

NCC EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA
IN
BUSINESS

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

9th MARCH 2008

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) Define the following terms:
- i) Defamation. 1
 - *A false statement that tends to damage someone's character or reputation*
 - ii) Libel. 1
 - *Written defamation*
 - iii) Slander. 1
 - *Spoken defamation.*
- b) Print is only one format in which you can read newspapers. List THREE other formats that these publications use. 3
- *Databases containing newspaper articles*
 - *CD-ROM*
 - *Microfilm*
 - *Full text or limited editions available on the Internet*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 3marks.*
- c) List SIX major sections of a traditional résumé used in job applications. 6
- *Name and contact information*
 - *Career objective*
 - *Summary of qualifications*
 - *Education*
 - *Work experience, skills and accomplishments*
 - *Activities and achievements*
 - *Personal data*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 6 marks.*
- d) You have been given the responsibility of planning, organising and chairing an important meeting. Briefly describe FOUR **preparation tasks** that you need to undertake before the meeting. 4
- *Decide on your purpose: informational or decision making meeting? Purpose must be clear and communicated to all participants beforehand to ensure they are well-prepared*
 - *Select participants for the meeting: too many and the meeting will be too long; for problem-solving invite only those who will help meeting reach its objective*
 - *Choose the appropriate time and facility: morning sessions usually more productive than afternoon; consider seating, room, lighting, temperature, acoustics, refreshments*
 - *Set the agenda: distribute well thought out and carefully written agenda to participants giving them time to prepare*
- 1 mark per task described to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- e) Outline FOUR uses of an organisation chart. 4
- *To illustrate the positions, units or functions of an organisation*
 - *Shows how the departments or individuals interrelate e.g. vertical or lateral relationships*
 - *A visual representation of an organisation's communication channels e.g. reporting lines*
 - *Can also be used to outline messages: showing main idea and 'lower' subordinate/ supporting ideas or points*
- 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) Name and briefly describe FOUR principles of graphic design that can help you to design good quality visuals to use in your presentations and projects. **8**

- *Continuity: use design elements consistently so as not to confuse the audience e.g. colours, fonts, size, shape, scale etc.*
- *Contrast: use contrasting colours or black and white to emphasise differences; to emphasise similarities make colour differences more subtle*
- *Emphasis: present the key item on the visual in the most prominent way – through colour, position or size; less important items can be downplayed*
- *Simplicity: limit the number of colours and design elements used; don't overuse decorative elements e.g. clipart as it will only clutter the look and confuse the audience*
- *Experience and expectations: be aware of professional and/ or cultural expectations; certain colours or designs might have particular associations e.g. red cross on white background indicates emergency medical care in many countries, but cross is a Christian symbol so red crescent is used in Islamic countries. Original red cross is flag of Switzerland and nothing to do with religious iconography*

Up to 2 marks per principle named and described to a maximum of 8 marks.

b) There are many ways of presenting information visually.

Describe each of the following visual representations of information AND say when or in what circumstances you would use each of them.

i) Table

4

- *A systematic arrangement of data in columns and rows with useful headings along the top and side*
 - *Numerical tables most common, but can also contain words, symbols or other facts and figures*
 - *Used to present detailed, specific information/ exact values*
 - *Ideal when audience/ reader needs information that would be difficult to handle in the main text*
- Up to 4 marks for description and use(s).*

ii) Line chart

4

- *Vertical 'y' axis shows amount and horizontal 'x' axis shows time or other quantity against which amount is being measured*
- *Both axes often start at zero in lower left hand corner, but can be flexible in order to present data as clearly as possible*
- *Used to show trends in one or more variables or the relationship between those variables over time*

Up to 4 marks for description and use(s).

iii) Flowchart

4

- *illustrates a sequence of events from start to finish*
- *flowchart language: each shape has a specific meaning - diamonds are decision points, rectangles are process steps*
- *show physical or conceptual relationships rather than numerical ones*
- *used to illustrate processes or procedures or sequential relationships*

Up to 4 marks for description and use(s).

