

January 2016

Examiners' Report

NEBOSH International Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety (Unit C)



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NEBOSH INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

UNIT IC: INTERNATIONAL WORKPLACE AND WORK EQUIPMENT SAFETY

JANUARY 2016



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Introduction

NEBOSH (The National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health) was formed in 1979 as an independent examining board and awarding body with charitable status. We offer a comprehensive range of globally-recognised, vocationally-related qualifications designed to meet the health, safety, environmental and risk management needs of all places of work in both the private and public sectors.

Courses leading to NEBOSH qualifications attract around 50,000 candidates annually and are offered by over 600 course providers, with examinations taken in over 120 countries around the world. Our qualifications are recognised by the relevant professional membership bodies including the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management (IIRSM).

NEBOSH is an awarding body that applies best practice setting, assessment and marking and applies to Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) regulatory requirements.

This report provides guidance for candidates which it is hoped will be useful to candidates and tutors in preparation for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content and the application of assessment criteria.

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General comments

Many candidates are well prepared for this unit assessment and provide comprehensive and relevant answers in response to the demands of the question paper. This includes the ability to demonstrate understanding of knowledge by applying it to workplace situations.

There are other candidates, however, who appear to be unprepared for the unit assessment and who show both a lack of knowledge of the syllabus content and a lack of understanding of how key concepts should be applied to workplace situations, which is an essential requirement at Diploma level.

This report has been prepared to provide feedback on the standard date examination sitting in January 2016.

Feedback is presented in these key areas; examination technique, command words and learning outcomes and is designed to assist candidates and course providers prepare for future assessments in this unit.

Candidates and course providers will also benefit from use of the 'Guide to the NEBOSH International Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety' which is available via the NEBOSH website. In particular, the guide sets out in detail the syllabus content for Unit IC and tutor reference documents for each Element.

Additional guidance on command words is provided in 'Guidance on command words used in learning outcomes and question papers' which is also available via the NEBOSH website.

Candidates and course providers should also make reference to the Unit IC 'Example question paper and Examiners' feedback on expected answers' which provides example questions and details Examiners' expectations and typical areas of underperformance.

Unit IC

International workplace and work equipment safety

Candidate performance

This report covers the examination sitting in January 2016.

Learning outcomes

Question 1

11.1 Outline the principles of operation of liquefied gas storage; refrigeration systems; and heating systems

Learning outcome 11.1 is broad in its requirements. However, there are two specific demands within the supporting text concerning the hazards of steam and the mechanism of a steam explosion. Candidates need to be able to outline the hazards that steam poses in industrial processes. This not only includes the thermal comfort issues but also gas under pressure, the potential for noise and the problems associated with steam hammer.

Candidates are also expected to be able to understand the mechanism of a steam explosion. The syllabus identifies the Corus Blast Furnace accident in Port Talbot in 2001. It would have been a distinct advantage for candidates to have read about this incident, or a similar one, in order to have correctly answered the question.

It was evident that there was a lack of sufficient background reading on this subject. This would have given candidates an insight into the practical issues surrounding steam explosions, such as having sufficient cooling water available; having adequate means of leak detection; and having recovery plans following abnormal plant conditions.

Most candidates found this area of the syllabus extremely challenging, with many not attempting the question at all. A major pitfall was that candidates answered the question that they would have *liked* to have been asked, or that they had a prepared answer for. Quite a number of candidates provided answers to a previous question concerning the inadvertent closure of connecting valves to sight glasses on a package(d) boiler. While the answers were correct in their own way, they were not worthy of marks.

Candidates appear not to be prepared for an element 11 question. This confirms the comments given in the July 2015 Examiners' Report concerning Q3 on that paper.

Question 2

6.2 Describe, with examples, the principal generic mechanical and non-mechanical hazards of general workplace machinery

6.3 Describe protective devices found on general workplace machinery

6.4 Explain the principles of control associated with the maintenance of general workplace machinery

Within the general category of work equipment, candidates need to be able to identify the generic hazards presented by a range of work equipment, including bench-mounted saws. Circular saws, and by implication bench-mounted saws, are specifically listed in learning outcome 6.2.

Overall, the Examiners are of the view that there was a high degree of rote learning associated with this question. For many candidates, this was their highest scoring question on Section A.

Candidates provided good answers on these learning outcomes and there were no identifiable areas of weakness or common pitfalls. One minor exception was that few candidates identified the need for a braking system as a means of safeguarding bench-mounted saws.

