

NCC EDUCATION

**INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA
IN
COMPUTER STUDIES**

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

12th June 2005

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 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 total mark recorded for a question should be a whole mark.

QUESTION 7

1

Which colour best completes this advice about designing slides for presentations?

The amount of space on a slide not taken up by text or graphics is referred to as _____ space.

- A) Blue
B) Black
C) Grey
D) White

Answer D

QUESTION 8

1

Is the following statement about groups true or false?

Informality, involvement and interest are characteristics displayed by an ineffective group.

- A) True
B) False

Answer B

QUESTION 9

1

What does the abbreviation ISDN stand for?

- A) Interval Sounds Digital Network
B) Integral Services Design Network
C) Integrated Services Digital Network
D) Interjected Services Design Network

Answer C

QUESTION 10

1

Choose from the list the word which best completes this name of a commonly-used library cataloguing system:

Dewey _____ System.

- A) Decalogue
B) Congress
C) Decimal
D) American

Answer C

SECTION A - 2
ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS FROM THIS SECTION
EACH QUESTION REQUIRES MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE

QUESTION 11

2

Which TWO of the following are **not** likely to be sources of job vacancies?

- A) Employment agency
B) Catalogue
C) Newspaper
D) Directory

Answer B & D

QUESTION 12

2

Which TWO of the following types of file might you find attached to an email message?

- A) Ring file
B) J-Peg file
C) Word file
D) Personal file

Answer B & C

QUESTION 13

2

Which TWO of the following Committee Members' duties are usually carried out by the Secretary?

- A) Opening the meeting
B) Maintenance of financial records
C) Taking notes for the Minutes
D) Administrative responsibilities

Answer C & D

QUESTION 14

2

Which TWO of these four statements about the use of slides in a presentation would be judged to be **advantages**?

- A) Simplify information
 B) May distract presenter
 C) Dependent on equipment
 D) Reinforce what has been said

Answer A & D

QUESTION 15

3

Match each type of communication in the first, numbered list with the appropriate category of communication in the second list.

1. Graph
2. Job specification
3. Presentation

- A) Speech
 B) Writing
 C) Image

Answer 1C; 2B; 3A

QUESTION 16

3

Which THREE pieces of information should be included in a reference for a book?

- A) Author
 B) Internet address
 C) Issue or part number
 D) Title
 E) Name of the publisher
 F) Volume number

Answer A, D & E

QUESTION 17

4

Which FOUR of the following features are parts of a **memorandum**?

- A) Postal address
 B) Salutation
 C) Reference
 D) Complimentary close
 E) Subject heading
 F) Date
 G) Name of recipient
 H) Footnote

Answer C, E, F & G

QUESTION 18

4

Put these stages of a group's development in the order in which they normally occur.

- A) Performing
 B) Norming
 C) Storming
 D) Forming

Answer 1D; 2C; 3B; 4A

1 mark for each item in its correct position in the list to a maximum of 4 marks. For incomplete answers, allow 1 or 2 marks at marker's discretion.

QUESTION 19

4

Formal meetings have set rules and procedures. Which FOUR of the following types of meeting are **formal**?

- A) Board meeting
 B) Team briefing
 C) Shareholders' meeting
 D) Annual General Meeting
 E) Project group meeting
 F) Working party meeting
 G) Problem solving meeting
 H) Extraordinary General Meeting

Answer A, C, D & H

QUESTION 20

4

Put these stages of a presentation into the order in which they would usually occur.

- A) Questions from the audience C) Introduction
B) Main content D) Conclusion

Answer **1C; 2B; 3D; 4A**

1 mark for each item in its correct position in the list to a maximum of 4 marks. For incomplete answers, allow 1 or 2 marks at marker's discretion.

Total 40 Marks

SECTION B

ANSWER ANY THREE QUESTIONS

QUESTION 21

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

a) **Abstracts** and **executive summaries** are two different types of summary of reports or business information designed to give the reader an understanding of the full content of the original document.

i) List FIVE of the main characteristics of an **abstract**. 5

- *aimed at a technical or expert audience*
 - *uses same level of technical language and expertise found in the original document itself*
 - *summarises the key information in the report*
 - *descriptive rather than informative (emphasising what was done more than what was found out)*
 - *may briefly touch upon the actual research methods if appropriate*
 - *tends not to use bullet points*
 - *usually between 150 to 250 words*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.*

ii) List FIVE of the main characteristics of an **executive summary**. 5

- *written for managers and others who are not expert in the subject matter of the report*
 - *puts the report in context by explaining the reasons for writing it*
 - *focuses upon how the information contained in the report can be used*
 - *emphasises the conclusions and the recommendations rather than the supporting data and the methods used to collect it*
 - *geared towards quick reading and decision making, so may use heading, sub-headings and bullet points in order to simplify the understanding of the content*
 - *can vary in length, but may in some cases be roughly one tenth the length of the original report*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.*

b) Many organisations produce and use various written communications intended to **persuade**.

i) What is the **purpose** of persuasive communication? 1

The purpose of persuasive communication is get people to do something you would like them to do when you cannot simply issue an instruction.
1 mark.