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 3

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) An understanding of non-verbal signals can enhance your ability to communicate successfully.
- i) What is *non-verbal communication*? 2
- *the interpersonal process of sending and receiving information*
 - *can be intentional and/ or unintentional*
 - *does not use written or spoken language*
 - *supplements spoken language*
- Up to 2 marks for definition.*
- ii) Name and describe THREE important roles that non-verbal signals play in communication. 9
- Complementing verbal language*
- *non-verbal signals can strengthen a verbal message (when the non-verbal signals match the words)*
 - *can weaken a verbal message (when non-verbal signals don't match words)*
 - *can replace words entirely*
- Up to 3 marks for name and description.*
- Revealing truth*
- *people find it harder to deceive with non-verbal signals*
 - *non-verbal clues help the listener ascertain the truth of spoken information*
 - *e.g. nervous eyes and a sweating brow send a different message to the verbal lie of reassurance*
 - *can convey more to a listener/ observer than the words spoken particularly when they are trying to decide how the speaker really feels about a situation or when judging aptitude for leadership*
- Up to 3 marks for name and description.*
- Conveying information efficiently*
- *non-verbal signals can convey nuance and rich amount of information in a single instant*
 - *e.g. varying body language/ signals from members of a group in response to the same event such as raised eyebrows, exchanged glances, nodding and so on*
- Up to 3 marks for name and description.*
- Overall maximum total of 9 marks.*
- b) Describe and give examples of each of the following general categories of **non-verbal signals**.
- i) Gesture and posture. 3
- *moving or not moving the body can express voluntary and involuntary messages*
 - *many gestures have a specific, intentional meaning*
 - *e.g. a wave of the hand*
 - *other types of body movement are unintentional and give a more general message*
 - *e.g. slouching, fidgeting, walking fast are unconsciously signals that reveal whether the individual is confident or nervous, friendly or hostile, assertive or passive and so on*
- Up to 3 marks for description/ examples.*

ii) Touch**3**

- *powerful way of conveying warmth, comfort and reassurance*
- *governed by cultural customs that establish who can touch whom and how in various circumstances*
- *e.g. in US and GB people touch less frequently than people in France or Costa Rica*
- *different attitudes within each culture to touch*
- *e.g. manager might use hugs to express support, but subordinates might interpret them as a sexual advance or a show of dominance*

Up to 3 marks for description/ examples.

iii) Time and space**3**

- *can be used to assert authority, imply intimacy and send other non-verbal messages*
- *e.g. some people demonstrate own importance or disregard for others by keeping them waiting*
- *e.g. other people show respect by being on time*
- *manipulation of space: executives having a dining area or room separate from other employees*
- *decision to respect or violate someone's 'private space' is another powerful non-verbal signal*
- *attitudes toward time and space vary from culture to culture*

Up to 3 marks for description/ examples.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 4

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) A job interview has two objectives: one for the employer and another for the applicant. What are the TWO objectives? 2
- *the employer's objective is to find the best person available for the job*
 - *the candidate's objective is to find the best job suited to his/ her goals and abilities*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- b) Describe FIVE things that an employer is looking for when interviewing a job candidate. 10
- *To go beyond the basic data found on résumés and application forms to see what sort of personal style the candidate has: open, interested, sincere, willing to learn, positive, self-confident?*
 - *To investigate personal background e.g. interests/ hobbies, awareness of world events, and so on*
 - *To see whether the candidate will be a good fit with the organisation: will s/he be compatible with other people and with corporate culture generally?*
 - *To discover basic dimensions of the candidate's personality: sense of humour, self motivation, enthusiastic, good communicator and so on depending on the demands of the job*
 - *certain character traits such as high emotional intelligence or EQ (emotional quotient) defined as the ability to recognise one's own emotions and those of others; success in teamwork, customer support and other business endeavours call for a wider range of capabilities than just academic intelligence*
 - *Evidence that the candidate can handle the job: to determine how well skills match the requirements; additional in-depth information about qualifications and previous job experience*
- Up to 2 marks per point well-described to a maximum of 10 marks.*
- c) Here are some questions you might be asked at a job interview. Describe, in **general terms**, how you would plan answers for them.
- i) What are your greatest weaknesses? 2
- *Describe a weakness so that it sounds like a virtue*
 - *Honestly reveal something about yourself whilst showing how it works to an employer's advantage*
 - *E.g. if you sometimes drive yourself too hard, explain it helps when you have to meet deadlines*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- ii) What didn't you like about previous jobs you've had? 2
- *Say what you didn't like*
 - *Discuss what the experience taught you*
 - *Avoid being rude about former or present colleagues and/ or employers*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*
- iii) Tell us something about yourself. 2
- *Say you are happy to talk about yourself, and ask what the interviewer wants to know*
 - *If the point is clarified, respond*
 - *If the point is not clarified, tell them how your skills can contribute to the job and the organisation*
 - *A good chance to sell yourself*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.*

iv) Where do you want to be in five years from now?

- *The question is testing whether you'll use the job as a stopover until something better comes along*
- *Testing whether you've given any thought to long term goals*
- *Answer should reflect your own long term goals and the organisation's advancement opportunities*
- *Realistic answer required*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 5

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) Write a routine request letter asking your old college tutor to supply a letter of recommendation for a job you are applying for. **10**

Your letter must follow a standard business format. Invent any information you may need.

