

REPORT OF CHIEF EXAMINER

Subject:	Certificate of Professional Competence
Stage/Scheme:	Unit 5 Road Passenger Operation
Series and/or year of examination:	December 2011

Report on the work of candidates

The standard of scripts submitted varied considerably, with some excellent answers and at the other extreme candidates who appeared to be ill-prepared for a Level 3 examination.

A few candidates lost marks because they failed to write legibly, and whilst this is not a handwriting examination, it is essential that the examiner can read the script.

As is often the case, some candidates failed to read the question and consequently wrote an answer to a question that they would perhaps have preferred had been asked. Furthermore, many candidates felt it necessary to include a lot of extra information in their answer which was either irrelevant or unnecessary; these candidates often failed to complete the entire paper.

As is typical in this examination a number of questions asked candidates to 'identify' and 'explain'; a significant number failed to either identify or to explain and therefore lost half of the marks that were available in the question.

Question 1

This question required the candidate to identify issues in the scenario that required action in relation to an Operator Licence.

It was clear to the examiners that candidates could interpret this question in two ways, and therefore marks were awarded for correct answers regardless of which interpretation was used by candidates. A few candidates adopted the 'write all I know about Operator Licensing' approach without relating this to the specific question and information in the scenario. This was not a question about applying for a new Operator Licence. It was about varying an existing Operator Licence and therefore candidates who successfully dealt with this issue were the ones who scored well. However, many candidates managed

to identify the areas of concern but did not explain the action that was required.

Question 2

This question dealt with maintenance procedures stated in the scenario that did not satisfy those required by the Licensing Authority (VOSA).

Most candidates managed to provide an answer to half this question. As with question 1, writing in an abstract way about maintenance and associated issues was not in itself sufficient. What the candidates who gained good marks did was to apply their knowledge of maintenance requirements to the items in the scenario. A number of candidates just listed equipment that was required for maintaining vehicles!

Question 3

This question was in two parts.

Part (a) asked the candidate to provide a quote for a tour as given in the scenario. A significant number of candidates obtained maximum marks for this question. Those who did not tended to either select the wrong tour or, in some cases, make calculations that did not bear any relationship with the information in the scenario or the question. Candidates did not layout their answers very well but instead placed them in random positions on the page. I believe this approach caused many candidates to make incorrect calculations.

Part (b) this required the candidate to calculate the annual depreciation for a vehicle given in the scenario. The majority of candidates performed well on this part.

Question 4

This question also had two parts to it:

In part (a) candidates were asked to complete a driver's schedule using the information in the scenario. For an item that is fundamental to a Transport Manager's role, this question was answered very poorly. Many candidates were not able to produce a legal driver schedule. A worrying number of those who managed to work out the correct start time went on to schedule the driver for a continuous driving period of 4 hr 45 min, without a break. The question clearly asked for the vehicle to arrive at the depot as early as legally possible; many candidates ignored this piece of information and therefore took breaks where they saw fit and did not meet the requirements of the schedule.

Part (b) asked candidates to explain why the schedule in part (a) could not be undertaken on six successive days per week.

Many candidates failed to obey the instruction to "explain your answers". For example, a candidate should have said that one of the reasons this could not be done by a single driver for six days is that the daily driving time of 10 hours could only be done twice a week. Candidates often just stated the regulation without explaining its relevance to the scenario.

Question 5

The question required the candidate to produce an organisational chart from information contained both in the question and the scenario. Many candidates just used the staff as listed in the scenario without adding those given in the question or contained in the scenario under the heading 'background'.

Normally production of an organisation chart results in candidates gaining good marks. For some reason, this was not the case with a minority of candidates being able to compile a chart with logical reporting lines.

Question 6

This question has been used many times over the years although in a slightly different format. The question was subdivided into part (a) which asked candidates to identify compulsory types of insurance and the cover they offered and part (b) which asked the same but for optional types. In both parts candidates were told to refer to the scenario. Many candidates were unable to explain the compulsory insurance requirements. A number added Public Liability; others said that the minimum Third Party Vehicle Insurance covered damage to the operator's own vehicles. Part (b) was answered reasonably well but numerous candidates offered optional insurance that was not relevant to the scenario.

Question 7

This question was concerned with setting up a Private Limited Company.

Part (a) asked the candidate to identify and describe items typically found in the Articles of Association. Very few were able to answer this and those that offered acceptable responses often did not provide a satisfactory description.

Part (b) asked for two documents that must be submitted with the application. A better attempt was made at this part but many candidates stated that the Certificate of Incorporation should be sent which of course is not possible.

Part (c) asked the candidate to state three advantages of forming a Private Limited Company. A significant number of candidates stated advantages of setting up a Public Limited Company and although some were the same as for a Private Limited Company, some marks were lost.

There were few prompts in the pre-released scenario and this may have lead to a below average performance by candidates.

Question 8

The final question required candidates to calculate the number of buses (part a) and drivers (part b) required to operate three bus services given in the scenario. This is a question that has posed problems with candidates in the past but it is pleasing to report that this part of the question was generally well answered. Part (b) caused many candidates problems, and very few demonstrated a grasp of the simple way to make the calculation. Part (c) asked candidates for three types of duty that you would most likely roster to carry out the services. To a certain extent the question was open to interpretation

and subject to industry terms and practice therefore the examiners used discretion if the candidate provided a credible answer.

This paper was not unduly difficult and was consistent with past papers. The fact that there were some excellent answers demonstrated that well prepared candidates were able to achieve a high mark. As in all areas of assessment preparation is everything.

The examiners recognised that question one was open to two correct interpretations and candidates who used either interpretation were awarded marks for correct answers.

Pass rate: 42%