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# **Introduction to Business Communication**

**NQF**

## **Subject Examiner's Report**

**Unit Title:** Introduction to Business Communication

**Unit Code:** NQF IBC

**Session:** June 2016

## Question 1

- (a) Describe two techniques that a seller can use to persuade a customer to buy a product and, in each case, say whether the technique is likely to be effective. **(10 marks)**
- (b) A manager wishes to praise a member of staff for the quality of her work. State three possible channels that the manager might use. In each case say why that channel might be a good choice, and identify one or two possible drawbacks of each of your chosen channels. **(15 marks)**

### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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Both parts of this question were generally answered well. In (a), candidates were usually able to identify a couple of appropriate techniques and offer developed examples. In (b), most candidates made the distinction between medium and channel. The more obvious channels were correctly identified and the better candidates went on to develop the responses with comments re the benefits and drawbacks of their choices.

### 2. Mark scheme

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#### Instructions to markers

- (a) 2 marks per technique + 3 marks per elaboration. There are lots of possible correct answers, so look for a logical elaboration in each case. Do not accept repetitions.
- (b) 1 mark if the writer explicitly knows that a channel is NOT a medium; 1 mark for identifying an appropriate channel to a max of 3. In each case, award up to 3 marks for benefits, and up to 2 for drawbacks. Thus up to 6 marks are available in each of the three parts of the answer (ie a possible 19 marks if we include the first mark). Do not accept repetitions or opposites, unless made in words that are clearly different. Max 15.

#### Suggested answer

(a) A seller might let the customer hold the product, so that he can see its quality. She might let the customer use the product, to show how easy it is to handle. A seller will maintain eye contact, to show that she is sincere. She will listen carefully to what the customer says, and will adapt her sales technique according to the customer's feedback. The seller will smile to show warmth, and will talk enthusiastically about the product, to get the customer excited about it. The seller can offer a discount, so that the customer will purchase the product there and then.

(b) The manager might use a letter. This will be effective because it will serve as a record, and the employee will see that the manager has gone to a lot of trouble over it, which means that it will be taken very seriously. If it is written on company headed paper, it will be an official company document, and all the more important for that. A letter also gives the employee physical evidence of her achievement. However, a letter can be slow and does not easily give the employee a chance to reply.

A face to face meeting might be good because the employee will be able to hear at first-hand what the manager thinks of her. The manager will be able to explain in detail why he is praising the employee, and the employee will be able to ask questions and get lots of positive feedback. The employee might be made to feel very important that the manager has taken the time to speak with her. If the praise is given in front of other colleagues, it will be a public recognition. The main drawback is that a conversation leaves no record.

The manager might use an email. This has the advantage of being immediate, and can be sent personally to the employee without risk of getting lost. However, it might seem a little casual, and there is the risk that the employee might delete it by mistake.

### 3. Recommendations

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The wording of the question implies that development/elaboration is required in order to maximise the marks. Tutors should not allow students to merely enumerate choices; rather, they should encourage students to justify said choices in terms of both potential benefits and drawbacks.

#### Examiner's tips

Make your point – then justify it.

## Question 2

### Question wording

You are the manager of a small manufacturing company in a busy part of town. There is a private gate into your compound, which is for the exclusive use of your employees. However, a new firm has recently opened behind yours, and you have noticed that some of the workers from that firm are using your compound as a short cut on their way to and from the new firm. Last week you telephoned the manager of the new company and asked him to stop his employees from doing this, but they are still doing it. You have decided to write a letter to the manager of this other company explaining your feelings about the situation. Inventing all details as you wish, write the letter. **(25 marks)**

### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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It was disappointing to note how many candidates lost marks on this question because of an inability to structure the correct layout for a formal business letter. Typically, the two addresses were misaligned (or one was omitted entirely), dates were missing, subject lines deemed irrelevant, and salutations/closures did not correspond. Additionally, important details in the question prompt such as the previous telephone conversation were too often ignored in responses. A surprising number of answers contained what could only be interpreted as 'threats' to the receiver, with little recognition of the fact that such wording might not elicit the expected positive response.

