

T-LEVELS



IfATE Institute for
Apprenticeships
and Technical Education

Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care T Level

**Core Exam Guidance:
Supporting your learners**



Land T level Team



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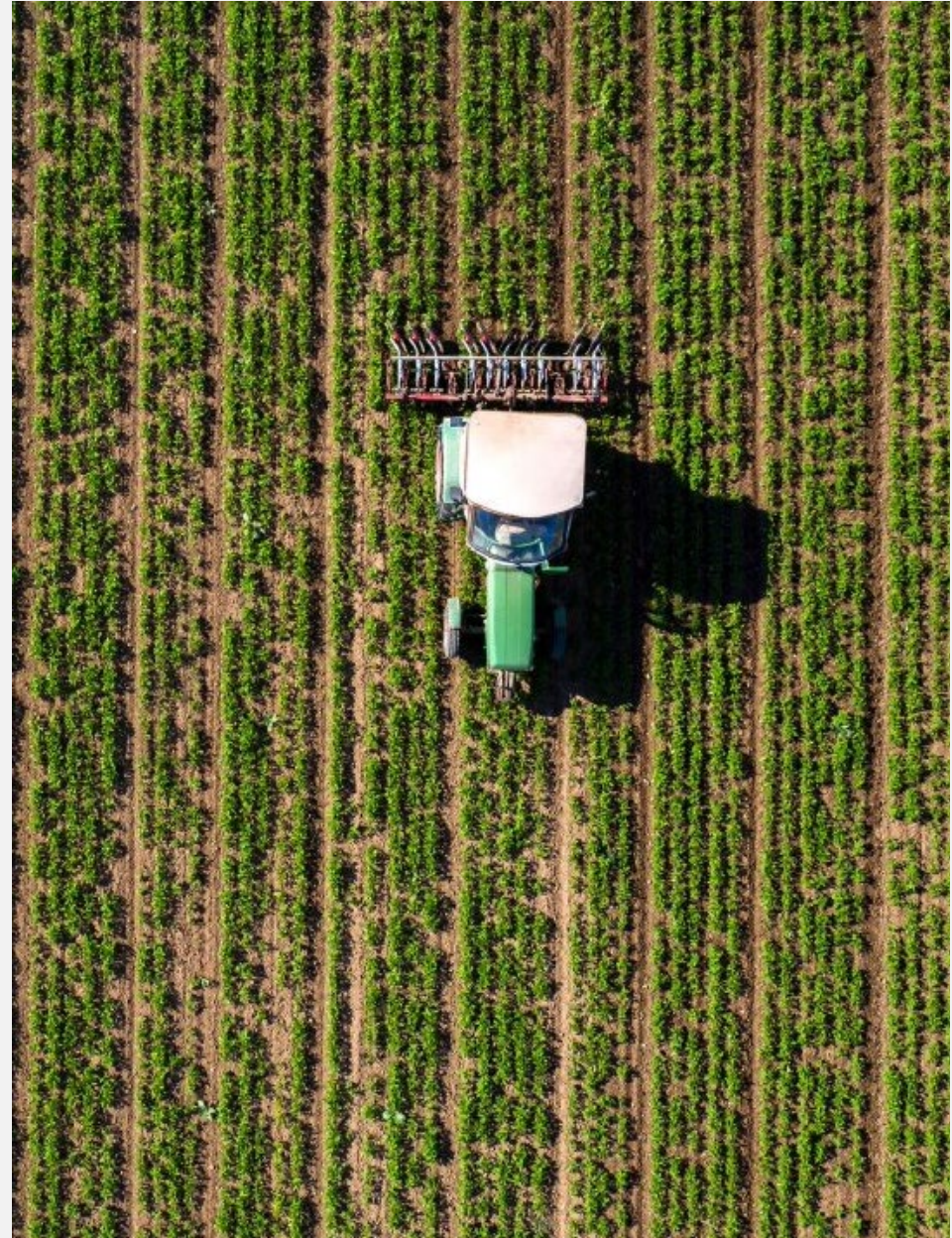


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Agenda



- Examiner reports
- Exam guides
- Sample question responses
- The differences between Technicals and T Level exams



- Overview of core theory exams
- Employer set project
- Occupational specialism assessments
- Delivery and curriculum planning outside of the Technical Qualification
- Progression or industry placements.

** If you missed our previous Land T Level recordings, you can find the recordings and slide deck on our T Level events page [here](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

What information is contained within the examiner reports?

How are the exams marked?

How should learners structure their answer?

Which command verbs are used in the questions?

What information is contained within the exam guides?

Why is the question stem important?



Core Theory Examination Documents

Exam Guides

T-LEVELS | **IfATE** Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

T Level Technical Qualification in Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care: Common Core

8717-030 Core: Paper 1 Exam guide

Version 1.0

City & Guilds

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These can be found on the qualification page, under the “Exam Guide and Support” accordion for each exam paper.

