (c) Candidates' responses varied in terms of their ability to write convincingly about the appropriate types of training available to employees in the chosen job role. It was clear that many candidates did not know exactly what jobs particular organisations provided, and many responses made vague generalisations, sometimes only describing a particular job. Such responses were weaker, and

were awarded fewer marks. Precise details of the training made available for the chosen job role were frequently lacking. More thoughtful responses made valid references to ideas such as induction training, shadowing, the availability of particular courses and managerial supervision. Where these ideas were contextualised, the answer was credited more marks. However, the lack of evaluative comments resulted in few individuals obtaining full marks.

- (d) It was clear that many candidates had not read this question carefully enough. Candidates were expected to consider the feedback methods used by a specific organisation to gather feedback from external customers, and therefore, responses that suggested mystery shoppers as one such method were not credited. However, there were plenty of strong answers and many candidates were able to make a series of valid comments about different types of survey, comment cards, focus groups and the handling of complaints. Many answers obtained some marks but, as with **Question 1 (c)**, there tended to be a lack of evaluation and therefore many responses did not obtain full marks. Most candidates, however, have a very thorough knowledge and understanding of customer feedback.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates struggled to identify the features of a fine dining restaurant. This was surprising considering that the image used in Fig. 1 was representative of such a venue. Many candidates provided suggestions that might have been equally applicable to a café or a bistro, and therefore were not credited. The stronger responses highlighted more appropriate characteristic features such as formal place settings, signature dishes, a range of glassware, linen tablecloths and napkins, an a la carte menu and formally qualified staff.
- (b) There were some thoughtful responses and most candidates were able to offer some valid comments about the economic impact of a food fair. The key point for this question was 'within a destination' and a significant minority of candidates chose to write about the national economy rather than the more local context stated in the question. However, credit was awarded for all valid statements which linked a particular positive economic impact with the food fair. Stronger responses clearly suggested that the food fair would attract additional tourists and therefore visitor spend would increase, profits for local traders would rise with increased sales, jobs (both direct and indirect) would be created, and there would be a significant multiplier effect as visitors consume additional local services.
- (c) Candidates frequently made a positive attempt to answer the question and there were many valid comments made about experiencing the traditional culture of a destination. However, there were often issues with the description of how a visiting tourist might experience a given culture. Stronger responses noted that tourists could visit a museum or historic site to see displays of traditional cultural artefacts, attend folklore shows to see performers singing and dancing in traditional costumes, or go to a local market to see traditional arts and crafts on sale. Weaker responses tended to simply list aspects of a culture without clearly stating what the tourist experience involved specifically.
- (d) Candidates are clearly aware of how and why web-based technologies could be used in travel and tourism and there were many very good responses to this question. There were some outstanding answers. Responses frequently referenced the internet's worldwide access, the use of social media, the ease of posting and updating website information, the opportunities for direct communication and the cost effectiveness of digital media. Many candidates wrote well, clearly highlighting relative advantages.

Question 3

- (a) There were some significant difficulties with this particular question. Many candidates made the mistake of quoting aspects of Sierra Leone's attractions rather than stating factors which might influence travel from the tourist's place of residence. Very few candidates mentioned appropriate factors such as the cost of transport, accessibility (availability of routes), disposable income levels, exchange rates, levels of car ownership and similar socio-economic factors. Consequently, the result was that many answers did not receive full credit.
- (b) The Fig. 2 stimulus material was not always used well and many candidates failed to make sufficient reference to the data contained therein to support their various ideas. Furthermore, some candidates had only a superficial knowledge of the Butler model's development stage. At the

development stage, visitor numbers rise rapidly with an increase in both foreign owned facilities and the expansion and upgrading of the local infrastructure. Marks were credited for ideas such as:

- local suppliers and providers of tourist products and services become increasingly involved in the development process
- the area becomes established as a tourist destination with a defined market
- as visitors continue to come to the destination, more businesses enter the market as it becomes profitable
- package holidays are developed and the destination sees the marked expansion with the arrival of foreign operators and investors
- as the country becomes more popular and the infrastructure begins to take shape, more tour operators become interested and organise package tours to the country

It was expected that candidates would use Fig. 2 for evidence to support such ideas, however only a minority of responses attempted to do so, resulting in candidates obtaining fewer marks.

