



National
Qualifications
2024

2024 Administration and IT

Higher

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

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General marking principles for Higher Administration and IT

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

- (a) Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (b) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (c) For **compare** questions, candidates must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the similarities and/or differences between things, features, methods or choices. This does not need to be a comparative sentence. Up to the total mark allocation for this question:
 - award **1 mark** for each accurate point of comparison.
- (d) For **discuss** questions, candidates must make accurate relevant points that are more than just naming. There has to be an element of discussion within each point. Award marks for development and examples of a point.
 - award **1 mark** for each discussion point.
 - award **1 mark** for further development of a relevant point, including exemplification when appropriate.
- (e) For **describe** questions, candidates must make a number of relevant factual points, which may be characteristics and/or features, as appropriate to the question asked. These points may relate to a concept, process or situation. Candidates may provide a number of straightforward points or a smaller number of developed points, or a combination of these. Up to the total mark allocation for this question
 - award **1 mark** for each relevant factual point
 - award **1 mark** for any further development of a relevant point, including exemplification when appropriate.
- (f) For **outline** questions, candidates must make a number of brief statements appropriate to the question asked. These may include facts, features or characteristics. Up to the total mark allocation for this question
 - award **1 mark** for each accurate statement.
- (g) For **justify** questions, candidates must give good reasons to support suggestions or explain the reason(s) for or against the issue raised in the question. A development point can be given.
 - award **1 mark** for further development of an accurate justification.

Marking instructions for each question

Section 1

Question	Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce/use break out areas or meeting rooms for teams to discuss issues • issue staff with noise reducing headphones/acoustic panels/baffle boards to help them concentrate • move noisy equipment to a separate room • (re)train/remind/e-mail employees to file documents securely after use • introduce a booking system for desks • allocate specific days for different teams in the office • introduce a policy that no one is allowed to eat at their desks/have a separate areas • employ another cleaner or increase their hours to clean desks and keyboards more thoroughly • invest in more lockable drawers/filing cabinets to ensure confidential files/laptops are locked away each night • create/book a smaller office or breakout area to have confidential meetings • carry out workstation assessments for staff working away from the office • provide staff with appropriate equipment for working at home eg wrist wrests, adjustable chairs • team leaders could set targets/deadline for employees to complete work • team leaders could do regular check-ins with employees through e-mail etc • have air conditioning systems for the office • teams could carry out some meetings via teams/zoom so everyone can be included even those working from home • intranet kept up to date/good file management with access to updated information/weekly team bulletins • organise team building/social events 	5	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid brief statement.</p> <p>No development marks available.</p> <p>NB Each problem can only be solved once. However, a similar solution may be given for different problems.</p> <p>Do not award (DNA) for “moving desks/furniture.”</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

Question	Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it can motivate employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increased productivity • it can enhance employee skills/experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ could help prepare staff for taking charge if Greg was absent • it could help lead to future promotion opportunities for team members • reduced staff turnover <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ could lead to less time/money spent on recruitment • it would help to ensure that deadlines are met • it could increase the standard or quality of Greg's work • it can alleviate Greg's stress • allows Greg to focus on more important tasks 	2	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid justification.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each development point.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employers must provide and maintain safe equipment and machinery whereas employees must report any faults with machinery or equipment immediately • employers must issue guidelines/training on how to use equipment and machinery whereas employees must ensure they follow these guidelines and never operate equipment they are not authorised to use • employers must provide protective clothing/equipment whereas employees must ensure they wear the protective clothing/equipment issued to them • employers must have clear procedures in place for dealing with accidents whereas employees must be observant and report any hazards in the workplace • employers must provide health and safety training whereas employees must cooperate by attending these training courses • employers must provide health and safety policies and ensure staff are kept updated whereas employees must ensure they read and familiarise themselves with all the policies issued 	3	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid comparison.</p> <p>Similarities or differences can be given.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

Section 2

Question		Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
4.	(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allows a two-way discussion between employees • employees can gauge people’s reactions or body language/facial expressions • messages can be changed if the person/people have misunderstood what is being said • can allow for instant feedback/further questions from the employer or employee • can allow for practical tasks/demonstrations to take place eg lifting and handling techniques • employees can use visual aids such as charts, slides to further enhance the information 	3	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid justification.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each development point.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

Question	Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language used - message may not be understood because slang/jargon/technical language has been used • noise - background noise may distract the people who are talking and make it difficult to hear the conversation • technical/IT issues eg on Teams meeting/Facetime might make it difficult for conversations to take place • information overload - there is too much information and people become tired and struggle to take it all in • jumping to conclusions - someone hearing or seeing what they want rather than what is actually said • differences in perceptions - people from different cultures, backgrounds might interpret situations differently • lack of interest - the sender or receiver doesn't engage fully in the conversation so the meaning is lost • bias and selectivity - someone only hears the parts of the conversation that they are interested in and ignores the rest of it • lack of feedback - when a message has been sent to someone but they do not reply so you have no idea if they received and understood it • distortion - message is not accurately stated due to inappropriate language, typing errors or unclear explanations • distractions/interruptions - parts of the message are missed • different time zones - difficult to find a suitable time • personality clashes between sender and receiver • person speaks too quickly meaning parts of the communication are not heard/missed 	3	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid description.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each valid development point.</p> <p>Must describe at least 2 barriers correctly to gain all 3 marks.</p> <p>DNA any answers that simply state that communication is not possible/effective due to different languages being spoken.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

Question		Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
5.	(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific - the targets are well defined and state exactly what needs to be achieved • Measurable - targets must be quantifiable to assess if they have been met eg an increase in sales by 10% • Agreed - target must be discussed and agreed by the team leader • Realistic - targets must be challenging but achievable • Timed - target completion dates should be identified/deadlines given 	3	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid brief statement.</p> <p>No development marks available.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p> <p>Acceptable alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainable/achievable - target must be realistic and within skill set • Relevant - target must be in line with the project or business goals <p>Candidates do not need to state the characteristic if it is inferred in their answer.</p>

