NCC EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA
IN
COMPUTER STUDIES

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

9th MARCH 2008

MARKING SCHEME

Markers are advised that many answers in Marking Schemes are **examples only** of what we might expect from candidates. Unless a question **specifically states** that an answer is demanded in a particular form, then an answer that is correct, factually or in practical terms, must be given the available marks.

If there is doubt as to the correctness of an answer the relevant NCC Education textbook should be the first authority.

This Marking Scheme has been prepared as a guide only to markers. This is **ABSOLUTELY NOT** a set of model answers; **NOR** is the Marking Scheme exclusive, for there will frequently be alternative responses which will provide a valid answer.

Notice to Markers

Where markers award half marks in any part of a question they should ensure that the <u>total</u> mark recorded for a question is a whole mark.

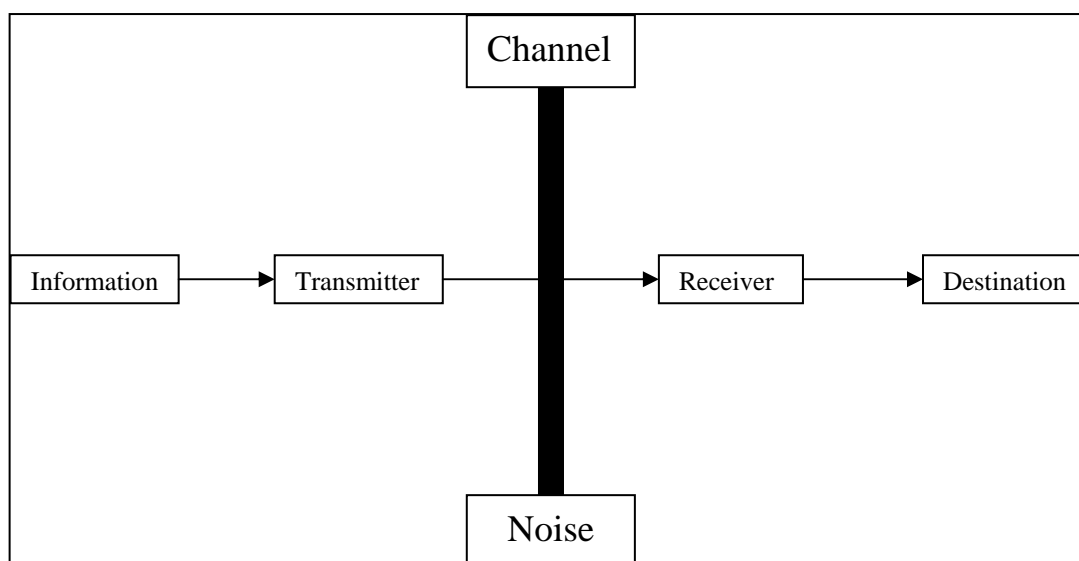**QUESTION 1**   **Marks**
<mark>Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.</mark>

a) Write out in full what the following abbreviations stand for:
  i) PLC   **1**
     Public limited company

  ii) ISDN   **1**
     Integrated Services Digital Network

  iii) ISBN   **1**
     International Standard Book Number

  iv) AGM   **1**
     Annual General Meeting

  v) CV   **1**
     Curriculum Vitae

b) Explain why it is important in business writing to use **non-sexist language**.   **4**
  • *Business writing should reflect the fact that there are males and females active in business*
  • *Although masculine pronouns such as 'he' 'him' and 'his' have been used for centuries to refer to both sexes, an engineer or a doctor or a manager or an accountant is not now always a 'he'*
  • *A secretary, nurse or cleaner is not always a 'she'*
  • *Whatever the writer's personal views may be it is important in business to avoid offending anyone*
  Up to 4 marks for explanation.

c) Draw a simple diagram to illustrate Shannon and Weaver's theory of a **one-way communication process.**   **8**
  One mark for each correctly named element of the communication process to a maximum of 6 marks.
  One mark for correct arrangement of stages.
  One mark for correct arrows/ directional indication.