- (c) This question was not always well attempted and some candidates were unsure about the concept of perishability. Perishability refers to travel and tourism service products which, unlike other products such as manufactured goods, cannot be stored for sale on a future occasion. Many responses made some valid reference to the fact that organisations will have to devise pricing and promotion policies such as 'BOGOF' in an attempt to sell during periods of low demand, such as 'off-season'. Similarly, careful monitoring of bookings via computerised reservation systems is needed in order to forecast the need for further action if demand is believed to be below expected levels. Weaker responses tended to repeat the promotional aspect and lacked explanatory development which could have been provided. It was this lack of fully developed ideas which tended to limit that amount of credit that could be awarded.
- (d) There were some very thoughtful responses to this question and many candidates were able to make reference to a variety of natural disasters. The key point was that the answer itemised appropriate risks and hazards and then provided valid explanatory comments about the disruption caused. Stronger responses talked about issues such as volcanic eruptions with ash clouds disrupting flights, tsunamis and their associated floods cutting off whole areas, ruining local economies and resulting in no visitors. There were some strong comments about hurricanes laying waste to tropical and sub-tropical destinations and disease outbreaks causing travel restrictions.

Question 4

- (a) This question was generally answered well, and most candidates had a good understanding of the public and private sectors. Stronger responses acknowledged that the term public sector refers to services provided for the population that are financed from public money and that public sector bodies are not primarily concerned with making a profit, and tend to have much wider social and economic aims, such as creating jobs through tourism and improving tourist facilities for visitors and local people. Similarly, candidates were aware that the private sector is made up of commercial enterprises that are in business to make money and generate a profit. Many responses obtained full marks.
- (b) Some candidates did not offer an appropriate consideration of all the stated aspects of sustainable destination management when considering the 'Go Eco Phuket' clean-up event. Many candidates failed to look methodically at the definition and then attempt to match this up with details from the Fig. 3 stimulus material. Some candidates made a fair attempt to do this. Weaker responses were characterised by candidates copying out Fig. 3 text without much thought being given to precisely what the question required of candidates. It was expected that candidates mentioned the following:
- **visitor impact** - the accumulation of waste
 - **destination's economy** - the local diving industry may be disrupted
 - **physical environment** - land and water pollution
 - **benefits everybody** - the campaign is a clear illustration of the VICE principle (Visitors, Industry, Community and Environment) supported by national tourist organisation (TAT)
- (c) There was a positive attempt made to address each issue but a large number of candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with the concept of over-commercialisation. For example, in locations such as Spain's Costa Brava there is now comparatively little traditional Spanish culture. There are

too many English dominated facilities, high rise blocks and a congested beachfront which causes a decline in its popularity. Most candidates were aware that the events of 9/11 in New York changed the tourism landscape and that all terrorist events now immediately bring travel warnings effectively turning certain destinations into 'no go' areas. Similarly, crime and social problems exert a negative impact on tourist arrivals, and stronger responses provided valid examples of this, such as shooting incidents in the USA and elsewhere.

- (d) Candidates performed well on this question if they chose an appropriate attraction however, this was not always the case. The weakest responses selected resort hotels which were not considered appropriate visitor attractions, nor were shopping mall complexes. Where inappropriate choices were made, the response was marked to the candidate's advantage, but such responses struggled to obtain higher marks. Stronger responses tended to focus on a particular natural or built attraction that offered services to, and met the needs of, different types of visitor (families, school groups, business tourists, special needs, etc.). When a precise visitor attraction was offered alongside its suitability for a particular type of tourist, the answer was credited.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/13
Core Paper

Key messages

- Read the wording of the questions carefully and respond in an appropriate manner.
- Make clear and active reference to the stimulus material when appropriate.
- Make clearer and more specific use of factual information related to named examples with which candidates are familiar.
- Greater precision when explaining the significance of particular factors, avoiding unsubstantiated generalisation.

General comments

This was the final Core Paper examination in the current format. Following the revision of Syllabus 9395, a slightly revised format will come into being for the 2017 examinations. Many candidates made a positive attempt to address the issues posed by the various questions, but the stimulus materials were not always interpreted well. Many candidates relied on a limited range of examples and some of these were not fully appropriate to the context of particular questions.

