

NCC INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN COMPUTER STUDIES

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

12th September 2004

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.

SECTION A - 1

**ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS FROM THIS SECTION
EACH QUESTION REQUIRES ONE RESPONSE ONLY**

For each question enter ONE letter ONLY in your answer booklet.

Marks

QUESTION 1

1

From the following set of data, identify the *median*:

2, 7, 10, 7, 5, 2, 11, 12, 10, 2.

- a) 6.8
- b) 7
- c) 2
- d) 68

Answer B

QUESTION 2

1

Choose from the list below the type of **report** which this statement describes:

“A one-off, investigative report that includes conclusions and recommendations”.

- a) Informal report
- b) Routine report
- c) Commissioned report
- d) Periodic report

Answer C

QUESTION 3

1

Which of the following methods of displaying statistical information does this statement describe?

“A circle cut into slices, each slice representing a part of the total.”

- a) Histogram
- b) Pictogram
- c) Table
- d) Pie chart

Answer D

QUESTION 4

1

Which leadership style does this statement describe?

“The imposition of the will of the leader upon the rest of the group.”

- a) Persuasive
- b) Autocratic
- c) Democratic
- d) Laissez-faire

Answer B

QUESTION 5

1

Which of the following organisational structures emphasises a *project team* approach?

- a) Matrix
- b) Vertical
- c) Centralised
- d) Diagonal

Answer A

QUESTION 6

1

When you are applying for a job, what sort of letter should you submit with a completed application form?

- a) Letter of enquiry
- b) Letter of confirmation
- c) Covering letter
- d) Business letter

Answer C

QUESTION 7

1

FORMAL meetings have set rules and procedures which must be followed. Which of the following is a formal meeting?

- a) Team briefing
- b) Shareholders' meeting
- c) Project group meeting
- d) Departmental meeting

Answer B

QUESTION 8**1**

Whose responsibility is it to ensure that lines of communication are kept open between committee members and the organisation as a whole?

- a) Secretary
- b) Treasurer
- c) Chairperson
- d) Deputy chairperson

Answer A

QUESTION 9**1**

“*Netiquette* is a term derived from ‘etiquette on the Net’”. Is this statement true or false?

- a) True
- b) False

Answer A

QUESTION 10**1**

Reading your notes in full at a presentation might create a communication barrier between you and your audience. To avoid this, use _____ cards with large lettering, containing three or four points per card. Which of the following words best completes this sentence?

- a) Picture
- b) Practice
- c) Playing
- d) Prompt

Answer D

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

QUESTION 11**3**

Match each of the managerial roles in the first list with the appropriate area of responsibility in the second numbered list.

- a) Personnel manager
- b) Production manager
- c) Marketing manager
- i) Promotion and research
- ii) Industrial relations
- iii) Quality control

Answer a) + ii); b) + iii); c) + i)

1 mark for each correct pairing to a maximum of 3 marks.

QUESTION 12**4**

Put the following elements of a letter in the order in which they would appear in a correctly structured letter of complaint.

- a) Suggested remedy
- b) Description of the problem
- c) Salutation
- d) Subject heading

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

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

QUESTION 13**4**

Complete each of the following two statements with the most suitable words from the list below. Use **different** words for each statement.

1. In the FORMING stage of a group's development, the members look to the leader for _____ and _____.
2. In the STORMING stage of a group's development, _____ and _____ emerge in the relations between the group members.

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| a) Uncertainty | c) Competition |
| b) Guidance | d) Discovery |
| e) Conflict | f) Direction |

Answer 1 + b & f; 2 + c & e

1 mark for each word correctly paired with each statement to a maximum of 4 marks.

QUESTION 14**2**

Which TWO of the following are NOT parts of a memorandum?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------|
| a) Complimentary close | c) Subject |
| b) Salutation | d) Date |

Answer A & B

QUESTION 15**3**

Most libraries have a reference section. Which THREE of the following publications are you likely to find in the reference section of a library?

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| a) Dictionary | c) Year-book |
| b) Comic novel | d) Diary |
| e) Encyclopaedia | f) Bibliography |

Answer A, C & E

QUESTION 16**3**

Complete each of the following statements about meetings with the most suitable word from the list below. Use a **different** word for each statement.

1. Minutes are set down as either resolution minutes or _____ minutes.
2. A meeting must be _____ for its business to be valid.
3. Dishonest use of _____ language should be avoided in discussion and argument.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| a) Subjective | c) Quorate |
| b) Effective | d) Functional |
| e) Narrative | f) Emotive |

Answer 1 + E; 2 + C; 3 + F

QUESTION 17**2**

Which TWO items in this list might be included on an **evaluation sheet** designed to collect feedback from an audience at a presentation?