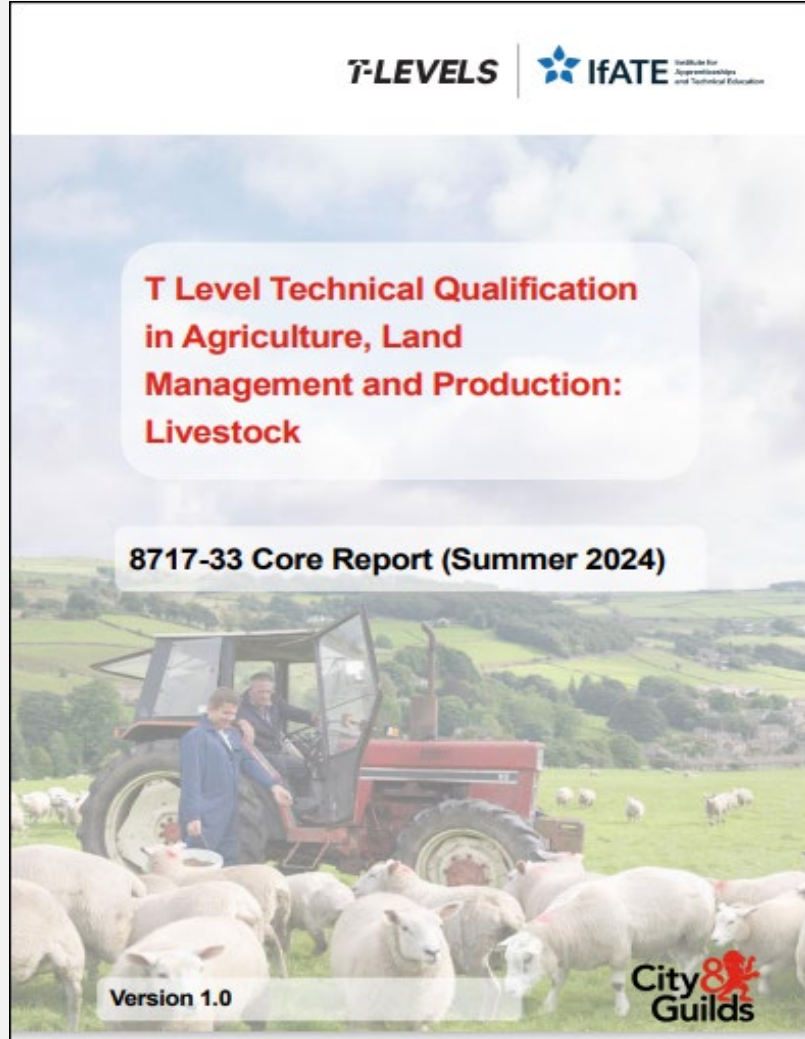
The guide includes examiner hints and tips, as well as actual responses given by candidates.

Examiner Reports

- These can be found on the qualification page, under the “Core Reports” accordion for each Core Pathway.
- They include information and commentary relating to both the Common Core Paper 1 and Core Pathway Paper 2.
- Each report discusses performance seen for a specific series e.g. Summer 2024
- Also provides commentary on ESP performance for that series.



Examiner Reports



Headline Points

- Most candidates were able to demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the core content in AO1a and AO1b questions. The cohort typically performed well on the more familiar topic areas where they could relate their response to 'real life' situations.
- Candidates showed good understanding in the AO2 questions. It was common to see the lower scoring candidates perform better on AO2 questions compared to AO1a and AO1b questions.
- The ERQ questions generally produced a narrow range of marks with most responses sitting at the top of Band 1 or bottom of Band 2. No candidates gave a response that gained marks from Band 4. This was due to candidates typically focusing on one of two command verbs within the ERQ.

Other Support Resources

On the qualification page you will find:

- Sample papers and marking guide
- Past papers and marking guides
- Centre guidance
- Candidate guidance
- Examiners report for each series
- Best practice guidance
- ESP sample and marking grid
- ESP scripts released to centres
- Exemplar materials

[T Level Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care qualifications and training courses | City & Guilds](#)

Events & Webinars Page ([Events and webinars - T Levels | City & Guilds](#)):

- Events and webinars on demand
- Live Q&A feedback sessions
- Dedicated sector specialist Technical Advisor

Resources and support hub

Welcome to the Resource and Support Hub for T Level Technical Qualifications.

