

NCC EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA
IN
BUSINESS

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

2nd DECEMBER 2007

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 Education 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 is a whole mark.

CANDIDATES MUST ATTEMPT THIS QUESTION

QUESTION 1

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) List FOUR sources of business information that you would find in a **library**. **4**
- *Business books*
 - *Electronic databases*
 - *Newspapers*
 - *Periodicals*
 - *Statistical resources and publications*
 - *Directories*
 - *Almanacs*
 - *Government publications*
 - *Librarians*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- b) List FOUR factors that make **business communication** unique and different to everyday communication. **4**
- *Globalization of business and increase in workforce diversity*
 - *Increasing value of business information*
 - *Pervasiveness of technology*
 - *Evolution of organizational structures*
 - *Growing reliance on teamwork*
 - *Communication barriers*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- c) Briefly describe the FOUR stages of **planning a business message**. **4**
- *Analyse the situation by defining your purpose and developing a profile of your audience*
 - *Gather information that will meet your audience's needs*
 - *Select the right medium (oral, written or electronic) to deliver your message*
 - *Organise the information by defining your main idea, limiting your scope, selecting an approach and outlining your content*
- 1 mark per point described to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- d) State FOUR ways that employers find potential new employees. **4**
- *Look within their own organisation to recruit for new posts*
 - *Rely on contacts and personal recommendations from people they know and trust*
 - *Use employment agencies or state employment services*
 - *Place help wanted advertisements in newspapers, trade magazines, campus publications, their own websites or radio and television*
 - *Send representatives to college campuses to conduct student interviews*
 - *Accept unsolicited résumés and keep them on file or on a database*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- e) List FOUR of the skills that can help you to improve your intercultural communication. **4**
- *Study other cultures and languages*
 - *Respect style preferences*
 - *Use interpreters, translators and translation software*
 - *Write and speak clearly*
 - *Listen carefully*
 - *Help others adapt to your culture*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*

Total 20 Marks

CANDIDATES MUST ATTEMPT FOUR FURTHER QUESTIONS

QUESTION 2

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) For a business message to be successful, it is important to define the purpose of the message in the planning stage.
- i) All messages have a **general purpose**. Describe what this means and how it can help in the planning of a business message. 3
- *General purpose of a message is to inform, to persuade or to collaborate with your audience*
 - *Helps to define the overall approach to take including the information to gather, the choice of media and the way the message is organised*
 - *Determines the appropriate degree of audience participation and the degree of control you have over the message*
- Up to 3 marks for description.*
- ii) Each business message also has a **specific purpose**. What does this mean? 2
- *Identifies what the writer hopes to accomplish with the message*
 - *Identifies what the reader should do after receiving the message*
- Up to 2 marks for description.*
- iii) List FIVE questions you can ask yourself to help decide whether to send a particular message, or to leave it until later, or not to bother at all. 5
- *Will anything change as a result of my message?*
 - *Is my purpose realistic?*
 - *Is the time right?*
 - *Is the right person delivering the message?*
 - *Is the purpose acceptable to the organisation?*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.*
- b) The more you know about your audience, the more effectively you will be able to communicate with them. 10
Describe FIVE stages of conducting an **audience analysis**.
- *Identify your primary audience: certain members might be more important than others; don't ignore the needs of less influential members; address concerns of key decision makers*
 - *Determine audience size and geographic distribution: a message aimed at 10,000 people all over the world requires a different approach to one aimed at a few people in a meeting room*
 - *Determine audience composition: look for similarities and differences in culture, language, age, education, organisational rank and status, attitudes, experience, motivations and any other factors that might affect the success of the message*
 - *Gauge audience members' level of understanding: do they share your background of knowledge? If not, the message needs an element of education; you have to decide how much information to include in order to accomplish the specific purpose of the message*
 - *Understand audience expectations and preferences: will they expect complete details or just a summary of the main points? The higher up the organisation the message goes, the fewer details people usually want to see because they have less time to read them*
 - *Forecast probable audience reaction: this affects the structure of the message; if you expect a favourable response, you can state conclusions and recommendations up front; if you expect scepticism, you can introduce conclusions gradually and with supporting evidence*
- Up to 2 marks per point to a maximum of 10 marks.*

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 3

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

a) Listening skills are essential for effective communication and there are several different methods of listening.