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| a) Qualifications | c) Questions |
| b) Visual aids | d) Delivery |

Answer B & D

QUESTION 18**3**

Put these items in the order in which they would typically appear on an agenda for a meeting.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Presentation of accounts | c) Correspondence received |
| b) Apologies for absence | |

Answer 1B ; 2C ; 3A

1 mark for each item in its correct position in list to a maximum of 3 marks. For incomplete answers, allow 1 mark at marker's discretion.

QUESTION 19**4**

Here are four statements about the use of visual aids in presentations:

1. Simplify information
2. Dependent on equipment
3. May distract presenter from the audience
4. Reinforce what has been said

For EACH statement, indicate whether it would usually be judged as an advantage or a disadvantage:

a) An advantage

b) A disadvantage

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

QUESTION 20**2**

Which TWO of the following would be listed in a person specification?

a) Special aptitudes

c) Job title

b) Responsibilities

d) General intelligence

Answer A & D

Total 40 Marks

SECTION B
ANSWER ANY THREE QUESTIONS

QUESTION 21
Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

a) Technology has changed many traditional office activities, particularly meetings. There are now several **alternative meeting methods**.

i) Briefly describe FOUR benefits (advantages) of using **audio conferencing** for meetings. **8**

- *Saves time spent travelling to remote locations*
- *Saves travel and accommodation expenses*
- *Excellent way of getting a group of people from different locations together for a meeting at short notice*
- *Little or no requirement to pre-book or schedule meetings in advance*
- *A low cost option with the telephone being the primary tool*

Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 8 marks.

ii) Briefly describe FOUR drawbacks (disadvantages) of using **web chat rooms** for online meetings. **8**

- *A text-only medium, no visual contact with other participants*
- *No clues from vocal tones as to the emotion being shown by the participants*
- *Information content is limited, and the basic text editing facilities do not allow for sharing of information or use of presentation software*
- *Problems in finding software that all participants can use – a problem if there is a mix of PC and Mac users*
- *Not all users may be familiar with the software, so their participation may be restricted because of technical limitations rather than their knowledge and experience of the subject matter being discussed*
- *Participation needs to be structured as with conventional meetings, otherwise users with the fastest typing speeds are likely to have the most to say*

Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 8 marks.

b) List FOUR characteristics that would be displayed by an **effective** group. **4**

- *Informality, involvement and interest*
- *Lots of discussion and contribution*
- *Understanding and acceptance of common aims*
- *Listening, considering, putting forward ideas*
- *Disagreements are examined without dissenters being overpowered*
- *Decision by consensus*
- *Constructive criticism*
- *Feelings are aired*
- *Leadership role undertaken by most suitable member*
- *Frequent review of operations*

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 has been a huge growth in the use of electronic mail (email) for business communication.
- i) Briefly describe THREE ways in which the speed of communication using email can affect the **style** of writing in these messages. **6**
- *Much less formal style in emails as the speed in turnaround time results in a much more conversational tone than letters and memos*
 - *In a paper document, it is essential for all facts to be clearly stated in detail since any confusion can lead to delays. With email recipient can ask questions immediately and problems can be resolved in minutes.*
 - *Emails sent to friends and colleagues may not be written to the same high standard as conventional documents: spelling and grammar may suffer*
- Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 6 marks.*
- ii) What is the *subject line* of an email message used for? **1**
- The place in the message header used to describe very briefly the contents of the email message*
- iii) Briefly explain why it is important to complete the subject line in an email message. **2**
- *Recipient might receive large volume of emails and habitually only open messages that look important or interesting*
 - *Gives a clear idea of the content of the message and will ensure that the message is read*
 - *Helps with dragging to correct folder for future reference*
 - *Non-completion of subject line may result in an error message*
- Up to 2 marks for explanation.*
- b) You have been told to produce a report. List SEVEN steps you would take from receiving your instructions through to producing a final version of the report. **7**
- *Understand your instructions*
 - *Collect your information*
 - *Put information into a logical order*
 - *Write a draft of your notes*
 - *Write a draft of the report*
 - *Proof-read the report*
 - *Edit the report*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 7 marks.*
- c) An interview should be an exchange of information between the interviewer and interviewee. It is important, therefore, to know how best to question people to encourage them to speak freely about themselves. OPEN questions are particularly suited to an interview situation.
- i) Briefly explain what open questions are. **2**
- *Questions phrased to invite full answers*
 - *Opposite of 'closed' questions which can only be answered with 'yes' or 'no'*
 - *Open questions usually begin with 'what', 'where', 'why', 'when', or 'how'*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- ii) Give TWO examples of open questions that might be asked by an interviewer in a job interview. **2**
- *Any question appropriate to an interview situation and which conforms with the criteria outlined in (i) above.*
 - *E.g. "What were your responsibilities in your last job?"; "Why do you want this job?"*
- 1 mark for each appropriately phrased question to a maximum of 2 marks.*