It is important that candidates pay close attention to the precise wording of particular questions. There were several instances where a question was misread including:

Question	Nature of mistaken approach
1(d)	There were many instances of candidates commenting on the reasons (i.e. the advantages) for holiday home ownership rather than considering the possible reasons for the increase in such ownerships, particularly in the European context.
2(b)	Job-specific skills were rarely quoted.
2(d)	Many candidates had difficulty in explaining the likely role of a mystery shopper in the benchmarking process for a travel and tourism organisation.
3(d)	Many candidates had difficulty in naming precise details of routes and methods of transport serving the chosen location.
4(c)	Very few candidates attempted to make direct references to Fig. 3 when answering this particular question.
4(d)	Some candidates neglected to offer appropriate examples when considering the ways in which declining destinations might be rejuvenated.

There is still some evidence of poor exam technique when candidates attempt to answer the more open-ended questions. Candidates should make a positive attempt to structure their responses.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The stimulus material for Photograph A was used quite well but many candidates were unable to clearly identify four different factors likely to attract guests. Credit was most commonly awarded for reference to being on the coast, having a swimming pool, a sun lounge area, being surrounded by woodland, sea views and car parking.
- (b) There were several fair responses but many candidates found it difficult to develop their answers and offer examples of the points they were attempting to make. Most responses concentrated on family facilities, business traveller requirements and facilities for the disabled. Many answers simply contained a description of these various facilities and there was only limited explanation of the ways in which a particular need was being met. It was the overall lack of development that limited an answer's progress into Level 2 and beyond. However, it was quite clear that most individuals had a sound understanding of the topic under consideration.
- (c) Candidates varied in terms of their ability to identify and comment on valid advantages to customers of the use of accommodation grading systems. Weaker responses simply described services in hotels with different star ratings and made little attempt to address the issue of the advantages to the customer. More thoughtful individuals realised that the use of such a star system allowed customers to easily make broad comparisons between rival providers, grades were not biased as they were awarded independently, and that the whole system was simple and easy to understand. Where candidates talked about a valid advantage credit was awarded.
- (d) There was a significant issue with a number of responses and it was clear that many candidates had not read the question carefully enough. The question was not about the advantages of holiday home ownership but rather about the reasons for the increase. Some thoughtful individuals realised that standards of living had risen, disposable incomes had increased and many newly retired people used their pension pots to buy property abroad. Such comments were perfectly valid and received due credit. The better responses widened the scope of their considerations to include factors such as the rental income potential of such properties and the fact that budget airlines and high rates of car ownership made a second property easily accessible throughout the year. However, such responses were in the minority and comparatively few answers were able to progress into Level 2.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates were able to correctly interpret Fig. 1 and identify literacy, numeracy, timekeeping and enthusiasm as being the four most important attributes that employers look for as being fully developed in employees.
- (b) There were some rather limited responses and many candidates chose to write about generic skills rather than job-specific ones. IT skills were perfectly valid for hotel receptionists but wider comments about timekeeping and communication are not job-specific. Better attempts were usually made with reference to numeracy for settling bills accurately and team working when two room attendants share the cleaning tasks. However, many individuals selected inappropriate workplace skills and thereby could not gain maximum credit.
- (c) Candidates frequently made a positive attempt to answer the question and there were many valid comments made about observation, informal feedback and the analysis of surveys and comment cards. The main failing with the weaker responses was that the role of the line manager in the monitoring process was not made clear. For example, many individuals mentioned the role of a mystery shopper and this might have been creditworthy had the answer pointed out that the manager would issue instructions and then review the reported findings. Unfortunately, however, many responses failed to make these connections.
- (d) Candidates are clearly aware of how and why mystery shoppers are used but many struggled with the idea of the benchmarking process. Thus, in many instances, the question was not really answered. The objective of benchmarking is to understand and evaluate the current position of a business or organisation in relation to best practice and to identify areas and means of performance improvement.

Responses tended to be vague with regards to what exactly the mystery shopper was looking for in terms of performance standards. When these were clearly stated in terms of a 'benchmark' then credit was awarded. This was again an example of many individuals not reading the question carefully enough.