  Maximum 8 marks overall total.

d) List ONE typical feature, ONE strength and ONE weakness associated with the Belbin **team type** called a   **3**
   shaper.

Shaper

- *Typical features: highly strung, outgoing*
- *Strengths: drive and readiness to challenge inertia*
- *Weaknesses: prone to provocation, irritation and impatience*

Up to 3 marks for one feature, one strength and one weakness correctly identified.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 2   **Marks**
<mark>Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.</mark>

a) i)   List FIVE items of information that would be included in a **job description.**   **5**
- *Job title*
- *Purpose of the job*
- *Duties and tasks to be undertaken*
- *Method of assessment of performance*
- *Special responsibilities*
- *Position of jobholder's immediate superior*
- *Jobholder's span of control (if any)*
- *Limits of jobholder's authority*
- *Internal contacts*
- *External contacts*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.

ii)   List FIVE items of information that would be included in a **person specification**.   **5**
- *Qualifications*
- *Experience*
- *General intelligence*
- *Special aptitudes or skills*
- *Personal characteristics or circumstances*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.

b) Many organisations now use the Internet to recruit staff. Candidates can apply online by going to a website which contains details of the job and an application form to complete and send by e-mail to the organisation.

i)   Using your knowledge of recruitment processes, briefly describe FIVE **disadvantages** for   **5**
employers using online recruitment methods.
- *Internet might not be the first choice for all jobseekers and so reduces the pool of talent*
- *Only those with access to IT/ Internet facilities can apply, so could reduce the number of applications overall*
- *Could act as a barrier to recruiting older workers or disabled groups who might lack computer skills or confidence using the technology*
- *Conversely, online access makes it easier for people to apply so the company could have much greater numbers of applications to deal with and not have sufficient staff to deal with them all*
- *If the company website is badly designed or has technical difficulties for applicants it could put them off applying*
- *Computer system failure/ problems, could adversely affect the organisation's recruitment process*
- *Usually more appropriate for recruiting for professional posts rather than everyday or manual jobs, so employer has to use additional traditional advertisements or agencies for these types of jobs*
- *Other valid answers*

1 mark per disadvantage described to a maximum of 5 marks.

ii) Again, using your knowledge of recruitment processes, briefly describe FIVE **advantages** for **employers** using online recruitment methods.   **5**

- *Speeds up the recruitment process – easy to place advertisement and applications received very quickly*
- *Reduces administration – no info packs to send out, or paper applications to receive and handle*
- *Therefore reduces recruitment costs*
- *Can reach a wide pool of applicants – offers access to vacancies 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to a global audience*
- *Gives the organisation an up-to-date image*
- *High volume of job applications can be handled in a consistent way if the organisation is set up to do so*
- *Other valid answers*

1 mark per advantage described to a maximum of 5 marks.

Total 20 Marks

a) Write a memorandum for trainee managers to tell them about a chairperson's role and duties when running   **12**
a meeting.

Answer should be in the form of a standard memo and include the following headings:
- *Memorandum/ memo or letterhead; to; from; date; subject*

2 marks for all correct headings and remainder of memo in appropriate format; for incomplete formats
1 mark available at marker's discretion

Introduction
- *Why the memo has been written and what it is about*

1 mark for introduction.

Main body should include some of the following points:
- *chairperson should be prepared for the meeting and be familiar with procedures*
- *practical preparation for the meeting e.g. authorizing and checking agenda*
- *open and close the meeting; ensure a quorum is present; convey apologies; approving minutes*
- *manage time carefully so that the meeting starts and ends on time*
- *keep to the agenda and ensure all items of business are dealt with fairly/ impartially*
- *all attendees should be clear about the objectives of the meeting and the person leading the meeting should steer the discussion toward these aims*
- *ensure that everyone has a chance to contribute*
- *keeps discussions to the point*
- *stop anyone taking over the meeting and keep order when there is disagreement*
- *sum up discussion at the end*
- *check everyone understands what has been agreed*
- *work with the secretary in compiling agendas, drafting minutes and calling meetings*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 7 marks.

Up to 2 marks available for communicative quality: Is it clear what the writer is trying to say? Is the handwriting and presentation acceptable?