### 2. Mark scheme

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#### Instructions to markers

*Marks divided as follows:*

*A: Top & tail – 5 marks*

*B: Content – 10 marks*

*C: Style – 10 marks*

A: Look for:

Name & address of writer;

Title, name & address of receiver;

Date in correct place;

Salutation (Dear Name or Dear Sir only) + Yours sincerely or faithfully as appropriate;

Appropriate subject line;

B: Content should include:

ref to phone conversation (up to 2 depending on detail);

details of ongoing problem (ditto);

request to stop it happening (ditto);

reason why it's a problem (ditto);

appropriate concluding sentence or two (ditto).

A third mark can be awarded in any TWO of the above categories if the detail warrants it. (max 10)

C: Style should include: Formal tone; no threat; logical structure; paragraphs properly used. Take presentation into account. Use the following as a guide.

8, 9, 10: Top & tail complete or almost complete (allow a minor error); Body contains all necessary points; style contains or tries to acknowledge all points in markscheme. Receiver will be pleased to react as desired to a reasonable request. Suggestions that the two firms should work constructively to resolve the issue should be considered for this level, even if the top & tail are incomplete.

6, 7: Top & tail complete or almost complete (one or two minor errors); Body contains most of the important points; Style will adhere to the proper rules of business letters, though with some occasional minor infelicities. Receiver will probably do as he has been asked, but the letter might cause him to have some slight reservations.

4, 5: Top & tail mostly correct; Body includes enough detail to be fit for purpose, avoiding obvious errors; style is adequate though occasionally ill-judged. The tone may be on the firm side, but not enough to cause

the receiver to dig his heels in completely. At this grade we are still judging that the receiver will do as he has been asked. Without paragraphs this is the highest obtainable grade.

Above the line we look for reference to the receiver by name (preferred); ref to the phone call (essential); absence of threat/abuse and avoidance of rudeness (essential).

2, 3: Top & tail might be fine, but the body & style will cause the receiver to say No to the request. If a letter is headed Dear Madam, or Dear Sir or Madam, this is the highest mark it can achieve. The Q is explicit that the receiver is male. At this level and below we are seeing only a limited awareness of the importance of presentation or tone. At this level and below we are judging that the receiver will not be inclined to do as the writer wishes.

0, 1: Seriously unfit for purpose. Top & tail confused, letter strewn with errors. Letter badly put together with no real sense of the scenario. Likely to be aggressive or abusive. There is no chance that the letter will get a positive response.

Show marks as A+B+C.

**Exemplar answer:**

Mrs Virginia Kalahari  
Delta Company  
22 Side Street  
Cleantown

7 June 2016

Mr Desmond Sahara  
Gamma Company  
42 Back Road  
Cleantown

Dear Mr Sahara

**Potential danger to your workers**

Following our telephone conversation last Monday regarding some of your employees using Delta Company's compound as a short cut, I regret to say that it appears that they have not heeded what you told them. I had no doubt, after we spoke, that you would try to stop this practice, and I am sorry to tell you that your workers still seem to be paying no attention.

As I mentioned in our telephone call, the nature of Delta Company's business means that we often keep some heavy and potentially dangerous pieces of machinery and equipment in our compound, and these could pose a risk to anyone who is not familiar with our compound, especially if they try to walk through it in the dark. For the avoidance of doubt, I wish to make it a matter of record that Delta Company will not be held liable for any injury that your workers may suffer as a result of cutting through our compound on their way to and from work.

In addition, I am sure that you will understand our concern for the security of our equipment and personal belongings. I would be very surprised if you were happy to allow in your own compound unknown persons who just walk in off the street. I am not making allegations against your staff, merely pointing out what we believe to be good business practice.

I am therefore asking you again to have a more serious talk with your employees, advising them of our concerns. They are gaining only a small amount of time by using this short cut, and I do not believe that it is worth the risk either to their safety or to our ongoing relationship.

I look forward to your further co-operation in this matter, and to continuing to work with you as neighbours for a long time to come.

Yours sincerely,

### **3. Recommendations**

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Knowing HOW to set out a formal written communication is not a difficult skill to acquire; there are innumerable guides available and good examples should be studied and absorbed as a matter of course, not least because students should carry forward the knowledge gained as an important lifeskill. All too often the basics appear not to have been taught, thereby disadvantaging candidates in an exam and perhaps in their professional lives. The skills involved in setting out correctly both formal and informal communications will always feature in these exam papers and tutors should prepare their students accordingly.

#### **Examiner's tips**

**LEARN** how to **STRUCTURE** and **LAY OUT** both formal and informal written communications. Failing to do so may cost you more than just a good exam grade.