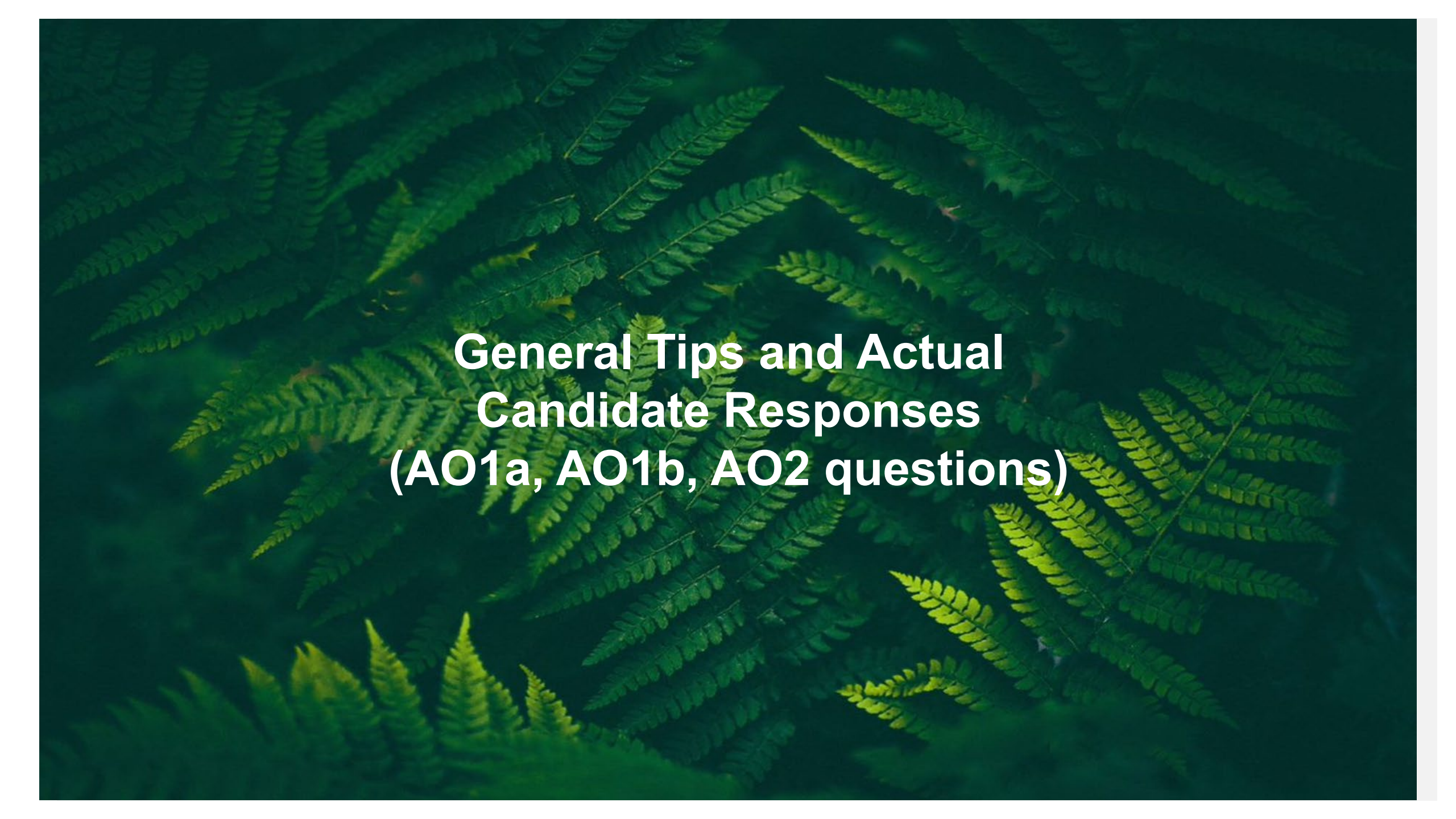
Here you'll find a range of teaching, learning and planning resources for tutors as well as information and support regarding approval, quality assurance, registration, bookings, timelines, fees and communications for all staff.

Approval and quality assurance	▼
Specifications and centre documents	▼
Teaching, learning and planning resources	▼
Curriculum delivery planners	▼
Tutor resources	▼
Registration, bookings and results	▼
Assessment guidance	▼
Quality delivery portal	▼
Moderation portal	▼
Post-results services	▼
Fees	▼

[Resource Hub - T Levels | City & Guilds](#)

Assessment Objectives for the Core Exam

Assessment objective	Description	Assessment objective weightings
AO1a Demonstrate knowledge	<p>The ability to demonstrate basic recall of relevant knowledge in response to straightforward questioning, e.g. material properties.</p> <p>In the exam, this helps to give confidence in sufficiency of coverage of the content, and recognises that not all knowledge requires further understanding e.g. terminology, number facts, etc.</p>	10%
AO1b Demonstrate understanding	<p>The ability to explain principles and concepts beyond recall of definitions, but in a general way – i.e. out of a particular context in response to straightforward questioning e.g. simple concepts and terms of description in agricultural contexts.</p>	15%
AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding to different situations and context	<p>Using and applying knowledge and understanding taking the understanding of generalities and applying them to specific situations. Questions are likely to ask for application in relation to a straightforward situation e.g. assessing the application of a single concept and the application of essential mathematical concepts.</p> <p>It is more granular than the more extended synthesis/creation that may respond to an analysis of a more holistic complex situation/brief.</p>	45%
AO3a Analyse information and issues	<p>Complex thinking that distinguishes patterns and relationships, breaking material into constituent parts, and determining how the parts are related to one another and holistically, inferring underlying assumptions/conditions/relevance/causation.</p>	30%
AO3b Evaluate information and issues	<p>The ability to make judgements about the value, for some purpose, of own or others' work/ideas/solutions/methods using internal or external criteria or standards relevant for the occupational area. These criteria may include e.g. quality, accuracy, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, consistency, and may be quantitative or qualitative.</p>	



**General Tips and Actual
Candidate Responses
(A01a, A01b, A02 questions)**

General Tips

- Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) are not assessed within the core exam; no marks are awarded or deducted based on this.
- Handwriting quality - examination papers are scanned and marked on-screen; therefore, candidates must provide responses that are clear and legible. Candidates should use a black or blue ball-point pen and take care to ensure their handwriting is legible. For candidate writing that is often illegible, it is recommended centres provide a scribe, encourage candidates to write in block capitals or to type their responses.
- Papers are modelled in such a way that the easier questions are at the beginning gradually getting harder through the papers.
- The amount of white space provided on the exam paper is double to indicate the level of response required i.e. 8 lines for a 4-mark answer.
- There is no need for learners to repeat the stem within their response.
- The terminology used in questions is taken directly from the text in the specification. It is key that learners understand the terminology.