ii) Give TWO examples of written communications designed to persuade. 2

- *adverts*
 - *press releases*
 - *company articles*
 - *memos to motivate staff to improve sales, or performance*
 - *posters reminding workers of Health & Safety*
 - *notices to encourage personal hygiene e.g. in food preparation, or in toilets*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*

- iii) You are writing a business report which is meant to persuade its readers to agree to your proposals for a particular course of action. How does knowing who your readers are help you to make your arguments more convincing? Give THREE reasons. 3
- *you can write in a style that is suitable for them*
 - *you can capture their attention by knowing where their particular interests lie*
 - *you are prepared for any opposing views they may have and so be able to counter these with your own points*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.*
- c) You have applied for a job and received a letter inviting you for an interview. List FOUR points of information that the letter is likely to contain. 4
- *date and time of the interview*
 - *to whom to report*
 - *where to report*
 - *location of the organisation*
 - *special instructions e.g. documents to bring; tests to be held such as a presentation to prepare*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 22

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

a) There are now many technology-based conferencing methods available as alternatives to meetings where the participants traditionally physically meet to hold discussions and make decisions.

i) List THREE benefits and THREE drawbacks (disadvantages) of Web conferencing as an alternative meeting method. **6**

Benefits

- *saves on travelling time and accommodation expenses*
- *can involve very large groups of people and can be used to replicate both conferences and meetings*
- *encourages the sharing of information and collaborative working through the features provided*
- *whiteboards allow for the sharing of ideas and tracking of discussions*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.

Drawbacks:

- *no visual contact with other participants*
- *no clues from vocal tones to the emotion being shown by the participant*
- *all participants are reliant upon their Internet connection working effectively, which may at times be problematic and slow*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.

ii) List THREE benefits and THREE drawbacks (disadvantages) of Videoconferencing as an alternative meeting method. **6**

Benefits:

- *saves on travelling time and accommodation expenses*
- *ability to see other participants means you receive their full message including facial expressions, body language etc*
- *eliminates the fatigue experienced by attendees after long journey to attend meeting in person*
- *allows for document sharing and collaboration*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.

Drawbacks:

- *costs are higher than for other online conferencing solutions: high quality sound and picture qualities needed*
- *significant planning required in terms of booking videoconferencing rooms for group meetings*
- *participants must all use same videoconferencing software, or software that conforms to the same standard, or they may not be able to take advantage of all the features*
- *attendees can be uncomfortable on camera with the result that their participation is not as effective as it might be in a conventional meeting*
- *reliability can be a problem, particularly for those videoconferencing systems supporting group meetings*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.

- iii) Because of the many different ways of holding meetings, there are a number of matters to consider when deciding on the most appropriate meeting method. One example is the likely duration of the meeting. 4

Identify FOUR other issues that might influence the choice of meeting method.

- *how formal or informal the meeting is*
- *the seniority of the staff involved*
- *the requirement to share common information*
- *the possible cost*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.

- b) Name and describe TWO different measures of **average**. 4

- *arithmetic mean: to find the arithmetic mean of a set of quantities we divide their total by the number of quantities*

Arithmetic mean = $\frac{\text{total of the quantities}}{\text{number of quantities}}$

- *median: the middle element in a set of data when it has been arranged in order; when the number of elements is even, the median is found by averaging the middle two elements*
- *mode: often referred to as the typical average; the name given to the element which occurs most frequently in a set of data*

Up to 2 marks for each average named and described to a maximum of 4 marks.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 23

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) Describe FOUR ways in which phrases and sentences can be reduced when you are preparing a summary of written material. **4**
- *look for repetition: every piece of writing contains words which serve no useful purpose; to emphasise a point a writer will often repeat it*
 - *cut out elaboration: e.g. extra information in the form of examples, rephrasing or definitions*
 - *reduce sayings, expressions and clichés: many fashionable or long-winded phrases are used only for effect*
 - *use one or two words instead of several: e.g. lists can be reduced to one or two words*
 - *generalisations: use a generalisation (but not a cliché) to save words*
 - *statistics: leave figures intact unless a large number are quoted, or some merely reinforce a point already made*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- b) Well-designed **visual aids** (such as slides or overhead transparencies/ OHTs) can enhance a presentation.
- i) Identify and briefly outline THREE good design principles that you should bear in mind when using **text** (words) on visual aids. **6**
- *keep the content brief: too much text and the audience will read it rather than listening to the presenter*
 - *use keywords, short sentences or phrases: the audience can focus on keywords and the presenter can fill in the detail*
 - *make use of bullet points: gives the slide/OHT some structure*
 - *use a series of slides/ OHTs containing short messages to build up to a complex point: this will help to keep the audience's attention*
- Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 6 marks.*
- ii) Identify and briefly outline THREE good design principles that you should bear in mind when using **colour** on visual aids. **6**
- *use a limited number of compatible colours: mixing too many different colours on a slide/ OHT can be extremely distracting*
 - *try to use colours that give the strongest contrast to one another; colours that have a poor contrast to the background do not show up well and can cause confusion*
 - *good lettering colours for light backgrounds are blue, black, green and red*
 - *good lettering colours for dark backgrounds are white, yellow, pink and magenta*
- Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 6 marks.*
- c) People often use **prompt cards** to help them with their presentation. List FOUR things that you might include on your prompt cards to help make your presentation more professional. **4**
- *main points to include in presentation*
 - *technical instructions*
 - *turn on overhead projector (OHP)*
 - *use overhead transparency (OHT)*
 - *hand out leaflet 1 etc.*
 - *use flipchart for action points*
 - *slow down to emphasise a significant point*
 - *ask for a volunteer from the audience*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 24