### Question 3

#### Question wording

- (a) State six pieces of information that you should include when leaving a voicemail message on an answering machine. **(5 marks)**
- (b) Describe what happens in a briefing, and describe its main purposes. **(10 marks)**
- (c) Identify a formal situation in which face-to-face communication takes place. Describe how communication in this situation differs from an informal encounter. **(10 marks)**

#### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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Parts (a) and (b) of this question prompted many accurate responses and candidates had clearly been well prepared. Answers to part (c) were much less convincing, with too many candidates failing to note that the question made specific reference to a 'formal' situation in which 'face-to-face communication takes place'. Surprisingly, perhaps, the obvious example of an interview scenario rarely appeared in responses. Very few candidates were able to make the necessary comparisons between formal and informal encounters in terms of communication practices.

#### 2. Mark scheme

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##### Instructions to markers

- (a) 1 mark per point, for points 1-4; either one of pts 5 & 6.
- (b) 1 mark per point, to a max of 10. Both workplace and press briefings may be described.
- (c) Acceptable situations include, but are not restricted to, a meeting or an interview. Award 1 mark per point, +1 when contrasted with informal behaviour. If no ref to informal situations, then max is 6. The Q is worded in a way that invites a range of acceptable approaches.

##### Suggested answer

(a) 1) my name; 2) the company I am calling from; 3) my contact details; 4) the time I will call back OR be available; 5) who the call is for; 6) the reason for the call.

(b) A briefing is a short meeting<sup>1</sup> at which information on a specific topic<sup>1</sup> is passed to a selected audience<sup>1</sup>.

Within the workplace, a manager or senior colleague<sup>1</sup> may give instructions to the workforce<sup>1</sup> at the start of a shift<sup>1</sup> about the day's tasks and targets<sup>1</sup>. A briefing might also be used to pass on other important information, for example a change in working practices, or the illness of a colleague, or a reminder about certain Health and Safety issues<sup>1</sup>.

Outside the workplace, a "press briefing" is when journalists are told of important developments<sup>1</sup> affecting a company, eg a planned merger, or the launch of a new product<sup>1</sup>.

Although a briefing might be supported by written material (eg sales figures) it is always delivered by word of mouth<sup>1</sup>. This means that two-way communication is possible, and the audience can ask for clarification<sup>1</sup>, or even make their own suggestions<sup>1</sup>.

(c) In an interview I will sit facing a panel of senior people, so I will inevitably be less relaxed<sup>1</sup> than in an informal situation. If I meet a colleague in the corridor I can greet her in a friendly way<sup>1</sup>, and talk using slang<sup>1</sup> if I choose. We might have a laugh and a joke<sup>1</sup>. However, formal situations require formal behaviour and language<sup>1</sup>. I will dress smartly<sup>1</sup> to show that I am taking the interview seriously<sup>1</sup>. In formal situations, one is more likely to be judged<sup>1</sup>, so I will be careful not to use any negative body language<sup>1</sup>, eg slouching<sup>1</sup>. In an interview, the panel may well take notes of what I am saying<sup>1</sup>, whereas in an informal situation a message is passed entirely by word of mouth<sup>1</sup>.

**Total Maximum Marks for Q3**

**25 marks**

### 3. Recommendations

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Tutors could profitably remind candidates that when an optional question consists of several points, they should be confident of answering all tasks in choosing to answer it.

#### Examiner's tips

**DON'T** choose an optional question unless you are familiar with **ALL** of the **TERMS** used in its various parts.

## Question 4

### Question wording

- (a) Identify five aspects of your dressing and personal grooming that can make a positive impression on another person or group of people. In each case, explain what sort of impression you will be trying to create. **(10 marks)**
- (b) Explain what is meant by a 'grapevine', and explain how it affects the organisation in both a negative and a positive way. **(10 marks)**
- (c) Describe the differences between a Chain and a Circle communication structure. **(5 marks)**

### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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Most candidates answered part (a) satisfactorily and various examples of dressing and of personal grooming were presented; weaker candidates were either unable to distinguish between the two terms and/or concentrated disproportionately on one. In too many cases, the second mark for development/elaboration was not awarded because the candidate repeated a point made earlier or merely offered an opposite: such responses are rarely if ever rewarded.

The majority of candidates provided accurate definitions of the term 'grapevine' and then proceeded to explain how it might affect an organisation both positively and negatively.