Question 3

- (a) There was some confusion about the objectives of public sector organisations and weaker responses were often characterised by the copying of pieces of text from Fig. 2. Public sector bodies are not primarily concerned with making a profit. They tend to have much wider social and economic aims, such as creating jobs through tourism and improving tourist facilities for visitors and local people. When such aspects were described properly, credit was awarded.
- (b) The Fig. 2 stimulus material was not always used well and many candidates were unable to offer three valid examples. The question was about the advantages of working in partnership with the **local** i-SITE centre and not about i-SITE in general. Thus, many responses neglected to point out that a tourism provider could have their brochures displayed, their details added to a booking database and be listed on a website. Thus increased visibility, extra promotion and additional bookings would result. Weaker responses tended to talk in general terms, often repeating the promotional aspect, without clearly linking an advantage to a service offered by i-SITE. There were, however, some very thoughtful responses that scored well.
- (c) This question was very well attempted and most candidates could clearly link three recreational activities with three negative environmental impacts. Popular choices were hiking with footpath erosion, camping with littering (or starting fires) and scuba diving with coral reef damage. When candidates selected both hiking and trekking and did not make the difference very clear, double credit could not be awarded.
- (d) There were some significant issues with responses to this question. The use of destinations in Brunei such as the Jerudong Park always resulted in rather simplistic accounts as candidates appeared to have little to comment on. For example, no details of bus services were provided, knowledge of water taxi routes were vague, and road directions/routes were never clearly stated. Thus, most responses based on Brunei were not really destination-specific. When consideration was given to destinations outside of Brunei, such as Singapore and Malaysia, answers were similarly vague. Unfortunately, candidates rarely went into appropriate detail and the amount of evaluation provided was limited.

Question 4

- (a) The Fig. 3 stimulus material was usually correctly interpreted and many candidates obtained full marks. The variations in tourist arrivals were clearly identified and appropriately commented on and the vast majority of candidates had little difficulty in extracting valid information from the line graph contained within the stimulus material. There was frequent reference to:
- 2001–2007 being a period of overall growth;
 - 2007–2013 a period of decline and recovery;
 - 2007 peak of 8.4 million arrivals;
 - secondary peak in 2005 with 8.3 million;
 - 2010 being the low point with 7.4 million.
- (b) There were some very good responses to this question and most candidates were aware of the different ways in which excursions can be booked. There were frequent valid comments about the use of websites (booking and paying online), travel agency (face to face), telephone (asking questions) and the convenience of adding to an existing package. When three valid methods were commented on accurately then full marks were readily awarded.
- (c) Too many candidates made virtually no attempt to refer to Fig. 3 in their answers. The question was not about coach travel in general but about making an international journey to the south of Spain by coach. There was only limited reference to the map and so there were few comments about the relative inaccessibility from European neighbours. The distance key was ignored as was the fact that travelling from North Africa would involve a ferry.

- (d) Many candidates displayed appropriate knowledge and understanding of this topic and there was frequent reference to a variety of strategies to rejuvenate declining destinations. Furthermore, there was clear evidence of several candidates attempting to offer appropriate exemplification of the points they were making. Many answers pointed out that if major changes are made such as improving the environment and tourism infrastructure, better marketing or the addition of more attractions for example, then a previously declining destination may experience a period of rejuvenation. This is a period of further growth and development brought about by innovation and renewed diversification. In effect, the destination re-invents itself and extends its appeal to different market segments. In better responses it was pleasing to see reference being made to destinations such as Blackpool, Mediterranean Spain and even Jerudong Park as illustrations of this process in action. Many candidates were able to access Level 2 but progress into Level 3 was limited because of the lack of appropriate evaluative comment.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/31
International Business and Leisure
Travel Services

There were too few candidates for us to be able to produce a meaningful report.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/32
International Business and Leisure
Travel Services

Key messages

- Candidates are expected to be able to give definitions and examples of key terms and concepts associated with international travel and tourism.
- Stimulus material is provided for each of the four questions but candidates are expected to use these source materials only as a trigger to a more considered response. Candidates will not be able to access the higher mark bands for responses which rely solely on the stimulus material.
- Examples used within responses should be relevant to the travel and tourism context of the questions; general business examples are not acceptable at this level.