Describe EACH of the following listening methods:

i) Content listening

4

- *Goal is to understand and retain the speaker's message*
- *Emphasis is on information and understanding*
- *Ask questions to clarify and probe for detail*
- *No evaluation so it doesn't matter whether the listener agrees or disagrees with the content*

Up to 4 marks for description.

ii) Critical listening

4

- *Goal is to understand and evaluate meaning of the message on several levels*
- *Levels include: logic of argument, strength of evidence, validity of conclusions, implications, speaker's intentions and motives, omission of any important points*
- *Ask questions to explore speaker's point of view and credibility if you are sceptical*
- *Look out for bias that might affect the way information is presented*

Up to 4 marks for description.

iii) Empathic listening

4

- *Goal is understand speaker's feelings, needs and wants so you can appreciate the point of view regardless of whether you share that perspective*
- *Helps the individual to vent the emotions that prevent a calm approach to the subject*
- *Upset person needs someone to listen, so don't give advice unless they ask for it*
- *Once connection is established with speaker, you can help him/ her move on to search for a solution*

Up to 4 marks for description.

b) Define each of the following terms connected to the study of intercultural communication:

i) Ethnocentrism

2

- *Tendency to judge all other groups according to your own group's standards, behaviours and customs*
- *When making such comparisons, people often decide their own group is superior*

Up to 2 marks for definition.

ii) Xenophobia

2

- *An extreme version of ethnocentrism*
- *A fear of strangers and foreigners*
- *Xenophobics would not be able to interpret messages from other cultures correctly, neither would they be able to send successful messages*

Up to 2 marks for definition.

iii) Stereotyping

2

- *Assigning a wide range of generalized attributes to an individual on the basis of membership of a particular culture or social group, without considering the individual's unique characteristics*
- *Ethnocentrism and xenophobia represent negative views of everyone in a particular group, stereotyping is more a matter of oversimplifying and failing to acknowledge individuality*

Up to 2 marks for definition.

Marks

2

iv) Cultural pluralism

- *The practice of accepting multiple cultures on their own terms*
- *A positive viewpoint which shows respect for other people*
- *Adaptation of communication style to that of the culture encountered*
- *Integration of aspects of other cultures into your own*

Up to 2 marks for definition.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 4**Marks****Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.**

- a) There are many ways of delivering a presentation; some are better than others.
- i) Give TWO reasons why **memorising** your speech might not be the best delivery method for a presentation. **2**
- *It might be too long to memorise and you might forget your lines*
 - *It will sound stilted*
 - *You may need to address audience questions during the speech and should be able to adjust your speech as you go*
- 1 mark per reason to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- ii) Speaking from **notes written on cards** (sometimes called 'note cards') is a recommended way of delivering a presentation. Give THREE reasons why this is an easy and effective method of speaking to an audience. **3**
- *Gives the speaker something to refer to*
 - *Allows for plenty of eye contact and interaction with the audience*
 - *Allows speaker to improvise in response to audience feedback, but can still keep his/ her place in the presentation notes*
 - *If you are nervous, stiff cards won't shake like sheets of paper*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.*
- b) Prepare a simple presentation on the subject of **applying for a job**. **15**

Your answer must be in the form of **FIVE note cards**, the first of which should be an introduction.

Each card should include a very brief outline of that part of your talk, AND include reminders that will help you present effectively (such as details of a slide or handout, stage cues or anything that you think appropriate).

Please note that you do NOT have to write the full text of a presentation.

- *Format: five note cards including one introduction, two or three with headings for the main body of the presentation and one conclusion.*
- *Each brief outline should contain material relevant to 'applying for a job' plus a sensible instruction or description/ illustration of a slide or handout.*

Up to 3 marks per prompt card to a maximum of 15 marks.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 5

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) When recruiting staff, most employers interview applicants two or three times before making a job offer. Each interview has a different purpose.

Describe in detail what is involved in EACH of the following **interview stages**:

- i) Preliminary screening stage. 5

- *Purpose: to screen out unqualified/ unsuitable applicants*
- *Generally held on campus for new college hires*
- *Candidates who fit the organisation's requirements are invited to visit the company's offices for further evaluation*
- *Interviews are fairly structured so candidates are all asked roughly the same questions*
- *Standardised evaluation sheets may be used to 'grade' applicants so they are all measured against the same criteria*
- *Technology may be used to screen candidates by 'phone, video interview or computer*

Up to 5 marks for description.

- ii) Selection stage. 4

- *Invited to visit the company and will talk with several people*
- *Panel might include: human resources department, potential colleagues, potential supervisor*
- *Panel of interviewers will ask several questions in single session*
- *It will be noted how you respond, listen, think, and express yourself so they can decide how likely you are to get along with colleagues*

Up to 4 marks for description.

