



Report on the Examination

QCF Unit: 4PA Personnel Administration

Date of Examination: June 2015

Introduction/General comments:

The exam consists of eight questions. Students are required to answer any four of those questions.

The performance overall was rather mixed. An ongoing problem, that has been noted before, is that too many students do not answer the specific question that has been set.

Question 1:

This question had two parts, with the first part being answered less well than the second part. The second part was generally answered very well.

The first part required students to explain how the culture of the organisation affected the work of the HR department. Many students did not understand the concept of an organisation culture, and hence their answer did not address the specific question. There were several rather vague answers looking generally at what HR does.

The second part looked at the services that the HR function provides, and a good range of ideas was produced here.

Question 2:

Here it did not seem that students really understood the question, or they did understand it but became distracted and answered another question.

The question specifically asked the student to 'outline the training programme that you would provide.' However, many students responded by identifying a range of different approaches to training that could be used, and evaluating these options. Although some good points were made, that was simply not answering the question. There was a requirement to actually put together a training programme.

Question 3:

The first two parts of this question were generally answered well. Students generally understood the concept of continuous professional development, and could explain why it is important. There was also a good understanding of the competencies and skills that are required by a Personnel Administrator.

Very few students understood what should be included in a personal development plan. There were very few who had an understanding of the need to plan out personal development in a systematic way, and to have a mechanism to review development.

Question 4:

In the first part of the question too many students focused on the recruitment process rather than the planning. Part one of the question looked at the planning, and then part two looked at the recruitment process. Many students wrote very similar content for both parts of the question.

When looking at planning there was a need to think about what happens before the recruitment process starts. How does the organisation decide how many people, and what



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types of job, to recruit?

The second part then looks at the recruitment process – and students were able to answer this part in some detail.

Question 5:

The first part of this question, which required students to identify reasons that poor employer-employee relationships arise, was answered well with a good range of reasons being given.

The second part of the question was not answered well. There seemed to be little understanding of the purpose of exit and pre-retirement interviews, and hence little understanding of how information gathered through this route can be used.

Question 6:

This question produced a rather mixed range of answers. Some were rather vague, saying little more than communication is important, and should be something that line managers do regularly. However, some were very thorough with the identification of a range of different forms of communication, and some good analytical comments about them.

Question 7:

This question also produced a rather mixed range of answers. For the first part too many students simply listed a number of different places for an advertisement, without commenting on them and hence justifying the choice of the best option. Not enough thought was given to the context, and hence there was not enough thought about where a graduate trainee might be looking for a job.

Some advertisements were little more than a list of key requirements. Not enough thought was given to the purpose of the advertisement, and the essential components that it needed to include.

Question 8:

This question was answered quite well. Students were able to identify the key requirements for a Personnel Administrator, and to give a range of different points. There were some good ideas about the information that would need to be recorded, although some students seemed to be listing everything they could think of with the hope that the right answer would be included. There was some good understanding of the risks associated with holding information on a computer system.

Conclusions:

Overall, the performance was not as good as hoped. Too many students are not answering the specific question that has been asked, and too many do not seem to have studied the whole syllabus.

Recommendations to students and tutors for future examinations:

Students must read the questions carefully and answer what has been asked.

The full syllabus must be studied, and students must understand the basic concepts.