AO1a – Demonstrate Knowledge

What this assessment objective means:

Recall or recognition of specific elements of knowledge which must be committed to long term memory in order to underpin success in the role.

Stem - State **two** ways a business should respond to a data security breach. **(2 marks)**

Candidate response (1 mark awarded):

Update firewalls (1) and antivirus protection (0)

Change passwords (0)

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

Update firewalls (1) and antivirus protection (0)

Change passwords – this would be a third response.

The 'update firewall' and 'update antivirus protection' are under the same bullet point on the mark scheme therefore a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded for this.

Only the first two responses provided by the candidate can be marked, therefore although 'change passwords' are available marks on the mark scheme, this is the third response listed by the candidate.

Stem - State **two** ways a business should respond to a data security breach. **(2 marks)**

Candidate response (0 marks awarded):

Inform all customers and the public. (0)

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

No marks were awarded for this candidate's response. Both responses are too generic. If the candidate responded with 'inform all affected customers' or 'report to the individuals whose data has been breached', this would have gained a mark.

Please note:

- When asked to recall legislation or regulations, examiners will accept industry recognised abbreviations and acronyms, as shown in the marking scheme.
- As per the guidance at the top of the paper, examiners will only accept the first two responses (if two answers are required) for marking. It was common for candidates to list multiple answers with the correct answer at the end of this list. It is important for candidates to understand that only the required number of responses will be marked.
- If only two answers are required, the third answer or any other answers will be discounted.

AO1b – Demonstrate Understanding

What this assessment objective means:

The ability to explain principles and concepts beyond recall of definitions, in order to be able to transfer these principles and concepts between contexts.

A candidate can:

- explain a concept in their own words
- explain what it means in practice
- describe a process
- describe how something has an impact on another
- give relevant examples
- say what the impact/implication may be in general terms

This can be assessed within the examination by

- Give an example of how ...
- Describe how...
- Explain the use of...
- Explanation of how something works
- Explanation/comparison of the benefits/weaknesses of...

Stem - Describe two ways that a workplace can promote diversity and inclusion. (2 marks)

Candidate Responses:

Example 1 (2 marks awarded)

*One way would be having periodic **workshops to raise awareness of differences.** (1)*

*Another way would be **using posters in places where worker often use** (eg toilets, coffee room) **to advertise/promote diversity.** (1)*

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

The candidate provided two full descriptions, which were realistic ways that a workplace could promote diversity and inclusion, to achieve the full 2 marks.

Example 2 (1 mark awarded)

***Allow a new mother to be flexible about the times they can work** so they feel valued. (1)*

***Employ staff from different religions.** (0)*

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme: The candidate was awarded 1 mark for their first response as it fully described how a workplace can support a new mother. No mark awarded for “employing staff from different religions”. This is a statement only with no description provided. This statement is also not technically correct, as all new staff should be treated individually and given the same opportunities, regardless of their religion.

Stem - Describe two ways that a workplace can promote diversity and inclusion.

(2 marks)

Example 3 (2 marks awarded)

Ensure that everyone is given a fair opportunity to access a building (1) (eg with a ramp).

Not being discriminative when it comes to hiring new staff.(1)

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

The candidate provided two different ways that were fully described and met the requirements of the mark scheme to achieve the full 2 marks.

Example 4 (0 marks awarded)

Have a mix of employees of all ages and races and disabilities. (0)

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

The candidate only provided a statement (e.g. mix of ages) which was not described sufficiently. If the candidate had of added 'Have a mix of employees of all ages for a more inclusive culture', then 1 mark would have been awarded.

Stem - Describe two ways that a workplace can promote diversity and inclusion.

(2 marks)

Example 5 (0 marks awarded)

Support human rights (0)

Prevent conflicts at work (0)

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

These responses were both factual statements and lacked the full description to achieve the mark. The candidate could have achieved marks for the following elaboration:

- Support human rights by giving staff equal opportunities (1)
- Creating fair working policies prevents conflicts at work(1)

AO1b/AO2 - Explain style questions

T Levels use the following format to allocate marks:

For a 2 mark explain question, where candidates are required to 'Explain **one** X, candidates need to provide a statement AND basic explanation to gain the first mark, and further explanation to be awarded the second mark.

Statement + Basic Explanation (1) + Further Explanation (1)

It is important that centres are aware of this so they can best prepare their candidates to achieve the marks available.

AO1b Example 2

Stem - **Explain** one impact that trade unions can have on a business.

(2 marks)

Candidate Responses:

Example 1 (2 marks awarded)

*Staff having time off (**statement**) for going on strike (**basic explanation**) (1), making the production of products less (**further explanation**) (1)*

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

The candidate was able to provide a full explanation of how trade unions can impact a business. They used the structure of statement ('staff having time off') and basic explanation ('for going on strike') followed by further explanation ('making the production of products less') to achieve the full 2 marks.