Most candidates were well able to describe the differences between a Chain and a Circle communication structure.

### 2. Mark scheme

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#### Instructions to markers

(a) 1 mark per point + 1 for elaboration. Don't accept repetition or opposites. Max for an answer dealing only with dress or grooming is 8.

(b) 1 mark per point up to 5 for explanation of the term. Then 1 mark per point for the operation of a grapevine, to a max of 3 for -ve and 3 for +ve (but no more than 5 in total). Be aware that some answers may overlap between the two parts of the Q, and should not be penalised for doing so.

(c) Up to 2 marks for the description of each, and up to 2 marks for clearly identifying the difference between them. Don't accept repetition or opposites.

#### Suggested answer

(a) If I dress smartly it will show that I am prepared to work.

If I wear a uniform it will show that I am part of a particular group.

If my shoes are polished it will show that I care about my appearance.

By not wearing too much jewellery I will show that I am more concerned about my work than about trying to impress.

Good personal hygiene will make me pleasant to work beside.

(b) A grapevine describes the spread of rumour or gossip. It is a series of messages, always passed orally between people randomly. There is no formal structure to the process and the message can be changed or distorted as it passes. The veracity of the information is almost impossible to check, so it can be used maliciously to spread lies and suspicion.

It can have a negative effect when it includes false information, or exaggerated information, because it can harm people or destroy a company's reputation. Rumours spread very fast and are difficult to control. Positively, a grapevine can be useful if it makes people feel involved, as part of a group. Good news or recommendations can also be spread by a grapevine, to the benefit of the company. Management can use a grapevine to test the feelings of their staff about a proposal for a change in the workplace.



**(c)** A Chain is a message that is passed along a defined structure until it reaches the last person. It is often an instruction that is passed from managers via supervisors to workers. A Circle is like a Chain in that a message is passed along a line, but the last person in the line then takes a response back to the first person, e.g. a worker taking the response to the instruction directly back to the managers. A Circle allows the sender to verify that the message has been correctly received and acted on.

**Total Maximum Marks for Q4**

**25 marks**

### **3. Recommendations**

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Candidates need to better distinguish between the terms 'dressing' and 'personal grooming'.

Tutors should emphasise that repetition and opposites are rarely if ever rewarded in this examination; highlighting such errors in candidates' preparatory work should be the norm.

If candidates choose to use diagrams to help illustrate a concept or process (eg Circle communication), it is vital that all parts of the process are made clear (by using arrows, for example).

#### **Examiner's tips**

**DISTINGUISH** between 'DRESSING' and 'PERSONAL GROOMING', and  
**REMEMBER** that **REPETITION** and **OPPOSITES** are rarely rewarded in this examination

## Question 5

### Question wording

- (a) The sender of a written message knows that the receiver has poor reading skills. Identify five actions that the sender can take, in order to reduce this possible barrier. (5 marks)
- (b) Explain, with examples, two ways in which 'place' can be a barrier to successful communication. (5 marks)
- (c) Explain, with examples, what is meant by the term 'unclarified assumptions'. (5 marks)
- (d) Explain, with examples, what is meant by **any two** of the following terms:
- (i) Primary data (5 marks)
  - (ii) Cooling-off period (5 marks)
  - (iii) Business incentive (5 marks)

### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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Most candidates were able to offer a small number of remedial actions in part (a), though the maximum mark was rarely attained and some weaker candidates placed the onus on the receiver rather than on the sender.

Part (b) elicited few considered responses, with only a minority of candidates moving beyond the obvious 'noisy place' scenario.

Part (c) saw a good many accurate explanations of the term 'unclarified assumptions'; however, too often only a single example was evidenced. The same criticism could be levelled at the responses to part (d) where examples were thin on the ground.

### 2. Mark scheme

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#### Instructions to markers

- (a) 1 mark each for any five solutions. Accept reasonable answers in addition to those in the model answer.
- (b) Up to 3 marks x2, max 5. Accept refs to time zones.
- (c) Up to 2 or 3 marks for a definition, plus up to 2 or 3 for examples. Max 5.
- (d) In each case, up to 2 or 3 marks for the definition, plus up to 2 or 3 for examples. Max 5. If three answers are offered, mark only the first two.

#### Suggested answer

(a) The sender can use simple language; type instead of writing by hand; use a large font; leave plenty of space on the page; use short paragraphs; make a follow-up call to resolve any problems.

