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**NQF  
Certificate  
1.2 IBC**

**Introduction to Business Communication**

**Wednesday 7 December 2016, Afternoon**

1. **Time allowed: 3 hours.**
2. **Answer any four questions.**
3. **All questions carry 25 marks. Marks for subdivisions of questions are shown in brackets.**
4. **No books, dictionaries, notes or any other written materials are allowed in this examination.**
5. **Calculators, including scientific calculators, are allowed provided they are not programmable and cannot store or recall information. All other electronic devices, including mobile phones, are not permitted.**
6. **Candidates who break ABE Examination Regulations will be disqualified from the examinations.**
7. **Question papers must not be removed from the examination room.**



## Answer any four questions

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- Q1 (a)** A customer has contacted your company to complain politely about the poor customer service they felt they received on a recent visit to your store.

Explain two benefits and two disadvantages of replying to the customer:

- (i) By email **(5 marks)**
- (ii) By telephone **(5 marks)**
- (iii) By letter **(5 marks)**

- (b)** Describe how an open plan layout in an office can both benefit and hinder communication. **(10 marks)**  
**(Total 25 marks)**

- Q2** You have seen a job advertisement for an assistant manager to work in the local branch of a national clothing store. The advertisement states that CVs (or résumés) are not required.

Write a fully blocked letter to the HR Department applying for the job. **(25 marks)**

- Q3 (a)** Explain why a manager might want to arrange a briefing meeting in the workplace. **(5 marks)**

- (b)** Your company would like to know its customers' opinions about a product that it recently began selling.

- (i) Identify three channels that it can use to gather the information it requires. **(3 marks)**
- (ii) Identify one possible disadvantage to the company of using each of the channels you have chosen. **(3 marks)**

- (c)** (i) Explain what is meant by 'identity theft'. **(2 marks)**  
(ii) Describe a situation in which it can occur. **(2 marks)**  
(iii) State how you can prevent it from occurring. **(2 marks)**

- (d)** Much of our face to face communication in the workplace occurs in 'chance' meetings with colleagues at all levels and by making new contacts.

Describe four possible benefits and four possible disadvantages to a company of 'chance' face to face meetings in the workplace. **(8 marks)**  
**(Total 25 marks)**

- Q4 (a)** Explain what is meant by 'personal space' and describe why it can sometimes be a barrier to communication. **(7 marks)**

- (b)** Explain the meaning of each of these key components in the Communications Cycle:

- (i) Information **(2 marks)**
- (ii) Encoding **(2 marks)**
- (iii) The channel **(2 marks)**
- (iv) The purpose **(2 marks)**
- (v) Decoding **(2 marks)**
- (vi) Feedback **(2 marks)**

- (c)** Explain what is meant by the term 'upward vertical communication'. Identify two advantages and two disadvantages for a company of using such a system. **(6 marks)**  
**(Total 25 marks)**

- Q5** (a) Explain, using three examples, how differences of culture between two people can become a barrier to communication. In each case, suggest a way in which that barrier can be overcome. **(9 marks)**
- (b) You have been given the responsibility of organising the reception area of your company's offices so that visitors will feel welcome. Describe how you will achieve this. **(10 marks)**
- (c) (i) Explain three ways in which time can become a barrier to successful communication. **(3 marks)**  
(ii) Describe how these barriers can be overcome. **(3 marks)**  
**(Total 25 marks)**

- Q6** You have been part of a team carrying out research into the canteen facilities at Sanrest College. A colleague has passed the following document to you, as a draft of the research:

"The canteen at Sanrest College has been the subject of an increasing number of complaints. We have been asked to look at the problem and to offer some solutions as to how the situation can be improved. We have spent several days in the canteen area, sampling the food and drink on offer, and talking to College students and to canteen staff.

The canteen was built for an original student population of 2,000. The College now has almost 5,000 students and the canteen is clearly too small to cater for this number. Building a new, larger canteen is too costly. However, a substantial canteen extension could be built at a much more reasonable cost. We believe that the main aim of providing an attractive, fit for purpose extension would cost 325,000 Rupees.

Whilst the cramped conditions of the present canteen are a source of dissatisfaction, students also complained about having to queue for a long time to order their food and be served. If students are not served in time, they either miss their classes or leave the food they have paid for. The canteen staff are obviously working under extreme pressure and we witnessed several quarrels between staff and students. Employing extra staff, especially at busy times, is a possibility that management might like to consider if the budget allows. The canteen does not follow the example of other Colleges who offer part-time jobs to their own students. Because Sanrest College has many students enrolled on hospitality and cookery courses, this could be worth investigating further. We estimate that the College needs to spend about 50,000R extra per year to improve staffing levels in the canteen.

The present staff are not well dressed. Standard uniforms would cost 10,000R per year, and would lead to improvements in staff unity, identity, motivation and standards of personal hygiene.

The present management team lacks focus and leadership. Offering a salary of 20,000R would attract a qualified and experienced manager who could be supported by a food quality inspector, a senior cashier and perhaps a Chief of Staff to monitor and supervise the canteen staff. 60,000R would cover the annual salaries for these three senior staff.

The present menu for students is necessarily limited by the need to serve the greatest number of people in the shortest period of time and by the inadequate cooking facilities which urgently need to be replaced and updated. Offering the same items on the menu for consecutive days is certainly not good practice. There is very little provision for vegetarian students or for those who have special dietary needs. Once they have been served, students often find that all of the tables and chairs – many in a very poor state of repair – are occupied. This often results in students carrying their refreshments out of the canteen and into other, less suitable areas of the College, thus contributing to an increase in litter problems.

New chairs and tables would help create a more welcoming environment. Cleanliness will be a key concern. There should be extra cleaners employed to maintain neat and tidy floors and tables and canteen utensils. Students suggested that they would be happy for a small rise in canteen prices if they could see that the additional revenue was being invested in improved facilities. They would also like to see a suggestion box in the canteen area that would enable them to offer both ideas and complaints."

*[Turn over – Q6 continues overleaf]*

**Required:**

Summarise the content and present it in the form of a report in no more than 150 words, excluding headings. **(25 marks)**

- Q7 (a)** You have been invited for a job interview at a local company for the post of receptionist.
- (i) Describe how you will prepare for the interview, in order to make the best possible impression. **(10 marks)**
  - (ii) State five ways that you can conduct yourself during the interview, in order to continue making a good impression. **(5 marks)**
  - (iii) During the interview, you are asked why the role of receptionist is vital to the success of the business. Explain how you would answer this question. **(5 marks)**
- (b)** Explain what a spreadsheet is and describe the process of creating a new spreadsheet on a computer. **(5 marks)**  
**(Total 25 marks)**

**Q8** Explain the meaning of **any five** of the following terms:

- Sole trader
- Embargo
- Primary data
- Peripheral device
- Tariff
- Buyer's market
- Arbiter (arbitrator)

**(Total 25 marks)**

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**End of question paper**