Example 2 (1 mark awarded)

*Trade unions can impact a business as they have negotiation power over the company (**statement**) so they can demand higher wages etc (**basic explanation**). (1)*

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

The candidate provided a statement ('negotiation power over the company') and a basic explanation ('so they can demand higher wages etc') to achieve 1 mark. There was no further explanation provided, meaning the candidate was unable to achieve the second mark.

Examiners top tips A02

What this assessment objective means

Using and applying knowledge and understanding of processes, procedures, generalisations principles and theories to specified, concrete scenarios

A candidate can

- differentiate relevant from irrelevant information in a given, new scenario
- select appropriate procedures/principles from memory
- implement these procedures and principles appropriately for the given scenario.

This is assessed within the examination by

- Given a clear, straightforward/narrow scenario, the question requires selection and application of relevant principles and procedures in a way that is specific to the scenario (rather than in general terms).
- What is the best approach to... in this scenario?
- Explain the process/ procedure to take when...
- What are the implications of... (specific rather than general scenario).

Stem - Employees have been unable to use hand washing and toilet facilities at work because they are broken. The business has refused to repair them.
Explain **two** consequences of this situation. **(4 marks)**

Candidate Responses:

Example 1 (4 marks awarded)

Viruses and illness will go around the workplace (statement) leading to staff having time off (basic explanation) (1), decreasing the sales in the company (further explanation) (1).
If staff are in unions, they could strike (statement) leading to bad PR on the company (basic explanation)(1), therefore having less customers (further explanation)(1).

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

The candidate's first response focuses on the health and wellbeing of their staff. 'Viruses and illness will go around the workplace' is the statement followed by 'leading to staff having time off' as the basic explanation for 1 mark. The further explanation is then provided, 'decreasing the sales in the company', which was awarded another 1 mark. The 'striking of staff' (second statement) 'which leads to poor PR' (basic explanation) is awarded 1 mark. The 'reduction in customers' (further explanation) allows for the final 1 mark to be awarded.

Stem - Employees have been unable to use hand washing and toilet facilities at work because they are broken. The business has refused to repair them.
Explain **two** consequences of this situation. **(4 marks)**

Candidate Responses:

Example 2 (3 marks awarded)

*One consequence would be that the employees could pursue legal action (**statement**) for unsatisfactory work conditions (**basic explanation**) (1). Furthermore, employees may leave the business (**statement**) and join competitors (**basic explanation**)(1), this leads to a smaller workforce for the business (**further explanation**)(1).*

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

‘Pursuing legal action’ (statement) ‘for unsatisfactory work conditions’ (basic explanation) is awarded 1 mark. There is no further explanation linked to this sentence for 1 mark to be allocated. ‘Employees may leave the business’ (statement) ‘to join competitors’ (basic explanation) is awarded 1 mark. ‘This will lead to a smaller workforce for the business’ (further explanation) is linked to allow another mark to be awarded.

Stem - Employees have been unable to use hand washing and toilet facilities at work because they are broken. The business has refused to repair them.

Explain **two** consequences of this situation.

(4 marks)

Example 3 (2 marks awarded)

Firstly, the company are not providing the legal requirements of the toilets (statement) so they could be sued (basic explanation)(1). This could result in them being closed down (further explanation) (1) if they can't pay their fines.

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme:

Only one fully explained response was given, therefore a maximum of 2 marks could be awarded for this candidate. The candidate is able to provide understanding that 'the company are not providing the legal requirements of the toilets' (statement) 'so they could be sued' (basic explanation).

Example 4 (1 mark awarded)