(b) If someone is trying to have a conversation in a noisy place, the receiver will not be able to hear properly. If a manager tries to have an important conversation in a corridor, the other person might not take it seriously as a corridor is not an official place for doing business.

(c) Unclarified assumptions happen when a person does not take the trouble to verify the message, but thinks (s)he understands it. This can lead to the wrong action being taken. To avoid this, one must always check exactly what is wanted. Although it is more often the fault of the receiver, the sender might also be guilty of it if he fails to check that the receiver has understood the message properly. Unclarified assumptions can also refer to barriers such as stereotyping, where a conclusion is reached about a person's nature or talents without taking the trouble to check.

(d) (i) Primary data is information which is collected direct from the source. It is first-hand information, gathered for a specific purpose by interviews or questionnaires, and it is used by people to make decisions. Sometimes called field research, primary data is extremely accurate, but can be time-consuming and expensive to collect.

(ii) A cooling-off period is an amount of time given by law to a purchaser of an item or service to change his or her mind. If the customer decides not to purchase it after all, within the cooling-off period, (s)he can return the item undamaged, and will not lose any money; anything already paid will be refunded. Its purpose is to protect customers against high-pressure sales tactics. The term can also refer to many other types of contract, eg the opening of a bank account.

(iii) Incentive refers to any payment or other type of reward that will cause a person to behave in a particular way. Incentives are regularly offered by businesses to encourage staff to produce more or sell more. In the workplace, incentives can be offered in the form of overtime payments, job enrichment, job enlargement, promotion, extra training, etc. An incentive which is illegal is called a bribe.

**Total Maximum Marks for Q5**

**25 marks**

### **3. Recommendations**

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Tutors should remind candidates that question wording such as 'Explain, with examples ...' when the question is worth 5 marks implies that a degree of weighting is being given to the development/elaboration of the explanation. Students should, as a matter of course, be encouraged to justify and/or exemplify what they say and write. This 'good practice' will be of benefit when they are required to provide evidence and examples in their exam responses.

#### **Examiner's tips**

Make your point – then justify it. Think of **EXAMPLES** that **PROVE** what you are saying.

## Question 6

### Question wording

- (a) Explain the differences between photocopying, scanning and printing. **(10 marks)**
- (b) A company is considering giving all its staff a mobile phone. Explain the possible advantages and possible disadvantages for the company if it does this. **(10 marks)**
- (c) Explain how you will save a new document on your computer in order to keep it secure. **(5 marks)**

### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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Overall, candidates performed well on the three parts to this question. Part (a) saw most candidates distinguishing accurately between hard and soft copies of documents. Part (b) elicited many comprehensive responses, with the caveat that repetition and opposites appeared quite regularly. Most candidates were well versed in the procedure; weaker candidates tended to concentrate overmuch on the 'security' aspect of the question.

### 2. Mark scheme

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#### Instructions to markers

(a) Up to 3 marks each for explaining what they do. The tenth mark can be given for a particularly detailed answer on any one of them; this 4<sup>th</sup> mark can be awarded only once. A correct description of a barcode or hospital scanner may be awarded 1 mark max.

(b) Up to 6 marks for advantages; up to 6 marks for disadvantages. Max 10. Answer may relate either to the employee or to the company. Credit stolen OR lost, but not both.

(c) 1 mark per point; any five of these six, thus: Save As; give it a name; recognition that it is new; choose or create a folder; up to two ways of securing it.

#### Suggested answer

(a) A photocopier creates hard copies of documents for filing or distribution. It can make many copies with one press of a button, and some photocopiers can even copy and collate several pages. It is an output device, hard copy to hard copy.

A scanner is an input device. A hard copy is sent to the computer as a soft copy. It can be stored in the computer until needed, or sent as an email attachment.

A printer takes its instructions from the computer. A soft copy document on the computer will be printed out as hard copy, and as many copies as are required can be printed at the same time.

(b) The company will always be able to contact staff; staff can deal with office business when out of the office; problems can be attended to quickly, because the colleague is never away from a phone; it will increase efficiency for the company; messages can be left if the phone is switched off, e.g. during a meeting.

However, mobile phones can be stolen, lost or broken; the cost of insurance will be high. There may be no network signal, or the battery is flat. The phone can also run out of credit. Some staff may use company phones for private calls, and this will be a cost to the company.