General comments

The format of this paper follows that of the specimen and all other subsequent papers with a piece of source material for each of the four subsets of questions, drawn from vocational news articles and online travel and tourism sources. Candidates are expected to use the context of these sources to offer a developed answer, using their knowledge, understanding and their own words.

Question 1 was based on a cruise itinerary for the Seven Seas Mariner cruise ship, together with a news article about cruise tourism. The source material for **Question 2** provided information about Havelock Island and the Eco Villa Palm Beach Resort. **Question 3** centred on information about tourism in the Seychelles, and the Seychelles Secret Brand, whilst the final piece of source material for **Question 4** focused on business tourism within Israel.

The majority of candidates within the cohort attempted all of the questions in the time allowed. Performance was reflective of the full ability range, with most candidates scoring well in the **(a)** and **(b)** questions, and with only the better performing candidates accessing the higher mark ranges for **(c)** and **(d)** questions which required the higher order skills of analysis and evaluation.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The source material for this question provided candidates with the itinerary for an 18-night cruise on board the Seven Seas Mariner cruise ship, as well as a news article relating to trends in cruise tourism. The majority of candidates were able to access this resource at an appropriate level, in order to be able to answer the questions in this subset effectively.

- (a) (i)** This question posed no difficulties. Candidates used the information in the itinerary to make accurate identifications.
- (ii)** Responses to this question were more varied, with most able to score one mark out of the two marks available. Weaker responses did not always differentiate between an itinerary and the timetable of activities offered on board the cruise.
- (b)** Most answers here were mixed, with better responses using the resource appropriately to identify key reasons for the appeal of this particular cruise. At the lower end of performance, answers were confused, giving reasons why the cruise company offers its products and services, rather than detailing why customers might wish to experience what this cruise has to offer.

- (c) This question was not answered well. Weaker responses seemed unfamiliar with the distinction between premium priced cruise companies and the mass market. At the top of performance in this question, responses considered the benefits from an operational perspective, with competitive advantage being clearly explained.
- (d) This question acted as a good discriminator. Candidates had some understanding of the concept of star ratings, although there was some confusion and overlap between hotel-type classification and ratings, and the star ratings awarded by customers via online feedback, such as Trip Advisor. The responses were not unduly affected by this difference in emphasis; candidates were still able to access the higher grades for making evaluative comments about how star ratings benefit both the customer and the cruise line company, even where the emphasis was incorrect.

Question 2

Candidates were provided with information about Havelock Island and the Eco Villa Palm Beach Resort. Candidates relied quite heavily on the source document, in order to answer some of the questions in this subset.

- (a) (i) Most candidates were able to define the term domestic flight. The majority of examples used were appropriate. Weaker responses sometimes gave inaccurate examples, such as London to Paris.
 - (ii) This question was answered well, with all candidates using the source document to select the appropriate information.
- (b) As with **Question 1(b)**, answers here were mixed. At the top end, candidates extracted key facts from the source material and explained how these features would appeal to different target markets. At the lower end of performance, candidates overlapped answers with **Question 2(a)(ii)** and **Question 2(c)**.
- (c) Many responses here scored well, with key information about the limitations to Havelock Island's accessibility being identified from the source document and explained in the candidates' own words.
- (d) Many responses here missed the point. Candidates often saw this as another question about the convenience of the internet from the customer's perspective and thus restricted access to the upper mark bands. The best answers discussed advantages and disadvantages of using one distribution channel and often made recommendations based on the conclusions drawn.

Question 3

Candidates were provided with information about tourism in the Seychelles and the Seychelles Secret brand. The text was accessible to most.

- (a) (i) Many found it challenging to explain this term, and often repeated the key words in both the definition and any examples given. Inbound tourism is often still misinterpreted as meaning the same as domestic tourism.
 - (ii) This question also caused more issues than anticipated. Weaker responses relied on the stimulus material in the wrong way, giving applied responses copied from the text, e.g. guesthouses, rather than using this information to make the connection with the accommodation component.
- (b) Many responses were copied straight from the text. Whilst some marks could be gained this way about features that might appeal to visitors in general, the question required a more specific application to the context of families, so weaker responses tended to score identification marks only.
- (c) This question acted as a good discriminator. The best answers recognised that Europe is a key tourism generating area and consequently is served by a number of outbound operators. Others made an association between proximity of the destination to the source markets, but on the whole, weaker responses did not include two reasons why this may be the case.