- iii) Final stage. 3

- *Final stage could be a job offer either on the spot, or a few days later by 'phone or e-mail*
- *In other cases there may be an invitation to a final evaluation by a higher ranking executive who has the authority to make the hiring decision*
- *An underlying objective of the final stage is often to sell you on the advantages of joining the organisation*

Up to 3 marks for description.

- b) Many employers now conduct a variety of pre-employment tests that are designed to examine factors such as integrity, personality, job skills and substance use. Briefly explain what each of the following tests are for:

- i) Integrity tests. 2

- *A test to identify job candidates who are more likely to steal from their employers*
- *Identifies candidates likely to commit other ethical or legal infractions*

Up to 2 marks for explanation.

- ii) Personality tests. 2

- *Used to assess either general character or suitability for the demands of a specific profession*
- *Attempts to profile overall intellectual ability, attitudes towards work, interests, managerial potential*
- *Attempts to identify personal characteristics such as dependability, honesty, motivation and commitment*

Up to 2 marks for explanation.

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| | Marks |
| iii) Job skills tests. | 2 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>To assess the competency or specific abilities needed to perform the job</i>• <i>Frequent tests include: basic computer skills, clerical tasks, basic business financial tasks, legal and medical terminology</i> <p><i>Up to 2 marks for explanation.</i></p> | |
| iv) Substance tests. | 2 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Drug and alcohol testing of candidates and employees</i>• <i>Designed to avoid reduced productivity associated with drug use</i>• <i>To maintain workplace safety: reduce potential accidents if users are screened out</i>• <i>Controversial: some regard the practice as an invasion of privacy</i> <p><i>Up to 2 marks for explanation.</i></p> | |

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 6**Marks****Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.**

- a) Briefly describe the characteristics of each of the following tasks used in processing information:
- i) Drafting a summary. 2
- *A shortened version of one or more documents, research results or other information*
 - *It filters out details and presents only the most important ideas*
 - *It must be unbiased and free of the writer's opinions*
 - *Information that is most important to the reader should be highlighted*
- Up to 2 marks for description.*
- ii) Drawing a conclusion. 3
- *A logical interpretation of the facts based strictly on the information included in the report*
 - *A logical conclusion is one that follows accepted patterns of inductive or deductive reasoning*
 - *Must not be based on unproven premises, appeal to emotion, use generalisations or contain any other logical fallacies*
 - *May not obviously flow from the evidence: personal or organisation's values may influence conclusions*
 - *If conclusion is potentially biased for any reason, there is an ethical responsibility to explain this to the audience*
- Up to 3 marks for description.*
- iii) Making recommendations. 2
- *An opinion based on reason and logic about the course of action that should be taken*
 - *Should be based on logical analysis and sound conclusions*
 - *Should be practical and acceptable to readers*
- Up to 2 marks for description.*

- b) During your research for a project, you have found some useful information from many sources including the Internet.
- i) Name and briefly describe FIVE criteria for evaluating the credibility of an information source that would help you decide whether to include it in your project. **10**

Does it have a reputation for honesty and reliability?

- *Better to use information from a publication with a reputation for accuracy*
- *Find out how the publication accepts articles and whether it has an editorial board*

Is the source potentially biased?

- *Depending on what it stands for, an organisation's messages may be written with a certain bias which is neither bad nor unethical*
- *Its source of funding could influence its information output*
- *In order to interpret an organisation's information you need to know its point of view.*

What is the purpose of the material?

- *Was it designed to inform others of recent research, advance a position or to stimulate discussion?*
- *Was it designed to promote or sell a product?*
- *You need to distinguish between advertising and informing*

Is the author credible?

- *Is s/he well-known in this field?*
- *Is the author an amateur or just a 'blogger' expressing an opinion?*

Where did the source get its information?

- *Many sources of secondary information get their material from other secondary sources*
- *If so, the information can be checked out for accuracy elsewhere*
- *Find out who collected the data, the methods used, their qualifications and their professional reputation*

Is the information current?

- *Check the publication date to ensure you are using the most current information available*
- *Business related fields change quickly and published information can become obsolete in a short time*

Is the material complete?

- *Have you accessed the entire document or only a selection from it?*
- *What has been excluded? Do you need more detail?*

Do the source's claims stand up to scrutiny?

- *Does the information make sense? E.g. do any projected outcomes add up and make sense?*
- *Other logical approaches*

Up to 2 marks for each criterion named and described to a maximum of 10 marks.

- ii) Give THREE reasons for documenting secondary sources of information. **3**

- *It properly and ethically credits the person who created the original material*
- *It shows your audience/ readers that you have sufficient support for your message*
- *It helps readers to explore your topic in more detail if desired*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.

Total 20 Marks