Maximum overall total marks: 12

b) You are the Human Resources Officer for a manufacturing company.

You have to go to a meeting to tell the staff about a plan to introduce computerised production methods. This will mean that some staff will lose their jobs, so your speech needs to be very well-prepared and convincing.

Briefly outline EIGHT things that you have to consider when preparing your argument so that you will persuade the staff to accept the changes.

Please note that you are NOT required to write a speech, so do not waste time doing so as no marks are available for this.
- *You need to know exactly what you want to say and how you intend to present your argument*
- *Before becoming involved in formal discussion, decide what you hope to achieve and what you are willing to concede*
- *Make sure the facts you use are relevant to the argument*
- *Opinions are not facts*
- *Confine arguments to objective statements*
- *Prove your case: strength of argument depends on the quality of reasoning, not the quantity*
- *Show practical evidence: have examples ready to support your facts*
- *Anticipate objections and arguments against you so that you can defend your case*
- *Don't use hearsay*
- *Do not trade on emotion*
- *End by firmly repeating the proposition*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 8 marks.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 4   Marks

a) You have been asked to make a presentation to an audience of school students to help them decide what   **12**
sort of course to take in the next stage of their education.

Write some **notes** for a properly structured **short presentation** about your own experience of the
International Diploma in Computer Studies course.

Use a **heading** for each of the main topics you want to tell the students about. Under each heading include
a **list of the points** you intend to make. If you plan to use **visual aids**, indicate where these will be shown.
Structure:
Must have an introduction, a main body and a conclusion
Up to 3 marks for structure.

Introduction should include:
- *Your name*
- *What you are going to speak about*
- *Why you are going to speak about that particular topic*
Up to 3 marks for content of introduction.

Main body:
- *Points should be in logical groupings and in sensible order to support any argument or point*
- *Visual aids cues*
Up to 5 marks for content of main body.

Conclusion:
- *Should summarise main points and come to a tidy finish*
1 mark for content of conclusion.

Maximum overall total 12 marks.

b) It is your responsibility to arrange for the room and the equipment to be available for your presentation.   **8**

List EIGHT checks that you should make before the day of the presentation.
Check:
- *the room is booked and the equipment is available on the correct date and at the correct time and duration*
- *size of room is suitable*
- *temperature/ heating/ ventilation is appropriate*
- *lighting is adequate/ appropriate*
- *shade/ window blinds/ curtains*
- *seating is arranged for maximum visibility*
- *acoustics are good*
- *'do not disturb' signs available*
- *there is a clock facing you so you can make inconspicuous time checks*
- *a technical assistant is on call for the duration of the presentation in case of equipment failure*
- *refreshments are organised if necessary*
1 mark per point to a maximum of 8 marks.

Total 20 Marks

<mark>**Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.**</mark>

a) State the most appropriate communication method to use for each of the following situations and give a **reason** for each answer.

i) To provide information on some research undertaken about the development of your company over the last three years.   **2**
- *(Formal) report*
- *Reasons: complex information gathered for a specific purpose with a specific audience; might include recommendations; permanent record*

One mark for method plus one mark for reason given to maximum of 2 marks.

ii) To inform all employees about new pay arrangements.   **2**
- *Letter with pay slip or in pay packet for each employee*
- *E-mail message only appropriate if EVERY employee affected uses/ reads e-mails on a regular basis*
- *Reasons: personal/ confidential information essential to each employee and specific to the recipient*

One mark for method plus one mark for reason given to maximum of 2 marks.

iii) To inform staff about a holiday trip to visit an amusement park.   **2**
- *Notice board or include in firm's newsletter or mass e-mail*
- *Reasons: information not crucial therefore notice board probably best method; grapevine is likely to play its part in this sort of situation*

One mark for method plus one mark for reason given to maximum of 2 marks.

iv) To tell someone that they are to be made redundant.   **2**
- *Formal business letter*
- *Reasons: confidential information specifically for the recipient; permanent record for personal file*

One mark for method plus one mark for reason given to maximum of 2 marks.

v) To ask a colleague out on a date.   **2**
- *Telephone call or face to face conversation or possibly e-mail*
- *Reasons: informal situation, quick and efficient method required preferably with immediate feedback*

One mark for method plus one mark for reason given to maximum of 2 marks.

b) Formal **working relationships** affect the flow of information in an organisation.