- (d) This question was answered well. Top performing candidates understood the environmental benefits of using e-technology for marketing purposes, as well as the time-saving benefits. At the lower end of performance, candidates often provided the 'quicker, cheaper, more convenient' argument that is becoming a stock answer to questions about the advances in travel and tourism technology.

Question 4

The stimulus here was information about business tourism in Israel. Candidates seemed to rely quite heavily on the source material when answering this subset of questions.

- (a) (i) Most explanations made no reference to travel and tourism, giving a generic description of trade fairs and often lifting the example directly from the stimulus material.
- (ii) The majority of responses to this question scored both the marks available for correctly identifying travel products and services.
- (b) Answers to this question tended to rely heavily on the wording of the stimulus material, which made it difficult to score maximum marks, especially where references were made specifically to the convention centre. The best answers were those where candidates used the text to draw conclusions about the country's suitability as a business tourism destination, based on general factors.
- (c) Responses here were variable. Most candidates understood that hotels want to gain competitive advantage by offering bespoke services. Weaker responses tended to make the same point twice. The best answers considered customer satisfaction and the opportunity to generate additional income as motivating factors.
- (d) This question acted as a good discriminator. Many answers could have been better developed, although this may be more due to the fact it was the last question on the paper, than a lack of understanding of the context of the question. Weaker responses tended to list reasons. At the top end of performance, responses considered the impact on a country's economic development as well as the need to diversify the tourism offering to overcome issues such as seasonality.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/33
International Business and Leisure
Travel Services

Key messages

- Candidates should be familiar with the learning content from section 4.2 of the syllabus in preparation for this examination. This requires candidates to study a wide range of travel service providers within the international context and to understand key terminology from this sector of the industry.
- The higher order learning skills of explanation and analysis are essential at A Level, and candidates should have opportunities to develop these skills in preparation for the examination.
- Candidates will be expected to use a case study approach, with four vocationally relevant news articles from the travel trade being given. These should be used to extract key information in helping form a response to the questions, but these responses must be written in the candidates' own words.
- Examples from the travel and tourism industry should be used to support answers.

General comments

The question paper followed the standard format of other papers for this qualification, comprising four subsets of questions, each worth a total of 25 marks. Each subset of questions took as its focus a piece of vocationally specific stimulus material.

For this examination, **Question 1** used as its focus, information about business tourism in Zimbabwe. The stimulus material for **Question 2** provided candidates with information about self-drive holidays in New Zealand. **Question 3** was based on a news article about changing trends in air travel, whilst **Question 4** introduced the concept of river cruising and gave data relating to the cruise industry.

Most candidates accessed key information from these source materials effectively to enable them to answer the questions which followed. Some candidates tended to rely heavily on the source materials and gained most of their marks from the short response questions within each subset. At the top end of performance, candidates were able to write extended answers, demonstrating good use of the higher order skills of analysis and evaluation.

The majority of candidates within this cohort attempted all of the questions within the allocated time.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Information about business tourism in Zimbabwe was provided for candidates to introduce this series of questions.

- (a) (i) Most candidates could give a satisfactory definition and suitable example of the term infrastructure.
- (ii) Identifying competitors from the source material caused no difficulties.
- (b) Responses here were mixed. The weaker responses did not clearly state how investment could be used. The best answers considered not only infrastructure development but the concept of wide scale marketing of the destination's business tourism provision.
- (c) This question was answered well, with most candidates using key information from the source document effectively to explain the suitability of the venue for large scale business events.

- (d) This was a good discriminator. At the lower end of performance, candidates made generic statements about more visitors and more money. The best answers were those which considered the broader economic and social benefits of tourism development.

Question 2

This question was based on information about self-drive holidays in New Zealand.