This question assessed three specific learning outcomes within element 6 and candidates seemed to be well prepared for this area of the syllabus.

Question 3

2.2 Outline the behaviour of structural materials, buildings and build contents in a fire

2.3 Outline the main principles and practices of fire and explosion prevention and protection

This question assessed two specific learning outcomes within element 2. Both required an understanding of the principles of fire and explosion and its effects on structural materials. This appears to be a popular area for candidates and may reflect the high proportion of candidates from the oil and gas industry entering this award.

There were no evident areas of weakness and candidates seemed to be well prepared for this area of the syllabus. Many candidates gave long explanations for part (b) that only required an 'identify'. This was a classic example of where candidates do not read and follow the question's command word. However, as with Question 2 above, Examiners were of the view that there was a high degree of rote learning.

Question 4

1.3 Explain the assessment of risk and safe working practices associated with work in confined spaces

Many candidates provided plausible answers to this question. Although candidates may not be familiar with the scenario, they need to be able to apply general principles to specific situations. Confined spaces can occur in many workplace settings not just the conventional entry into sewers and tanks. Candidates were asked to consider a different environment, that of a roof space. Many potential issues are present including overheating, falls from height and how to extract a worker in an emergency (limited size of access way), a single means of access and so on.

Candidates did not read the question and take the time to fully understand the scenario presented to them and in consequence they sometimes provided irrelevant or unrelated answers. Many candidates were unable to define what constituted a confined space.

When the question asks for the 'factors to be considered' in assessing the risks it is **not** looking for candidates to go straight into listing all the possible control measures. Within the risk assessment process, candidates are attempting to miss out essential steps and going straight to 'the answer'.

The syllabus is very clear that '*candidates should be able to demonstrate understanding of the content through application of knowledge to **familiar and unfamiliar** situations*'. These words preface each and every set of learning outcomes in the syllabus. Course providers and candidates need to be reminded of this and they should expect to face (as in the past) scenario-based questions, that reflect real-life working practices.

Question 5

- 5.2 Explain how risks to health and safety arising from the use of work equipment are controlled**
- 5.4 Explain the role of competence, training, information and supervision in the control of risks arising from the installation, operation, maintenance and use of work equipment**
- 7.1 Describe the main hazards and control measures associated with commonly encountered mobile work equipment**

This question was scenario-based and required candidates to demonstrate understanding across a number of learning outcomes relating to work equipment and to mobile work equipment especially.

Candidates need to be able to explain the full range of hazards associated with mobile work equipment. Learning outcome 7.1 specifically refers to the hazards associated with power take offs (PTOs). Many works vehicles use PTOs to power ancillary equipment such as pumps and generators. PTOs are therefore a commonly encountered and *practical* aspect of mobile work equipment (along with drive shafts and moving parts). Candidates need to be familiar with them.

The main area of weakness was that candidates were not prepared for questions based on practical scenarios covering a number of learning outcomes. In Unit C, candidates are expected to show an understanding of health and safety issues across a number of manufacturing processes and industrial settings. Background reading, case studies and personal research all help to better equip candidates to be able to tackle these demands.

There were two main pitfalls. Firstly, candidates confused belt drives with PTOs. Secondly, candidates had a limited understanding of 'competence'. There are many instances where the employer has to make a judgement on a worker's competence. Candidates seemed unable to explain what constitutes competence, except for saying that a worker needs to attend a course, or have a relevant certificate.

Course providers and candidates need to note that the syllabus refers to 'commonly encountered' mobile work equipment and that the requirement is a broad one. Questions concerning lift trucks, agricultural tractors and works' vehicles (such as shovel loaders, aircraft tugs and dumper trucks) are all examinable.

Few candidates were able to explain competence requirements for mobile work equipment. This is an area that might have been considered, incorrectly, as a Unit A topic and as a result may have been overlooked by both candidates and course providers.

Question 6

4.1 Outline the main physical and chemical characteristics of industrial chemical processes

Most candidates had a clear understanding of batch manufacturing processes involving chemicals. Some of the answers showed a level of detail that clearly indicated that the candidate had some first-hand, practical knowledge of the subject. Better answers were evident when candidates were asked to outline methods for preventing and mitigating runaway reactions. Candidates cited the use of neutralisation, inhibitors, and the dumping of reactants, plus the use of high integrity temperature detection and agitation failure alarms.