(c) When saving it I will click on the Save icon, choose "Save As," give it a name because a new document does not have one already, and select a folder in which to save it. To keep it secure I might protect it with a password, or give it an obscure name that no-one will associate with its content, or hide it deep in a subfolder.

**Total Maximum Marks for Q6**

**25 marks**

### 3. Recommendations

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Tutors should not assume that students are comfortable writing on topics related to communications technology, especially those that relate specifically to the workplace. Student familiarity with activities such as gaming and using social networking

does not necessarily translate into knowledge and understanding of wider issues in business communications. There needs to be subject specific teaching and guidance.

### **Examiner's tips**

**KEEP UP TO DATE.** Complement what you learn about communications technology in the classroom with what is being written and talked about in the media and in the workplace.

## Question 7

### Question wording

- (a) State, in the correct order, five items that should always appear on the agenda of an official meeting. (5 marks)
- (b) Explain five responsibilities that belong to the chairperson of a meeting. (10 marks)
- (c) Describe how a company's reception area can be made welcoming for visitors. (10 marks)

### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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Another popular question with candidates seemingly well prepared. Weaker candidates tended to include secretarial duties in their responses to part (b).

### 2. Mark scheme

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#### Instructions to markers

- (a) 1 mark for each of any four of the six items in the model answer. Reserve the fifth mark for the items being in the correct order, irrespective of which ones are chosen.
- (b) 1 mark per correct responsibility + 1 mark for development. No marks for any secretarial duties. Accept first five suggestions only.
- (c) 1 mark per point + 1 or 2 for development. Description of the receptionist is not strictly relevant, but we can allow up to 2 marks for it. Don't accept repetitions.

#### Suggested answer

- (a) Apologies for absence; minutes of the previous meeting; matters arising; correspondence; items for discussion; AOB.
- (b) the chairman should: ask the secretary to read the minutes of the previous meeting; sign the agreed minutes; ensure that minutes are being taken; keep order in the meeting; keep to time; keep to the agenda; invite people to contribute; ask for any other business; ensure that discussions remain relevant; ensure fairness/stay neutral; ensure that no single person dominates the meeting; call for votes; count votes; declare the result of any votes; use a casting vote, if required; set the date and time of the next meeting.
- (c) I will ensure that the reception area is bright and airy. It is essential that visitors feel valued and comfortable. So it will be kept at a pleasant temperature, and there will be comfortable chairs for them to use while they are waiting. I will also ensure that there are refreshments – water, tea and coffee – and entertainment – magazines, newspapers and even a television. The reception area will be decorated in pastel colours, with nothing too vibrant as we want visitors to feel at ease.

**Total Maximum Marks for Q7**

**25 marks**

### 3. Recommendations

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Tutors should remind candidates that question wording such as 'Explain' or 'Describe' when the question is worth 10 marks implies that a degree of weighting is being given to the development/elaboration of the explanation. Students should, as a matter of course, be encouraged to justify and/or exemplify what they say and write. This 'good practice' will be of benefit when they are required to provide evidence and examples in their exam responses.

#### Examiner's tips

**PRACTISE** taking **ONE STEP AT A TIME**. Think of a situation that you might be presented with and carefully talk through the logical sequence you would follow to deal with it.

## Question 8

### Question wording

Your friend wants to apply for a job as an office junior in a bank, but has not yet drafted a Curriculum Vitae (CV) / résumé to go with the application. Your friend has come to you for help. A section of what your friend has written is printed below.

Your task is to summarise and organise the information as a CV so that it will make a good impression on the prospective employer. Do this in no more than 100 words.

