4406-031/531 – Coordinating Business Support – Theory Exam

March 2020

Examiner Report

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Introduction

This document has been prepared by the Chief Examiner, it is designed to be used as a feedback tool for centres to use in order to enhance teaching and preparation for assessment. It is advised that this document be referred to when preparing to teach and then again when candidates are preparing to sit examinations for City & Guilds Technical qualifications.

This report provides general commentary on candidate performance and highlights common themes in relation to the technical aspects explored within the assessment, giving areas of strengths and weakness demonstrated by the cohort of candidates who sat the **March 2020** examination series. It will explain aspects which caused difficulty and potentially why the difficulties arose, whether it was caused by a lack of knowledge, incorrect examination technique or responses that failed to demonstrate the required depth of understanding.

The document provides commentary on the following assessment;
4406-031/531 – Coordinating Business Support – Theory Exam.

Theory Exam – March 2020

Grade Boundaries and distribution

Assessment: **4406-031/531**
Series: **March 2020**

Below identifies the final grade boundaries for this assessment, as agreed by the awarding panel:

Total marks available	80
Pass mark	31
Merit mark	43
Distinction mark	55

The graph below shows the approximate distribution of grades and pass rates for this assessment:

4406 -031/531 March 2020
Grade Distribution
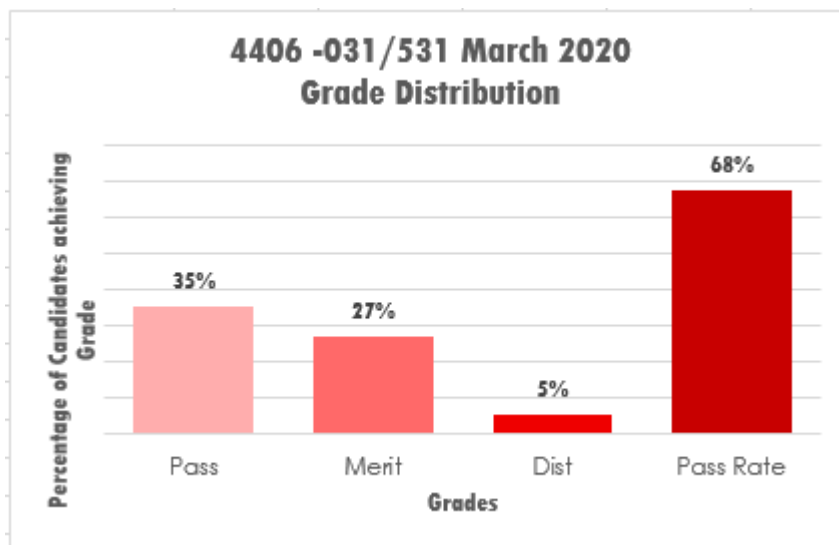
Chief Examiner Commentary

General Comments on Candidate Performance

Assessment component: 4406-031/531

Series March 2020

The performance of this paper was similar to previous years, with some pleasingly clear Level 3 answers to AO4 questions. Overall, however, this paper saw a drop in candidate performance, with a rise in the number of candidates gaining a pass, but a drop in both merits and distinctions.

Generally speaking, candidates answered the questions referencing customer service activities very well. A significant majority showed excellent understanding on the reasons for customer feedback and the role of social media. There were some very good answers in the use of tone of voice when dealing with customer complaints. However, a significant number of candidates did not develop their answer to include questioning techniques. Stronger candidates accessed marks by recognising the need to gather information, show interest in the customer and make the customer feel valued.

Conflict management was another area that produced some good answers overall, with the majority of candidates able to identify its advantage. The evaluation of disadvantages was less well answered, with candidates often making throwaway remarks regarding promotion or dismissal, with little justification.

A significant number of candidates did not clearly explain the differences between the governance of public sector organisations and public limited companies. Responses were often confused and it was apparent that many candidates did not understand the features that distinguish a public sector organisation from a private one.

Other topics that gave cause for concern were in leadership theories, where a significant number of candidates could not clearly explain transactional leadership or the benefits of emotional intelligence for a business.

It was notable that, when answering the question on the Health and Safety at Work act, very few candidates gave responses that referenced employees' responsibilities under HASAW. The majority simply listed minor safe working practices for a specific job role. It is imperative that candidates take time to read the questions thoroughly to avoid these errors.

In the extended response question, candidates were asked to propose an induction and training programme for a charitable organisation's new recruits.

Band 1 candidates showed some knowledge and understanding of charitable organisations, with some applied examples (environment, homelessness). However, they did not necessarily relate the induction training programme to recently recruited volunteers. Candidates gave some examples of the generic and overall training that would apply to any type of business, but some of the induction training was not feasible. If included, the checklists at Band 1 were generally brief.

Band 2 candidates displayed some good ideas for an induction programme that related, specifically, to the volunteers, or the needs of the charity. At this level there was evidence of understanding, with candidates attempting justifications for some of their points. However, a significant number of candidates' responses lacked depth and relevance. Some candidates included the required checklists appropriate to Level 3 and the proposal they made was suitable for the Director's attention, as required by the question.

Band 3 candidates gave some well-developed responses. At this level, there were some attempts at chains of reasoning which enabled the candidates to access these higher level

marks. These candidates gave considered responses and demonstrated a more logical ordering in their answers.

In order to achieve a good result in this Business Support qualification, it is important the candidates demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding of business structures, concepts and systems. Therefore centres are encouraged to ensure candidates develop an understanding of these business concepts alongside business theories, so that their candidates gain a firm frame of reference for answers to all question topics. In general, centres are advised to help candidates develop their exam technique, so that they understand what the question is asking of them and how to evidence it. A recommended technique for AO2 and extended response questions is to take a few minutes to set out a plan. This plan is then used as a reference to order work as responses are written. This is good practice for all, but especially useful for Level 3 candidates with ambitions for higher education qualifications.

Centres are reminded of the City & Guilds Technicals 'Exam Guides' available here:

https://www.cityandguilds.com/-/media/productdocuments/business_skills/business_admin_and_public_services/4406/4406_level_3/centre_documents/4406-031_and_531_technicals_exam_document_2019_v1-1-pdf.ashx