One of the three parts of this question used the command word 'identify'. Many candidates wasted valuable time by providing more fulsome 'outline' answers, when these were not required.

In giving the meaning of 'runaway reaction', the key aspect is its exponential nature. An exothermic reaction on its own does not necessarily lead to a runaway reaction.

An exothermic reaction **can lead** to thermal runaway, which begins when the heat produced by the reaction exceeds the heat removed. The surplus heat raises the temperature of the reaction mass, which causes the rate of reaction to increase.

Thermal runaway can occur because, as the temperature increases, the rate at which heat is removed increases linearly but the rate at which heat is produced increases **exponentially**.¹

Generally, candidates provided good answers to this question and, other than the exponential nature of runaway reactions, there were no identifiable areas of weakness or common pitfalls.

Question 7

4.2 Outline the main principles of the safe storage, handling and transport of dangerous substances

This question concerned the storage of dangerous substances and how bulk, palletised containers of flammable materials are stored and used. Learning outcome 4.2 is wide-ranging and concerns '*storage methods and quantities – bulk, intermediate, drum storage, specific locations*'. While not explicitly stated in the question, the part of the learning outcome that was being assessed in this case was that of intermediate storage (on pallets). For clarity, intermediate storage also includes bulk bags known as flexible intermediate bulk storage (FIBCs), commonly known as bulk bags. These are widely used across many industries and typically store one tonne of bulk materials and are within the scope of the syllabus.

Candidates often provided answers to the wrong parts of the question. So, answers concerning *design* issues appeared in response to the parts of the question concerning *use* of the store. Examiners are unable to award marks to answers given in this way and candidates **must** read the question carefully and then correctly answer question in the order that it is asked.

Some candidates over-concentrated on transport systems and forklift trucks, while these were valid points they did not warrant a large number of marks. Candidates did not appreciate that this was a question concerning storage of dangerous goods rather than a workplace transport one. Very few answers related to protection zones and intrinsic safety.

Question 8

6.2 Describe, with examples, the principle generic mechanical and non-mechanical hazards of general workplace machinery

6.3 Describe protective devices found on general workplace machinery

6.6 Explain the key safety characteristics of general workplace machinery control systems

Learning outcome 6.2 lists common machinery hazards that candidates are expected to understand. In addition to simpler machines such as radial drills, guillotines, sanders and lathes, it also lists more complex machinery such as computer numerical control (CNC) machines and robotics. It may be incorrectly thought that these machines are only used in heavy engineering. However, they have applications in many industries. Example of their usage includes engraving, manufacturing of circuit boards and pick-and-place operations in food production and food packaging.

Candidates are expected to know the full range of safeguarding measures available, including interlocked guards, light curtains and pressure mats. Maintenance provisions and the safety requirements for the training of robots are also included.

This was not a popular question. However, those candidates who did answer showed a good knowledge of hazards presented by robots. Very few candidates could outline how the risks of injury (and the introduction of the necessary safeguarding measures) could be minimised.

The feedback from Examiners was that candidates had rote learned the answers to this question. This was an unpopular question with candidates, with modest marks gained by those who did attempt it. The impression gained by Examiners was that candidates were unprepared for this learning outcome. This would suggest that both course providers and candidates are neglecting more complex machinery hazards in learning outcome 6.2 and the relevant aspects of learning outcome 6.6 on machinery control systems.

Question 9

1.5 Explain the hazards, risks and controls when working at heights

1.6 Explain the hazards, risks and controls for lone working

9.3 Explain the hazards associated with working at heights from fixed work or temporary platforms and the necessary precautions and safe working practices

Candidates must be able to apply their knowledge and understanding to practical situations that may touch on a number of syllabus areas. In this case, working at height from a temporary platform and lone working. Unit B has similar, but adjoining, topics concerning psycho-social agents. However, these are concerned with work-related violence and aggression. Learning outcome 1.6 looks at the wider problems facing lone workers, and candidates and course providers are advised not to overlook its requirements.

Many candidates did not fully *describe* the safety precautions as directed by the question's stem. While answers were mostly correct, many lacked a full description. This meant that candidates often did not gain the full marks for what was otherwise a good answer. There were misunderstandings about the use of harnesses and the need to use carabineers to connect the harness to an anchored point on the work platform.

A common mistake was to misread the question. What was asked for was the 'factors' to be considered in developing an emergency plan for a worker, not the controls that would be implemented *after* considering the relevant factors. Candidates tended to list all the control measures they could think of, and consequently did get awarded any marks for what was not relevant to the question.