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 23

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) 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. 6
- *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*
- Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 6 marks.*
- ii) Briefly explain 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*
- Up to 2 marks for explanation.*
- b) i) Give a definition of *probability*. 1
- *The likelihood of an event occurring*
 - *The total number of favourable outcomes divided by the total number of possible outcomes*
- 1 mark for definition.*
- ii) List FOUR reasons why *probability* is important for business planning. 4
- Probability is used to:*
- *Evaluate and allow for risks*
 - *Attempt to forecast what is likely to happen*
 - *Anticipate behaviour of systems*
 - *Compare the reliability of systems*
 - *To calculate chances of 'downtime' etc.*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- c) i) What is the **range** of the probability scale? 1
- zero to one [0>1]*
- ii) What is the probability of **certainty**? 1
- p = 1*
- iii) What is the probability of **impossibility**? 1
- p = 0*

- d)** When you are preparing a presentation, it helps to know your audience. Give FOUR pieces of information that you need to know about the people who will be watching and listening to you. **4**

- *Who will they be?*
- *Will they be senior to you, your peers or your subordinates?*
- *How many people will there be?*
- *What is the background and existing knowledge of the audience e.g. specialist or non-specialist?*
- *What are their interests and values?*

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) **Teams** are made up of very different types of people with their own personalities, strengths and weaknesses. A group leader should be aware of the different **team types** (such as Shaper, Completer etc.) that might be in the group. **8**

Briefly describe FOUR ways in which knowledge of different team types could help a leader to manage his or her team.

- *Success of a project or task relies upon the right combination of talents and specialisms in a team: prior knowledge of people's characteristics can help a leader to choose the best team for the job*
- *Each member has a specific role to play in the activity being worked upon: leader can allocate roles appropriately*
- *Knowledge of a member's characteristics can enable a group leader to recognise and utilise the talents of the individual*
- *An effective leader will use each individual's strengths to maximum effect and minimise the weaknesses*
- *Awareness of the likely behaviour of members enables a leader to assess the potential for conflict and to deal with it should it occur*
- *Anticipation of members' behaviour allows for the development of strategies for coping with a group of people who might not normally choose each other as associates*

Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 8 marks

- b) You have been closely involved in the creation of your organisation's new website. Your manager is very impressed with your work and has asked you to prepare a short talk about the experience to present to other departments in the company. **12**

Write structured notes for a short speech about creating the website. Invent any details to make it realistic.

Available marks:

Structure: **3**

Content: **8**

Style/ composition: **1**

Structure:

Must have an introduction, a main body and a conclusion

Up to 3 marks for structure.

Introduction should include:

- *Who the speaker is*
- *What s/he is going to speak about*
- *Why s/he is going to speak about that particular topic*

Up to 2 marks for content of introduction.

Main body:

- *Points should be in logical order to support relevant argument (if appropriate)*
- *Any relevant information should be credited as content*

Up to 4 marks for content of main body.

Conclusion:

- *Should summarise main points and come to a tidy finish*

Up to 2 marks for conclusion

Style/ composition

1 mark.

Total 20 marks

Section A1	Obj A	Obj B	Obj C	Obj D	Obj E	Obj F	Obj G	Page reference <i>Business Communication</i> (NCC Education Ltd, 2002)
Q1		1						2-15
Q2			1					3-37
Q3							1	7-23
Q4					1			5-10
Q5	1							1-19
Q6				1				4-14
Q7						1		6-4
Q8						1		6-15
Q9			1					3-56
Q10							1	7-18
Total A1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	10 marks
Section A2								
Q11	3							1-13
Q12			4					3-21
Q13					4			5-8
Q14			2					3-30
Q15		3						2-8
Q16						3		6-29/30
Q17							2	7-19
Q18						3		6-8
Q19							4	7-20
Q20				2				4-5
Total A2	3	3	6	2	4	6	6	30 marks
Section B	Obj A	Obj B	Obj C	Obj D	Obj E	Obj F	Obj G	
Q21a) i) & ii)						16		6-22 & 24
Q21b)					4			5-14
Q22a)i) ii) iii)			9					3-56/7
Q22b)			7					3-38
Q22c)i) ii)				4				4-24
Q23a)	8							1-18
Q23b) & c)		8						2-22
Q23d)							4	7-14
Q24a)					8			Chapter 5
Q24b)							12	Chapter 7
Total B	8	8	16	4	12	16	16	80 marks
Total A1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	10 marks
Total A2	3	3	6	2	4	6	6	30 marks
A + B	12	12	24	7	17	24	24	120 marks
recom'ed %	10%	10%	20%	5%	15%	20%	20%	
actual %	10%	10%	20%	6%	14%	20%	20%	