*"I started my education at Tarras Junior School, which was a small local school of about 200 children, then when I was 13 I moved to Longwe Senior School. It is much bigger, maybe 1500 pupils, about ten miles from where I live, and I had to catch the bus to get there. I enjoyed the time I spent there, and I got some qualifications at Longwe. I passed English and Computing with Grade A, and also got a Grade B in Maths and a Grade C in Science. I studied Geography but I only got an E grade. I had some good teachers, and they thought I did well in my exams. I was quite pleased with my results. When I was at Longwe I was a member of the school's running team, and I once came first in an 800 metres race between all the local schools. I won a gold medal for that, which I still have. I enjoy sport, but running is my favourite. I left Longwe last year and I have only done a small amount of work, helping Mr and Mrs Tummel selling books at the market. I have been doing this for six months. I like to talk with the customers and make jokes with them while they are looking at the books. Some people want to read without buying. I like reading, and Mr Tummel lets me borrow books from the shop for free. Mr and Mrs Tummel trust me to take their money to the bank every week. Mrs Tummel said to me, "You are a good person, and you can run fast. I wish everyone was like you." They said that they have sold more books since I began to help them. Two days a week I attend Valliol College where I am studying for my ABE Certificate in Business Management. I will be taking the exams in December 2016. On Saturdays I help out at our local athletics club with the young children, training them to be good runners. The Club President found out that I had a qualification in Computing, so he asked me to look after all the details of the members that the club keeps on its computer database. The other people at the club call me the Secretary!"* (383 words)

### 1. Comments on learners' performance

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It was encouraging to note that relatively few candidates exceeded the 100 word limit for the response. Weaker candidates failed to identify the most significant elements of the original passage or made little attempt to adapt the material appropriately. Most candidates set out their responses in a logical order with relevant headings. The layout provided an opportunity to use various presentational devices such as use of bold/capitals but not all candidates recognised this.

### 2. Mark scheme

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#### Instructions to markers

Mark as follows: Base your marks on the first 100 words of the answer except for headings (use double diagonal line at the 100<sup>th</sup> word.) Do not award marks for Content where the material has just been copied from the passage.

**A: PRESENTATION, up to 5 marks.**

Look for: headings (1); four headings (2); logical arrangement of cv; use of bold/capitals, etc; ease of reading;

**B: CONTENT: 15 marks max (from 20 available)**

Education (up to 6): names of Longwe and Valliol; four correct pass subjects; correct grades; omission of Geog result; current ABE study; date of ABE exam.

Work (up to 5): bookselling; six months; looking after money; secretary of athletics club; train children.

Skills (up to 4): computer literate; good interpersonal skills; selling skills; 800m gold medallist.

Personal Qualities (up to 5): any two of trustworthy/honest/reliable or other synonym; hardworking; enjoy reading; enjoy sport.

**C: STYLE: 5 marks max.** (Suggest you begin by deciding whether or not it's good enough in the first 100 words to call for interview, then assign within 0-2 or 3-5.)

**5** – I like this application. It's logical & succinct. Has done a good job adapting & presenting the info. Good focus on relevant personal qualities (honesty, etc) I will certainly interview the candidate. (Distinction)

**4** – This is a solid application though doesn't do full justice to the candidate. Has adapted some of the material quite well. Candidate is worth a closer look. (Credit)

**3** – Not too much irrelevance, though not especially well presented. Little sense of what is really important. Candidate scrapes an interview. (Pass)

**2** – Hasn't selected material well. Includes irrelevancies & has little adaptation. I won't interview. (Fail)

**1** – Relies on unadapted material with little sense of purpose. This is a poor application. No chance of an interview. (Low Fail)

**0** – Almost entirely copied. Relevant or not, in it goes. No sense of task.

### Show marks as A+B+C (Presentation + Content + Style)

#### Suggested answer

**EDUCATION:** I attended Longwe Senior School, gaining English-A, Computing-A, Maths-B, Science-C. I am currently studying ABE Business Management at Valliol College, to be taken in December 2016.

**WORK EXPERIENCE:** I have been selling books with Tummel & Co for six months; I am responsible for taking cash to the bank; I am secretary of the local athletics club, and I do voluntary work training local children.

**SKILLS:** I am computer literate, have good interpersonal and sales skills; I was an inter-school 800 metres silver medallist.

**PERSONAL QUALITIES:** I am reliable, honest, hardworking. I can be trusted with money. I enjoy sport and reading.

**Total Maximum Marks for Q8**

**25 marks**

### 3. Recommendations

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Tutors should appreciate that the art of summarising does not come naturally to their students and that it is a skill that should be taught thoroughly and practised regularly.

Tutors can encourage students to identify opportunities to gain additional marks for the layout and presentation of an answer. Thus, 'organise' and 'make a good impression' are key words in the question that could be profitably translated by well-informed students.

#### Examiner's tips

Remember that **CONTENT** is not the same as **STYLE**. If asked to 'create' a realistic document, make it **NOTICEABLE, EYE CATCHING** and **FIT FOR PURPOSE**.