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) The leader of a group will have a particular way of dealing with the group – his or her own particular *style of leadership*.
- i) Briefly describe TWO benefits and TWO drawbacks (disadvantages) associated with the **laissez-faire** leadership style. **4**
- Benefits:**
- *effective when leading a group of highly motivated and skilled workers who have worked together successfully in the past*
 - *the handing over of ownership by the leader to the group can empower the group to achieve their goals*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- Drawbacks:**
- *leader exercises little control over the group leaving them to sort out their roles*
 - *little evidence of responsibility being taken by leader*
 - *this approach can leave the group floundering with no direction or motivation*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- ii) Briefly describe TWO benefits and TWO drawbacks (disadvantages) associated with the **democratic** leadership style. **4**
- Benefits:**
- *makes decisions by consulting group whilst maintaining control of the group*
 - *encourages participation by generating a ‘we’ and ‘us’ approach where individual initiative is welcomed*
 - *motivates the team by empowering them to direct themselves and guides them in an overseeing role*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- Drawbacks:**
- *leader can be seen as being unsure of her/himself*
 - *everything can become a matter for group discussion and decision*
 - *true leadership can clearly be lacking*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- iii) In any group there is always the possibility of conflict. Give FOUR possible causes of conflict in a group. **4**
- *a breakdown of one or more stages in the communication process*
 - *some interference along the channels of communication*
 - *genuine misunderstanding between members*
 - *personality conflict*
 - *history of disagreement between particular members*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*

- b) Give THREE reasons why **feedback** is an essential element of successful communication. 3
- *to be successful, communication has to be a two way process; feedback is evidence of the completion of the communication cycle*
 - *the success of a message can only be measured by the effect it has on the receiver; feedback is the receiver's response to the message*
 - *feedback is needed to confirm understanding*
 - *feedback ensures that the desired response is made or action is taken*
 - *if there is no response/ no feedback to a message, follow-up is required to attempt to complete the communication cycle.*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.*
- c) Communication within an organisation can be very complex and people often have to decide whether to pass on information or to keep it to themselves.
- i) Briefly outline THREE reasons why a manager might fail to share information with others. 3
- *to preserve confidentiality or trade secrets*
 - *some information may be shared only on a 'need to know' basis : consequently it must be withheld from some members of staff*
 - *may see subordinates as a threat to power or authority: deliberately withholding information reduces the potential for others to progress*
 - *manager may be overburdened with work and forget to pass on information, but not consciously withhold it*
 - *message may become distorted in the telling so that the real information doesn't reach its target*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.*
- ii) Give TWO reasons why a good leader would share information. 2
- *helps others to take responsibility*
 - *improves decision-making*
 - *encourages effective downward communication*
 - *there may a legal requirement to do so e.g. local agreement with Trades Union or local representative*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*

Total 20 Marks

	Obj A	Obj B	Obj C	Obj D	Obj E	Obj F	Obj G	<i>pp ref: Business Communication (NCC Education Ltd, 2002)</i>
Section A - 1								
Q1			1					3-15
Q2			1					3-27
Q3				1				4-6/7
Q4						1		6-18
Q5						1		6-29
Q6							1	7-23
Q7							1	7-9
Q8					1			5-15
Q9	1							1-27
Q10		1						2-8
Total A - 1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	10 marks
Section A - 2								
Q11				2				4-4
Q12			2					3-59
Q13						2		6-15
Q14							2	7-20
Q15	3							1-33
Q16		3						2-7
Q17			4					3-30
Q18					4			5-8/9
Q19						4		6-4
Q20							4	7-5
Total A - 2	3	3	6	2	4	6	6	30 marks
Section B								
Q21a)i) ii)			10					3-34/35
Q21b)i) ii)			3					6-19
Q21b)iii)			3					3-50
Q21d)				4				4-16
Q22a) i)						6		6-25
Q22a) ii)						6		6-27/28
Q22a) iii)						4		6-29
Q22b)		4						2-14/15
Q23a)		4						2-35/26
Q23b) i)							6	7-8
Q23b) ii)							6	7-11
Q23c)							4	7-18
Q24a)i) ii)					8			5-11
Q24a) iii)					4			5-5
Q24b)	3							1-38
Q24c)i) ii)	5							1-18
Total B	8	8	16	4	12	16	16	80 marks
Total A - 1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	10 marks
Total A - 2	3	3	6	2	4	6	6	30 marks
A + B	12	12	24	7	17	24	24	120 marks
recommended %	10%	10%	20%	5%	15%	20%	20%	100%
actual %	10%	10%	20%	6%	14%	20%	20%	100%