2012 HSC Notes from the Marking Centre – Retail Services

Contents

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in Retail Services. It contains comments on candidate responses to the 2012 Higher School Certificate examination, indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabus, the 2012 Higher School Certificate examination, the marking guidelines and other support documents developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of Retail Services.

General comments

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the syllabus content in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating their knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying the course.

Candidates need to be aware that the marks allocated to the question and the answer space (where this is provided on the examination paper) are guides to the length of the required response. A longer response will not in itself lead to higher marks. Writing far beyond the indicated space may reduce the time available for answering other questions.

Candidates need to be familiar with the Board's Glossary of Key Words, which contains some terms commonly used in examination questions. However, candidates should also be aware that not all questions will start with or contain one of the key words from the glossary. Questions such as 'how?', 'why?' or 'to what extent?' may be asked, or verbs that are not included in the glossary may be used, such as 'design', 'translate' or 'list'.

Most candidates demonstrated an understanding of retail concepts appropriate for HSC candidates. They communicated their ideas and information using appropriate retail examples and retail terminology.

Candidates are reminded that a Board of Studies approved calculator is required for the examination.

Candidates are also reminded that in answering Section IV they should select the elective stream they studied during their course.

Section II

Question 16

(a) In better responses, candidates explained the cause and effect relationship between the adjustable bag racks, which adjust according to the height of the employee and benefit for employee by reducing workplace injuries due to back strain.

(b) In better responses, candidates explained the benefit of having rubber floor mats at the point of sale for the employer. These benefits included a reduction in the costs related to workplace injuries and worker's compensation claims due to reduced stress during long periods of standing at the point of sale.

In weaker responses, candidates addressed the benefits for the employee, rather than the employer.

Question 17

In better responses, candidates provided a clear description of how heavy items are safely moved using a variety of relevant techniques including manual handling and correct lifting technique. In better responses, candidates described a variety of effective methods of storing heavy objects, such as placing items on lower shelf, not stacking items in high shelves and easy access to goods.

Question 18

(a) In better responses, candidates outlined at least two benefits for the retailer for removing bag checks. These benefits included a reduction in costs of employing staff and quicker service.

(b) In better responses, candidates clearly stated how electronic article surveillance (EAS) such as RFID tags, pedestal gates and electronic tagging assisted in minimising theft. In these responses, candidates demonstrated by using relevant examples, such as using dye tags to stain clothing if forcibly removed, which deters theft.

In weaker responses, candidates referred to camera surveillance and other monitoring equipment, which are not examples of EAS.

Question 19

(a) In better responses, candidates provided relevant strategies a retailer can use to minimise environmental impacts in the storage area. These included reduce, reuse, recycle, energy saving lights and isolating chemical spills from drains.

(b) In better responses, candidates provided relevant strategies a retailer can use to minimise environmental impacts in the point of sale area. These included having recycle bins under the counter, encouraging customers to use green or biodegradable bags and charging money for the use of a plastic bag.

Question 20

In better responses, candidates responded to customer complaints and feedback separately in relation to how they improve store image and increase sales. Clear links were established between how customer complaints may improve store image and increase sales, for example introducing staff training to respond to customer service complaints. Clear links were also established between how feedback improved store image and increased sales. For example, feedback on product range could lead to a new product line being introduced, which leads to customers feeling that their opinion has been valued and encourages repeat sales.

In better responses, candidates responded to all parts of the question and supported their response with relevant retail examples.

Question 21

(a) In better responses candidates identified the correct answer that is when the quantity goes down to five or when more are sold it is necessary to order plain T-shirts.

(b) In better responses, candidates correctly calculated the total value of stock at $523.85.

(c) In better responses, candidates explained how recording the location of stock items assists in reducing shrinkage, for example where stock is in the incorrect area it may not sell since customers can't find the product.

(d) In better responses, candidates explained that accurately recording stock levels can reduce the incidence of items being out of stock or having excess stock, and minimise theft and the potential loss of profit.

(e) In better responses, candidates outlined possible reasons for a low quantity of printed T-shirts. These included misjudged customer demand, store sale, stolen stock, back order from the supplier and discontinued item.

Question 22

In better responses, candidates described a minimum of two appropriate actions that the sales person should take to appropriately deal with the abusive customer. These actions included apologising for the inconvenience, demonstrating active listening and empathy, and offering a refund or exchange. In these responses, candidates referred to the scenario.

Section III

Question 23

In better responses, candidates provided a range of strategies that managed workloads and related them to maintaining good customer service. These strategies included time management, decision-making, contingency planning, effective communication and frequent breaks during working shifts. In better responses, candidates showed the cause and effect relationship between management strategies and customer service. This information was communicated effectively by using appropriate retail examples and integrating correct retail industry terminology in a logical and cohesive response.

Section IV

Question 24 – General Selling

(a) In better responses, candidates clearly distinguished between features and benefits of products and used appropriate retail examples.

(b) In better responses, candidates explained in detail how knowledge of product features and benefits could be clearly communicated to customers. In these responses, candidates used examples to demonstrate a thorough understanding of a range of both verbal (including questioning to gain understanding of customer needs) and non-verbal communication techniques (including demonstrating the use of products to increase customer satisfaction). In these responses, candidates used appropriate retail examples and integrated current industry terminology in a well-reasoned and cohesive response.

Question 25 – General Food Selling

(a) In better responses, candidates clearly distinguished between food spoilage and contamination and used appropriate retail examples.

(b) In better responses, candidates demonstrated a thorough understanding of, and explained in detail, a range of corrective actions that can be taken to minimise food safety risks. Examples of corrective actions included handling and storage techniques to reduce wastage, maintaining food at the correct temperature to reduce health risks to customers, ensuring clean and sanitary workplaces to improve customer satisfaction. In these responses, candidates used appropriate retail examples and integrated current industry terminology in a well-reasoned and cohesive response.

Question 26 – Wholesale

(a) In better responses, candidates clearly identified distinguishing features of the wholesale industry and used appropriate retail examples.

(b) In better responses, candidates explained how current issues have led to changes in the wholesale industry, such as decline in work opportunities from technology, short lead-time pressures and larger retailers having their own links to manufacturers and farms. In these responses, candidates used appropriate retail examples and integrated current industry terminology in a well-reasoned and cohesive response.