- (a) (i) Most candidates were confident in identifying target customers for this type of holiday.
(ii) This was not answered well. Few seemed familiar with the term shoulder season.
- (b) There were mixed responses to this question. Most candidates were able to identify benefits of a self-drive holiday, although at the lower end of performance, this tended to be lifted from the source and not explained.
- (c) Candidates were not always able to identify the correct information from the source document which could help them with this question. Answers on the whole here were vague and generic, with few scoring maximum marks.
- (d) This question also proved challenging. At the top end, candidates attempted to respond with benefits of a two-centre holiday. Few considered the impact of visiting the country given its geographic location, and the desire to maximise the tourism experience from a long-haul destination.

Question 3

Candidates were provided with a news article about changes in air travel as well as information about Etihad's The Residence air travel accommodation.

- (a) (i) This caused no problems, as candidates were able to correctly identify features of the on board accommodation.
(ii) The term 'high yield business traveller' caused some difficulty. Most candidates were able to deduce that this related to those travelling business class but were unable to explain the meaning of high yield. Examples were often not appropriate.
- (b) There were mixed responses to this question. Those who limited their responses to the evidence in the case study found it difficult to access the full mark range available for this question. The best answers used key information from the source to draw their own conclusions about how the recession had impacted air travel.
- (c) This also acted as a good discriminator. Weaker responses used information about on board features, despite the instruction in the question to exclude these types of response. At the upper end of performance, responses considered quality of customer service, promotional techniques, and choice of routes as possible ways to remain competitive.
- (d) This was answered well, with responses across the ability range. Weaker responses identified a range of aids and services offered for disabled customers. The best answers were evaluative of additional products and services which could be offered to further enhance a disabled customer's experience at an airport.

Question 4

The stimulus here was information about river cruises on the River Seine in Paris, as well as data about cruise tourism over recent years.

- (a) (i) This question was answered well; all candidates were able to pick out key components of the cruise package.
(ii) There were mixed responses to this question, with some good definitions made within the context of the cruise service. Some candidates omitted this question. Check-in is a key vocational term and candidates should therefore be familiar with this concept.

- (b) Candidates often overlooked the context of the target market of special interest tourists, with answers being generic. Few scored maximum marks here.
- (c) Candidates understood better the concept of the luxury market and used the text effectively to help them answer this question. Weaker responses gained the identification marks here, whilst better responses interpreted the factors mentioned and offered explanations in the candidate's own words.
- (d) Many answers here were not well developed, although this may be more due to the fact it was the last question on the paper, than a lack of understanding of the context of the question. The best answers offered suggestions of how the cruise industry might develop differentiated products and services based on the trend outlined by the published data.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/41
Specialised Tourism

There were too few candidates for us to be able to produce a meaningful report.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/42
Specialised Tourism

Key messages

- Direct candidates to read questions carefully
- Work through case studies using relevant tourism data
- Practise writing answers using different command words
- Encourage candidates to take note of mark allocations for each question.
- Make sure handwriting is clear and readable
- Answer questions using the booklet and try not to use extra sheets

General comments

The case studies in this paper covered a broad range of syllabus topics. The first case study for question 1 covered the music festival of Benicàssim in Spain and the second ecotourism in Thailand. Both case studies were used to test the candidates' understanding and application of specialised tourism in detail.

It was very pleasing to see that almost all candidates attempted all questions. The standard of entry this year was very pleasing. There was much evidence of good understanding of all of the impacts of tourism. Some of the best responses were interesting, informative and well judged. There was evidence of candidates being well prepared for many aspects of this exam.

Some responses do not gain the higher banded marks due to an inability to demonstrate the higher order skills of analysis, evaluation and discussion. Many responses included competent descriptions but did not always effectively analyse or evaluate where required.

The majority of candidates were given credit for the shorter response questions, candidates should be reminded that if they are asked for e.g., two benefits or reasons, they should not give four or five answers.

For future reference, candidates should try and avoid repeating the question in their response. This takes up valuable time and space and is not necessary.