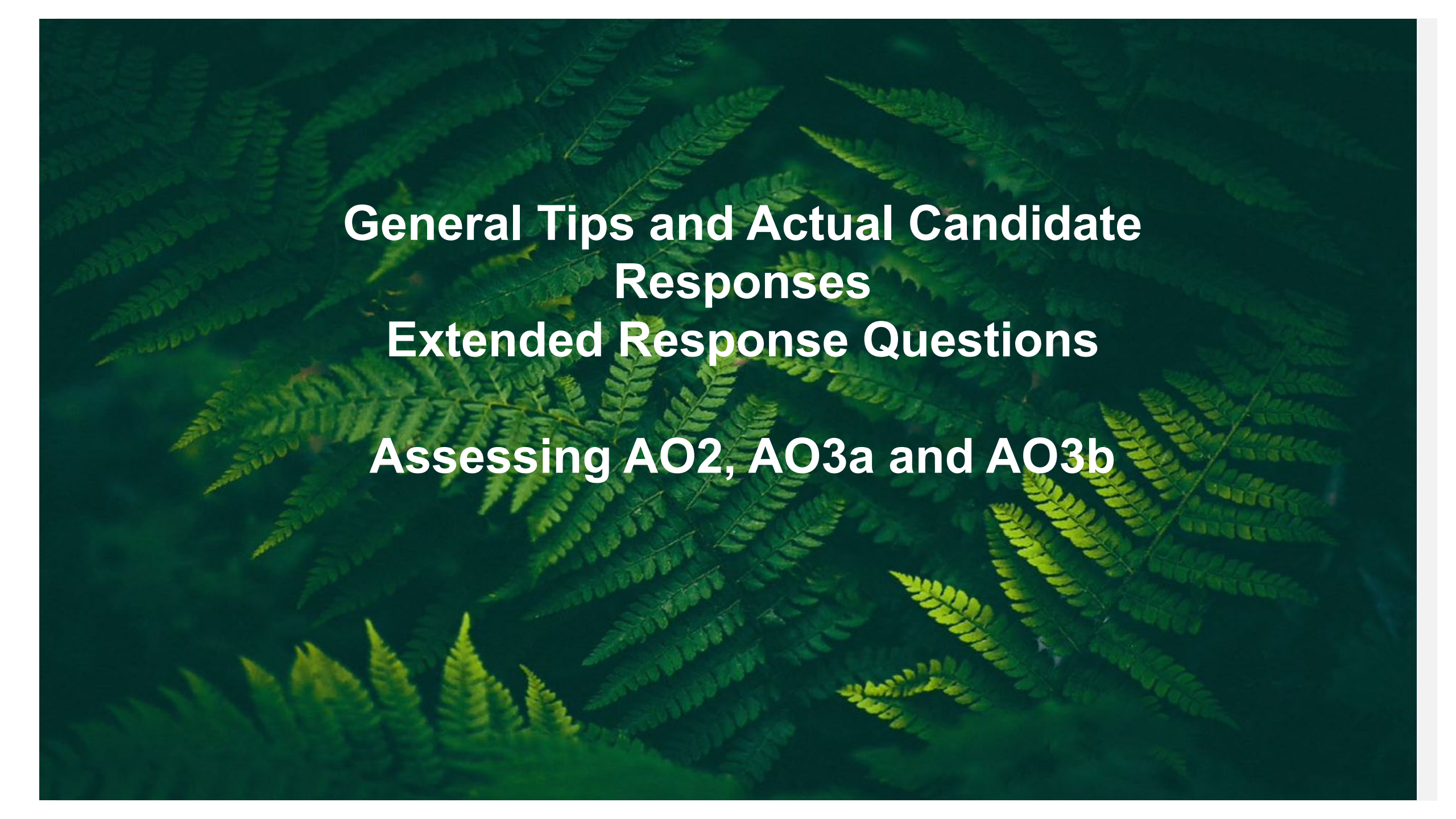
You could gain a bad reputation (statement) which could lead to a reduction in sales (basic explanation) (1)

Examiner Commentary on application of mark scheme

The candidate did not provide a further explanation for the second mark, nor did they attempt to provide a second consequence of the situation to achieve the additional marks.

Hints and Tips for AO2 Questions

- Start by stating their point - use connectives to expand on the answer such as “*which means*” or “*because*” or “*so....*” to show cause and effect of something.
- It may help to structure questions using this formula: statement + basic explanation (1 mark) + further explanation (1 mark)
- The question is made up of the scenario and the stem. It is crucial candidates acknowledge the scenario in their response and tailor their response to the context.
- Candidates will only be given context and information which is relevant and needed for them to answer the question.
- T Levels are more like an 'A level' than a technical qualification – different marking strategy and different way of teaching to Technicals.
- Common Core and Core Pathway exam papers are marked in exactly the same way, so centres can use the other pathway papers/guides as preparation for Animal Management / Animal Science.



**General Tips and Actual Candidate
Responses
Extended Response Questions
Assessing AO2, AO3a and AO3b**

Section B – Extended Response and AO3 (Analysis and Evaluation)

AO3a Analysis - a candidate can:

- break down a complex problem into parts – **structure an answer.**
- consider the relationship between the scenario/context and the stem/question – **link the answer to the question.**
- manipulate knowledge and experience to determine a range of solutions/proposals - **suggest methods and quantify the answer.**
- balance competing priorities to suggest the best outcome - **show that different options have been considered.**

This is assessed within the examination by

- Analyse the situation recommending an approach to be taken to...
- Analyse how the situation can be managed in order to...
- Analyse the consequences of...

AO3b Evaluation/justification

This is assessed within the examination by

- ...justify your decisions/approach- **say why you have given your answer**
- Evaluate how well ... meets ...standards- **what is the intended outcome**
- Evaluate how effective/efficient...**what was the outcome? what would you do differently, the same or change**

Only **two** command verbs will be used in the ERQ questions. These will be **analyse** and either **justify** or **evaluate**.

Question and Mark Scheme A03

Scenario:

A land-based company is struggling with staff retention and its profits have declined steadily over the last six months. As a result, a review has been carried out which showed that staff at all levels lack knowledge of current products and the latest business practices. It was clear that Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has been limited within the company.

Stem:

Analyse how this company would benefit from increased CPD opportunities and justify actions to be taken to improve employee performance.

(12 marks)

A land-based company is struggling with **staff retention** and its profits have declined steadily over the last six months. As a result, a review has been carried out which showed that **staff at all levels lack knowledge of current products** and the **latest business practices**. It was clear that Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has been limited within the company.

Analyse how this company would **benefit** from increased CPD opportunities and **justify actions** to be taken to **improve employee performance**.

(12 marks)

ERQ Tips

Candidates are encouraged to structure their responses as per the stem of the question. It is advised that candidates make it clear which part of the stem they are referring to by including a title of 'analysis' and then 'justify/evaluate' in their responses.

E.g. Candidate response for an ERQ -

Analyse

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Justify

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

By providing their responses in this format will ensure that they consider the two elements of the stem and also make it clear to examiners during the marking process.