Course providers and candidates are reminded that aspects of lone working appear on the Unit IC syllabus and are examinable. There are complementary but different syllabus requirements in Unit IB concerning violence and aggression.

Question 10

8.3 Outline the issues relevant to the installation, use, inspection and maintenance of electrical systems

8.4 Outline the main principles for safe working in the vicinity of high voltage systems

This question was based around the scenario of the safe use of electricity on a construction site. The expectation was that candidates could apply their knowledge and understanding of electrical safety to the practical situation of a construction site. The dynamic nature of the work, the use of contractors, damage to cables (whether overhead, underground and surface) and the damage by vehicles and plant are all *factors* that increase the risk of using electricity in this environment. Safe working near high voltage lines is also covered on this part of the syllabus.

Many candidates seemed to be unaware of the practical issues that may arise when using electricity on a construction site. While candidates were aware of the use of 'goal posts' and barriers to prevent contact with high voltage lines, they were unable to talk about issues concerned with the installation of electricity (especially the strength and capability of equipment for the environment). Neither were they able to discuss excess current protection; cutting off supply and isolation; or working space and access.

The most common pitfall was to confuse the answers to the two parts of the question. The first part concerned the factors that increased the risks from using electricity on construction sites and the second concerned control measures to minimise those risks. Marks were unavailable for correct answers albeit to the wrong question.

Course providers and candidates need to be prepared to answer long questions that assess learning outcomes 8.3 and 8.4, which are arguably the more demanding aspects of element 8.

Question 11

3.5 Explain the purpose of, and essential requirements for, emergency evacuation procedures

This question concerned a fire drill exercise at a large multi-storey office premises. Candidates need to be able to explain the purpose of emergency evacuation procedures. These procedures include, but are not limited to, evacuation in the event of a fire. Other emergencies may foreseeably arise. The learning outcome also incorporates the phrase ‘*..and essential requirements for..*’ emergency evacuation procedures. This means that candidates are going to be asked questions around their understanding of why emergency plans are necessary, rather than being asked to detail the contents of an emergency plan.

A common mistake generally with this learning outcome is that candidates wish to provide great detail about the contents of an emergency plan, when they are actually being asked a question around the *necessity* for having such a plan.

It was clear to Examiners that some candidates had rote-learned answers to this question. Examiners draw attention to the comments made above in relation to Q4, that the learning outcomes are prefaced by the requirement that ‘*candidates should be able to demonstrate understanding of the content through application of knowledge to **familiar and unfamiliar** situations*’. Candidates might therefore be asked to consider the fire evacuation arrangements in commonly encountered workplace settings including public buildings, hotels and workers’ hostels.

Examination technique

The following examination techniques are consistently identified as the main areas in need of improvement for candidates:

Candidates misread/misinterpreted the question

Careful and thorough preparation for the examination is vital for candidates. Accredited course providers should assist candidates in setting out and applying sound revision and examination practice and preparation techniques to ensure that they are well prepared for the examination. This includes ensuring that candidates carefully read the question to determine exactly what is being asked and answer accordingly.

Examiners noted that there was evidence of candidates not understanding the question that was asked and therefore providing an answer that was not relevant to the question.

The range of English language skills demonstrated in the examination by candidates varies enormously. Examiners often find themselves faced with scripts where candidates do not appear to have understood the question and struggle to write a coherent answer in English. Candidates for this examination should satisfy the required IELTS Level 7 language requirements. Course providers are reminded that it is incumbent on them to provide appropriate advice and guidance to candidates to help ensure that they stand a reasonable chance of success in the study of the NEBOSH Diploma.

There were numerous examples of quite long, detailed answers that suggest practical experience but do not focus on the question being asked. This may be a result of candidates either not reading the question properly, or because of possible language issues where candidates do not understand what the question is asking.

The examination is assessing candidates on their understanding of 'managing' health and safety and a number of candidates did not seem to grasp this resulting in long, detailed answers on such issues as 'what to look for in an audit' rather than how to prepare for and manage an audit.

Examiners ask questions based on the syllabus. Points, no matter how valid, but unrelated to the question being asked, will not attract any marks. Candidates should note that where there is emphasis in a question (eg by the use of italics) it is to guide candidates towards a particular point. Reading and re-reading the question encompasses taking due note of this emphasis.