It should be noted that candidates are not credited with marks for weak or over simplistic conclusions. All judgemental statements should be supported by comments made throughout the body of the response. In general the standard this session was very pleasing there were no confusion over rubrics and timing does not appear to have been a problem with the majority of candidates answering all questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This was reasonably well answered; most candidates were able to explain two negative economic impacts of the music festival on the local community. Some responses explained two environmental or two socio-cultural impacts rather than economic impacts.
- (b) Most responses included an explanation of the importance of retaining cultural events in destinations such as Benicàssim. However, some responses did not include any discussion of the importance. For an in-depth response candidates should be encouraged to practise responses with discursive comments. Discuss means to build an argument and present more than one side of the argument with supporting evidence. This will help to create a balanced answer and achieve the higher mark bands.
- (c) This was very well answered. Candidates were asked to evaluate the likely negative environmental impacts that a large music festival might bring. There were some excellent responses mostly covering noise and visual pollution. Some weaker responses did not include an evaluation of their impacts.

Question 2

- (a) This question was very well answered; many responses gained full marks as they were identified and explained two ways tourists in Thailand were able to be eco-friendly.
- (b) There were some good responses to this question; however a number of responses were unclear about the role of NGOs. Many responses used Fig. 2 and were related to the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF). However, some weaker responses included text taken directly from the case study which did not apply understanding of the role of NGOs in relation to the Thai tourism industry.
- (c) Reasonably well answered, most responses included an explanation of ecotourism principles and the ways that they may conflict with economic interests. The most popular responses included the detrimental effects of tourism on ecotourism sites due to overt economic interests.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Paper 9395/43
Specialised Tourism

Key messages

- Direct candidates to read questions carefully
- Work through case studies using relevant tourism data
- Practise writing answers using different command words
- Encourage candidates to take note of mark allocations for each question.
- Make sure handwriting is clear and readable
- Answer questions using the booklet and try not to use extra sheets

General comments

The case studies for this paper covered a broad range of syllabus topics. The first case study covered tourism in the Polar Regions discussing the sustainability challenges that lie ahead in this relatively newly discovered tourism destination. The second case study covered the Mayan ruins in Guatemala. Both case studies were used to test the candidates' understanding and application of specialised tourism in detail.

It was very pleasing to see that all candidates attempted all questions. The standard of entry this year was very pleasing. There was much evidence of a good understanding of all of the impacts of tourism. Some of the best responses were interesting, informative and well judged. There was evidence of candidates being well prepared for many aspects of this exam.

Some responses do not gain the higher banded marks due not demonstrating the higher order skills of analysis, evaluation and discussion. Many included competent descriptions but did not always include effectively analyse or evaluation where required.

The majority of candidates were given credit for the shorter response questions, candidates should be reminded that if they are asked for e.g., two benefits or reasons, they should not give four or five answers.

For future reference, candidates should try and avoid repeating the question in their response. This takes up valuable time and space and is not necessary.

It should be noted that candidates are not credited with marks for weak or over simplistic conclusions. All judgemental statements should be supported by comments made throughout the body of the response. In general the standard this session was very pleasing there was no confusion over rubrics and timing does not appear to have been a problem with the majority of candidates answering all questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This was very well answered; most candidates were able to explain two reasons for the growth of tourism in the Polar Regions. Good understanding and transference of information was clearly in evidence here.
- (b) Most candidates were able to explain the ways in which governments and NGOs were able to influence tourism activities in the Polar Regions. However some responses did not include a discussion of the importance. For an in-depth response candidates should be encouraged to practise responses with discursive comments. Discuss means to build an argument and present more than one side of the argument with supporting evidence. This will help to create a balanced answer and achieve the higher mark bands. Unfortunately, on occasion some responses referred to private and not public NGOs to explain the points.
- (c) This was very well answered. Candidates were asked to evaluate the likely environmental impacts of tourism to Polar Regions. There were some excellent responses with many distinguishing between both positive and negative impacts. Once again, some responses did not include an evaluation of their impacts and consequently did not gain the higher mark bands.

Question 2

- (a) This question was very well answered, many candidates gained good marks here as they were able to explain two objectives of ecotourism.
- (b) There were some good responses to this question. Many candidates were able to highlight the positive and negative economic impacts that increased levels of adventure tourism might have on the Atitlan community. Some responses were generic whilst others clearly applied understanding to the case study. Those responses that included assessment throughout gained the higher marks.
- (c) Reasonably well answered, most responses explained methods used to help preserve the cultural heritage of Guatemala. Developing education, skills and training was a popular response as was the development of crafts, festivals and exhibitions.