AO2 (core knowledge and understanding) will be assessed throughout both the analysis and justify/evaluate sections. The AO3a is assessed in the 'analysis' section and AO3b within the 'justify/evaluate section'.

AO3 Examiner Hints and Tips

Refer to bands and marks allocated in each band.

There are always two elements to each ERQ and it is important that candidates focus on both elements equally to be able to move up into the higher bands.

If candidates were asked to 'Analyse X and Justify Y', they need to attempt both of these elements. If a candidate provided a very comprehensive analysis of X, and did not provide any justification for Y, then the candidate may not be able to move out of Band 1 as they have not demonstrated understanding in both of the key areas.

In the example used here if the candidate only **analyses** how this company would **benefit** from increased CPD opportunities and did not **justify actions** to be taken to **improve employee performance**, they would not get higher than band 1 as the question requires both parts to be answered.

If they only explore one point in extensive detail, they will not demonstrate they have sufficient breadth of knowledge of the subject area and will not be able to access higher bands

When making a point in response to the question the candidate needs to explain why they think this point is relevant to the question; this demonstrates their ability to make judgements and is therefore evidence of evaluation.

Marking bands

Band	Marks	Descriptor
4	10-12	<p>Demonstrates comprehensive application of knowledge and understanding of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), in relation to the increased opportunities provided to employees from CPD.</p> <p>Demonstrates comprehensive use of analysis of the benefits of appropriate CPD to the employee's performance and impact on the company.</p> <p>Demonstrates comprehensive evaluative skills by justifying an excellent range of actions that could be taken to improve employee performance. Justifications are supported with highly detailed and relevant reasoning.</p>
3	7-9	<p>Demonstrates thorough application of knowledge and understanding of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), in relation to the increased opportunities provided to employees from CPD.</p> <p>Demonstrates thorough use of analysis of the benefits of appropriate CPD to the employee's performance and impact on the company.</p> <p>Demonstrates thorough evaluative skills by justifying a good range of actions that could be taken to improve employee performance. Justifications are supported with mostly detailed and relevant reasoning.</p>
2	4-6	<p>Demonstrates good application of knowledge and understanding of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), in relation to the increased opportunities provided to employees from CPD.</p> <p>Demonstrates good use of analysis of the benefits of appropriate CPD to the employee's performance and impact on the company.</p> <p>Demonstrates good evaluative skills by justifying a moderate range of actions that could be taken to improve employee performance. Justifications are supported with some detailed and relevant reasoning.</p>
1	1-3	<p>Demonstrates basic application of knowledge and understanding of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), in relation to the increased opportunities provided to employees from CPD.</p> <p>Demonstrates basic use of analysis of the benefits of appropriate CPD to the employee's performance and impact on the company.</p> <p>Demonstrates basic evaluative skills by justifying a limited range of actions that could be taken to improve employee performance. Justifications are supported with minimal detailed and relevant reasoning.</p>
	0	No relevant material

Candidate Responses

The exam guide document contains candidate responses at the top of each Marking Band.

Link to Common Core Paper 1 Examination Guide: [8717-030_exam_guide_v1-0-pdf.pdf](#)

Candidate Responses

6.2.1. Band 4

Top of band 4 response (12 marks)

The company's decline in profits and staff retention issues can be directly linked to the lack of current product knowledge and outdated business practices, highlighting the critical role that CPD can play in reversing these challenges. CPD involves the ongoing improvement of professional skills and knowledge, helping employees remain competent and confident in their roles. By offering increased CPD opportunities, the company can address several underlying problems.

Regular CPD ensures employees stay updated with the latest products and services, enabling them to better serve customers and enhance sales. Improved product knowledge would lead to great confidence in customer interactions, directly benefiting the business through higher revenue and customer satisfaction. This also allows employees to perform tasks with higher accuracy, efficiency and confidence. CPD also enables staff to learn and implement the latest industry standards and innovations. This keeps the company competitive as employees will be equipped with modern skills for an evolving market. Offering CPD shows employees that the company values their growth, which improves employee retention. Individuals are more likely to stay with an employer who invest in their future, reducing recruitment and training costs. Staff can also bring new ideas and innovations into the business, potentially leading to cost savings and operational improvements. A company that offers CPD becomes more attractive to both current employees and future recruits. A skilled, well-trained team enhances the company's reputation, not just with customers, but within the industry.

The company could develop a tailored CPD programme that provides specific training on product knowledge, modern business practices to meet the company's goals. This would address the current skills gap which would enable employees to improve their performance in line with the company's needs. This training would allow the company to streamline processes and reduce costs. The company could also introduce SMART goals for employees as part of their reviews/appraisals. These will provide clear and achievable targets that help employees to focus on areas for improvement. These goals can be monitored for progress and adjusted accordingly. Another action the company could do is to pair employees with mentors to offer guidance, support and to transfer their knowledge. This gives a more hands on approach and allows employees to gain insights from experienced staff and is directly applicable to their roles.