Layout should be of a consistent format throughout i.e. blocked, semi-blocked or indented style and include:

- *sender's address; recipient's name and address; date and reference; subject heading; appropriate salutation and complimentary close*

2 marks for all correct headings and letter in appropriate format; 1 mark at marker's discretion for incomplete headings/ format.

Introduction:

- *should clearly state that the writer is applying for a position and would like the reader to write a letter of recommendation*

1 mark for introduction

Main body:

- *details of relationship, dates etc to remind recipient about the writer*
- *refer to copy of résumé enclosed*
- *include information that reader could use to support the recommendation*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3marks.

Conclusion:

- *close letter with expression of appreciation*
- *include full name and address of person to whom reference to be sent*
- *give deadline/ date*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.

In addition:

- *enclose stamped, addressed envelope ('enclosure' notation required at end of letter)*

1 mark for mention.

1 mark available for communicative quality: Is it clear what the writer is trying to say? Is the handwriting and presentation acceptable?

- b) Selecting the right medium to communicate your message can mean the difference between success and failure.

- i) Face-to-face conversation is the most common **oral** method of communication. Give TWO other situations where the primary method of communication is oral. **2**

- *speeches*
- *presentations*
- *meetings*
- *telephone conversations*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 2 marks.

- ii) Give THREE **advantages** of using oral methods of communication. **3**

- *Provide immediate feedback*
- *Allow ease of interaction*
- *Involve rich non-verbal cues*
- *Allow the speaker to express the emotion behind the message*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 3 marks.

Marks

5

iii) Give FIVE advantages that **written** methods of communication have over oral methods.

- *Allow you to plan and control message*
- *Offer permanent, verifiable record*
- *Help you reach an audience that is geographically dispersed*
- *Minimise the distortion that can accompany oral messages*
- *Can be used to avoid immediate interactions*
- *De-emphasise any inappropriate emotional components*

1 mark per point to a maximum of 5 marks.

Total 20 Marks

QUESTION 6

Marks

Throughout the question, please credit any valid alternative point.

- a) The Internet is a great source of information, and there are many different ways of finding what you want.
- i) **Search engines** such as Google and Yahoo are most commonly used for finding information online. **4**
Describe in simple terms how a search engine works.
- *Identifies individual webpages that contain a specific word or phrase that you've asked for*
 - *Scans millions or billions of individual webpages*
 - *Best engines use powerful ranking algorithms to present the pages most relevant to the search request*
 - *Search engines do not actually search the web when a query is submitted, but search an index of periodically updated pages*
- 1 mark per point to a maximum of 4 marks.*
- ii) Search engines do have some **disadvantages** that can affect the quality of your research: briefly **6**
describe THREE of them.
- *Process used to search and find relevant pages is computerised*
 - *No human editors involved to evaluate the quality of content*

 - *Search engines cannot reach content in limited-access collections*
 - *e.g. back issues of newspapers, periodicals, professional journals*

 - *Various search engines use different techniques to find, classify and present pages*
 - *You might be able to find certain pages through one engine but not through another*
- Up to 2 marks per disadvantage described to a maximum of 6 marks.*
- iii) How can **metacrawlers** (metasearch engines) help you to find information on the Internet? **3**
- *Address the disadvantage of search engines' differing techniques of finding pages*
 - *Formats your search request for the specific requirements of multiple search engines*
 - *Tells you how many hits each engine was able to find*
 - *Only one search request required for multiple results*
- Up to 3 marks for explanation.*
- b) Understanding how to use search tools effectively is very important for your research. The most basic form of searching is to use a *keyword* search.
- i) Describe how a **Boolean search** is different from a basic keyword search. **2**
- *Keyword search: engine or database tries to find items that include all of the words you put into the search query*
 - *Boolean search: expands on this capability by letting you define a query with greater precision and will narrow down your search*
- Up to 2 marks for description.*

ii) Explain what **Boolean operators** are and give THREE examples of their use.

- *Boolean operators are words used to link the keywords of your search*
 - *Common Boolean operators: AND, OR, NOT, wildcards*
 - *Can also include operators that let you find a particular word in close proximity to other words*
- Up to 2 marks for explanation.*

- *AND: search must include both words before and after the AND*
 - *e.g. corporate AND profits finds entries containing both words*
 - *OR: can include either or both words*
 - *e.g. corporate OR profits finds entries containing either word but not necessarily both*
 - *NOT: search ignores items with whatever word comes after NOT*
 - *e.g. corporate NOT profits finds entries containing 'corporate' but excludes all those that contain the word 'profit'*
 - *Use 'wildcards' to find similar spellings e.g. profit* will find profits, profitability and so on*
- 1 mark per example to a maximum of 3 marks.*

Total 20 Marks