Briefly describe FOUR characteristics of EACH of the following working relationships and give ONE example of each type of relationship in a typical organisation.

i) Lateral relationship   **5**
- *exists between people on the same level or tier in the structure*
- *people in this relationship have to co-operate and work well together*
- *supervisory influence may be required in the event of conflict*
- *this relationship indicates the extent to which a team spirit is prevalent*
- *any appropriate example e.g. heads of department such as production manager and personnel manager; jobs within departments such as health and safety officer and industrial relations officer*

One mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks for description plus one mark for example to a maximum total of 5 marks.

ii) Line relationship

- *sometimes known as 'vertical' relationship referring to arrangement of jobs on a vertical organisation chart*
- *subordinate reporting to a superior and the superior issuing orders and instructions for the subordinate to act upon*
- *accountability and responsibility are reflected very clearly in this relationship*
- *indirect line relationship exists where other levels of supervision intervene e.g. managing director and a factory operative*
- *any appropriate example e.g. factory operative and supervisor*

One mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks for description plus one mark for example to a maximum total of 5 marks.

Total 20 Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

a) You own a small business and have had a completely new and up-to-date telephone system installed. This   **10**
should have helped your staff to deal with all calls and messages more efficiently and provided customers
with a much better service. However, you have had lots of problems with the system since it was installed.

Write a properly structured **letter of complaint** to the company that installed the telephone system. Invent
any background information that is necessary for your letter to be realistic. Your letter should be in an
accepted business format.

Letter should be coherent, legible and fulfil the purpose set out in the question.

Layout should be in a consistent format throughout i.e. in a blocked, semi-blocked or indented style and
include the following:
- *Sender's address*
- *Recipient's address*
- *Date*
- *Salutation and corresponding complimentary close*
- *Subject heading*

2 marks for all correct headings and remainder of letter in consistent format; for incomplete formats 1
mark available at marker's discretion

Introduction
- *A statement of the reason for writing the letter*

1 mark for introduction.

Main body should be ordered logically and include the following:
- *A clear description of the problem*
- *Statement of the facts including times/ dates*
- *The cost in terms of inconvenience/ money/ time*
- *Suggested remedy e.g. replacement/ compensation/ refund*
- *Time limit/ deadline for settlement of claim*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.

Up to 2 marks available for communicative quality: Is it clear what the writer is trying to say? Is the
handwriting and presentation acceptable?

b) Give FIVE reasons why most people prefer statistical data to be presented in the form of a **chart** rather than   **5**
a **table**.
- *for most people a diagram conveys more information than a table*
- *visual technique has a more immediate impact than numbers/ figures*
- *tables show more detailed information, but people often shy away from them because they are the*
  least visual of all ways of displaying numeric information
- *a diagram, such as the bar chart, gives an immediate overview of the contents of (part of) the*
  table and is more easily taken in
- *bar charts are very effective in presenting a comparison of numeric information*
- *other valid points*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.

c) Other than **tables**, name and briefly describe FIVE different types of visual representations of statistical information. **5**

- *line graph: shows the value of one variable and how it changes against the value of another; gives a picture of the trend*
- *bar chart: comparison of numbers; bars can be either vertical or horizontal, in 2D or 3D; each bar may vary in height, but not in width*
- *compound or component bar chart: bar chart with additional/ more detailed information introduced*
- *pie chart: circular, cut into slices, each slice representing a part of the total*
- *exploded pie chart: section shown separated from the 'pie' to add impact and emphasis*
- *pictogram: use symbols to represent quantities, each whole symbol representing a particular number*
- *histogram: similar to a bar chart, but is a graphical representation of a frequency distribution*
- *frequency polygon: constructed by joining up the mid-points of the frequency columns of a histogram*

1 mark per chart named AND described to a maximum of 5 marks.

Total 20 Marks