How we support you

Updates/Newsletters/Networks



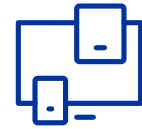
Blended approach to communication



Provider networks and events



e-bulletin content and email updates

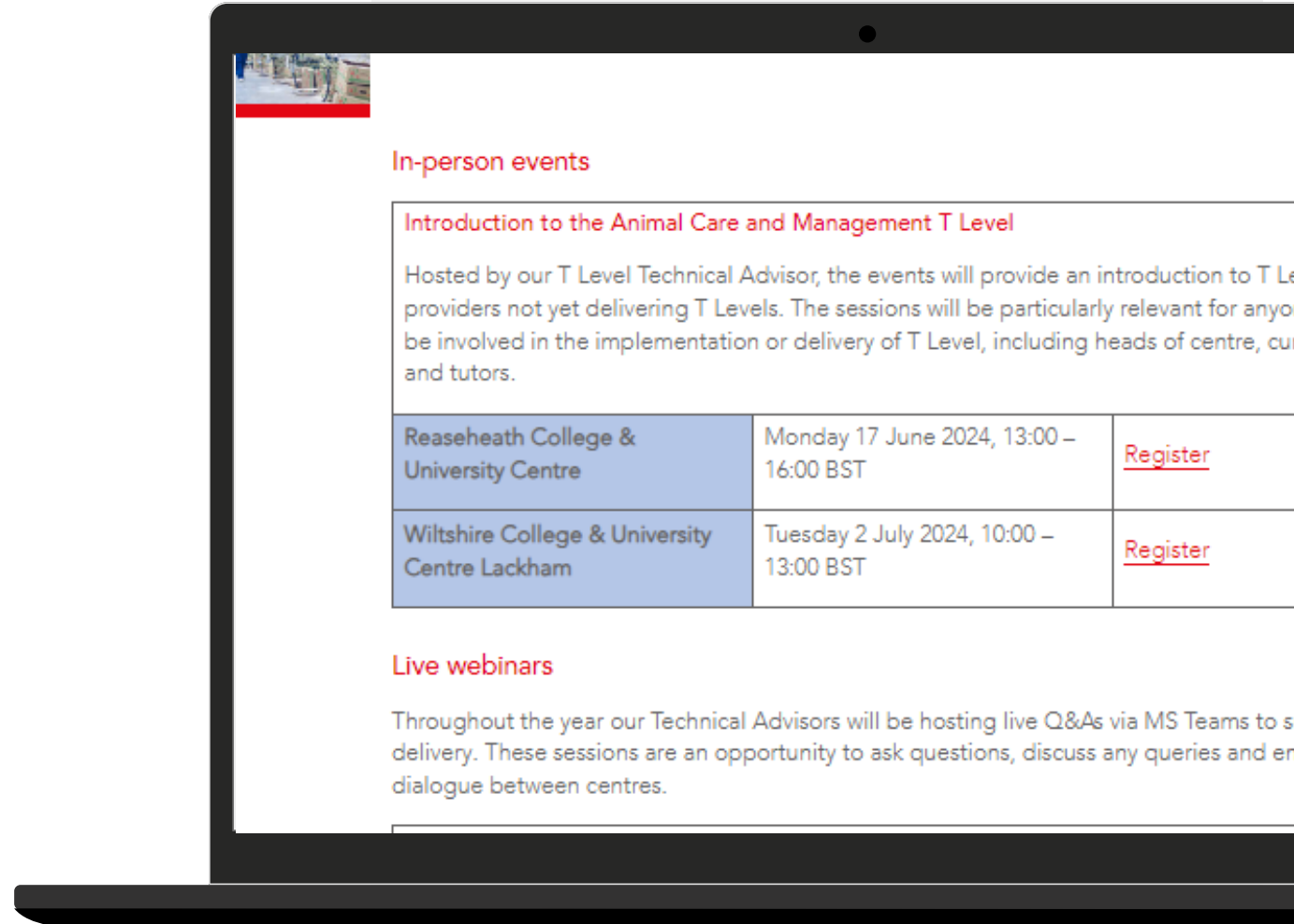


Website

Events and Webinars

Visit the T Levels Events & Webinars page for information on future events and to access on-demand recordings: [Events and webinars - T Levels | City & Guilds \(cityandguilds.com\)](https://www.cityandguilds.com/en/education/t-levels/events-and-webinars)

For the most up to date information regarding future events please register for our T Level ebulletins at the bottom of this webpage: [T Levels for Providers - T Levels | City & Guilds \(cityandguilds.com\)](https://www.cityandguilds.com/en/education/t-levels/levels-for-providers)



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- **Technical Qualification Associates (TQAs)** Review Eligible Provider approval applications, including supplementary evidence and carry out approval and support activities.
- **Chief/Principal Examiners** Produce and submit assessment materials and participate in all stages of the production process until sign off.
- **Marking Examiners** Mark candidates' scripts/evidence in accordance with the agreed marking scheme/criteria within the agreed timescale

[Associate Vacancies | City & Guilds Group Careers](https://www.cityandguildsgroup.com/careers/associate-vacancies)
([cityandguildsgroup.com](https://www.cityandguildsgroup.com))



Associate Vacancies

There are a variety of contracted associate roles you may wish to apply for, such as Examiners, Moderators, Independent End-Point Assessors, External Quality Assurers and External Assessors.

New roles are added to this site, therefore do visit regularly to see new opportunities as they become available. Find out more about the current opportunities and how to apply. The roles are very different, therefore do read the guidance for each to support your application.

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T-LEVELS



T-LEVELS

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sarah.cocks@cityandguilds.com**

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