Question		Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
	(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • buddy system - an employee is paired with a more experienced person for help and advice • mentoring system - a senior employee is assigned to a junior employee to assist and support them in reaching their targets • line manager reviews/meetings - the line manager can carry out regular checks on progress by meeting with a member of staff • action plans - shows which tasks have to be completed by each employee and reasons for deviation • random/sample or double checks to ensure the quality of employee work • appraisal - reviews current performance and helps identify and evaluate progress an employee has made in reaching their targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this appraises current strengths and weaknesses and assesses employee's development needs and career development • Gantt charts - useful to show the comparison between the planned and actual progress of targets/projects • mystery shopper/comment cards/online reviews/surveys/feedback forms - <i>if linked to monitoring and evaluating the employee</i> 	5	Award 1 mark for each valid description. Award 1 mark for each valid development point. Must describe at least 2 ways correctly to achieve all 5 marks. DNA PDP, To-do list, priorities list. Accept any other suitable response.

Question		Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
6.	(a)	Tables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shading rows/columns to enhance information • borders to make it easier to understand • converting text-to-table and table-to-text • inserting formulae into a table • sorting table on one or 2 columns 	2	Award 1 mark for each valid description. Award 1 mark for each valid development point. Accept any other suitable response.
	(b)	Section Breaks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a section break splits a document into different parts • different headers and footers on each page • different odd and even pages • page numbers on some but not all pages • the page orientation can be alternated between landscape and portrait throughout the document • the margin sizes can be customised to suit different types of pages • page borders on some pages, eg front cover • used to start information on a new page 	2	Award 1 mark for each valid description. Award 1 mark for each valid development point. Accept any other suitable response.
	(c)	Table of Contents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a table of contents shows the headings and corresponding page numbers • it links to the styles created in the document by picking up headings that have been formatted eg heading 1, heading 2 etc • any changes made to the document after it has been created can be updated using the update table feature • enables quick navigation to a section/hyperlinks 	2	Award 1 mark for each valid description. Award 1 mark for each valid development point. Accept any other suitable response.

Question	Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • naming files/folders - files and/folders should be named appropriately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this allows files to be found quickly and helps to speed up workflow • versions - different versions of files should be clear or early versions deleted so that employees are working with the most up-to-date version <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this avoids time being wasted by employees working on out-of-date files • read only files should be used, where necessary, to ensure no data can be changed on certain files <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this maintains the integrity of the document • routine maintenance - staff should be reminded regularly to delete files they are no longer using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to free up space on the network • back up - back up copies of files should be made regularly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ files may be accidentally overwritten or become corrupt eg through a virus ○ backups makes it easier and less expensive to recover information • security - files containing sensitive/confidential/important information should be password protected so that only certain employees can access them • levels of access within the network to limit what some employees can access • file locations - information should be given on where files should be stored on the network so that everyone can find them easily • archive files • train staff on filing system/GDPR regulations 	5	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid discussion point.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each development point.</p> <p>Award 1 mark max for naming files/folders appropriately.</p> <p>Must discuss at least 2 ways correctly to achieve all 5 marks.</p> <p>DNA answers relating to security of files including eg installing firewall and anti-virus software.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

Question	Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting may have to be postponed if not enough people attend or if they were given sufficient notice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ additional costs incurred eg hire of venue, equipment • employees might not have been properly prepared for the meeting if the agenda was not issued prior to the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this could impact the amount of discussion generated at the meeting and they might struggle to reach any agreements/decisions ○ a badly designed agenda could lead to time wasting and the meeting taking longer than necessary • any issues with the meeting venue could impact the meeting starting on time or taking place at all eg room not booked • if the correct procedures are not followed then any decisions taken at the meeting could be invalid • inadequate parking at the venue could lead to employees being late to the meeting • employees attending the meeting may feel that their time has been wasted and may be annoyed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ could feel like they would have been more productive not attending the meeting ○ this could put employees under pressure and lead to stress 	6	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid discussion point.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each development point.</p> <p>Award up to 5 marks for discussing consequences to employees or employers. Must answer on both.</p> <p>DNA any answers relating to motivation.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

Question		Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
9.	(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forms are user friendly • online surveys are relatively inexpensive to the organisation • feedback data can be collated automatically by the organisation • more likely to get a response (compared to written surveys) • customers can complete them at a time that suits them • online surveys can be returned instantly • customers can be sampled across a large geographical area • a large number of customers can be sampled 	2	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid justification.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each development point.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>
	(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • satisfied and loyal customers are likely to return to the business • happy customers are likely to tell their family and friends • may gain a good reputation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ easier to recruit staff when required • will help to attract new customers • fewer customer complaints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ staff are more motivated ○ less absenteeism ○ reduced staff turnover • can lead to increased sales and profits for the business • it can increase the business' market share • the business can have a competitive edge in their market • can lead to favourable on-line reviews (eg on website/trust pilot etc) 	4	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid discussion point.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each development point.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

Question	Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support senior managers with their admin tasks • motivating admin assistants to ensure team targets are met • delegating work to admin assistants and ensuring everyone has an even workload • providing support/help to junior admin assistants with their work • planning and organising meetings/prepare documents ahead of meeting • developing and maintaining a good filing system • developing and implementing office policies and procedures • training new staff in using office systems • checking the quality of admin assistants' work • completing financial documents eg budget 	3	<p>Award 1 mark for each valid brief statement.</p> <p>No development marks available.</p> <p>Accept any other suitable response.</p>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]