Candidates' handwriting was illegible

The examination situation is a stressful time for candidates and while the examination is not a test of the English language or handwriting scripts must be legible for Examiners to mark them fairly. As the examination progresses, candidates can become both mentally and physically tired. In an increasingly electronic age, professional people do not have the same need to write text in longhand. However, to pass this examination it is an essential and necessary part of the preparation to rehearse writing questions in full and in the time allocated.

When practicing examination technique, candidates should hand-write their answers and get feedback from their course providers on legibility (as well as how they performed).

Course providers need to identify those candidates whose handwriting is illegible and provide them with appropriate advice. Examiners cannot award marks for answers that they are unable to read.

Candidates unnecessarily wrote the question down

There are 15 minutes to answer a 10-mark question in Section A and 30 minutes available to answer a 20-mark question in Section B of the question paper. This time will be required for reading, re-reading and understanding the question, developing an answer plan on the answer booklet and finally committing the answer to the answer booklet. The efficient use of time is essential in order to answer the 9 questions within the 3 hours available. The majority of Examiners reported that candidates felt it necessary to write the question out in full, before providing the associated answer, and this limits the time available. Course providers should remind candidates that it is not necessary to include a question with their answer.

Good examination technique is followed where the candidate frames the answer in the context of the question, rather than rewriting the whole of the question. As with the other examination technique points above, good examination technique is developed through practice and good preparation.

Candidates repeated the same point but in different ways

In some cases candidates tended to make the same point more than once, eg training. Once a valid point has been made and the mark awarded Examiners will not be able to award the mark again. Unless otherwise stated, most questions require candidates to respond with a wide range of issues to gain high marks. Consequently candidates should take care when using terms that contain numerous points that should be made separately.

Accredited course providers should brief candidates on examination technique by way of understanding what points are mark worthy in an answer and those that are not.

Candidates did not respond effectively to the command word

A key indicator in an examination question will be the command word, which is always given in **bold** typeface. The command word will indicate the depth of answer that is expected by the candidate.

Generally, there has been an improvement in response to command words, but a number of candidates continue to produce answers that are little more than a list even when the command word requires a more detailed level of response, such as 'outline' or 'explain'. This is specifically addressed in the following section dealing with command words, most commonly failure to provide sufficient content to constitute an 'outline' was noted. Failure to respond to the relevant command word in context was also a frequent problem hence information inappropriate to the question was often given.

Course exercises should guide candidates to assessing the relevant points in any given scenario such that they are able to apply the relevant syllabus elements within the command word remit.

Candidates provided rote-learned responses that did not fit the question

Examiners report a high incidence of candidates writing down answers they have memorised from previous Examiners' Reports. These answers often relate to a similar, but different question, to which the memorised answer is not wholly applicable. For example, it may require a different aspect of the topic or relate to a different scenario.

Candidates are expected to apply their knowledge and understanding to the actual question given, not the question they think they see. This is why it is extremely important that candidates understand and are able to apply their knowledge, and not just memorise. Course providers should help candidates apply their knowledge to a range of different scenarios to aid understanding of the topic.

Candidates did not allocate enough time to the question

Some candidates were unable to give answers of sufficient depth to warrant good marks and sometimes spent more time on questions carrying fewer marks than was warranted by the command word.

Candidates need to take note of the fact that answers in Section A are worth 10 marks and those in Section B are worth 20 marks. The Examiners' expectation is that more detailed answers are required in Section B. Some candidates spend a disproportionate amount of time in writing long answers to Section A questions at the expense of time spent on the more in-depth answers demanded in Section B. Proper preparation and 'mock' examinations can help to correct this.

Accredited course providers should ensure that candidates are given adequate opportunity to develop examination skills to ensure that answers are provided to the depth and breadth required.

Structured Answers

It is important for candidates to structure their answers as this helps cover all the requirements of the question without losing focus. It is good examination technique to look for the principles or the concepts that underpin the topic and to use those as a basis for delivering a structured answer.

Candidates answered by posing a question

Candidates need to resist the temptation to present their answers as merely a series of questions. 'Outline' requires candidates *'To indicate the principal features or different parts of'* and this is not done through posing questions to the Examiners.

Command words

Please note that the examples used here are for the purpose of explanation only.

The following command words are listed in the order identified as being the most challenging for candidates:

Outline

Outline: To indicate the principal features or different parts of.

Most candidates are familiar with the requirements of 'outline'. However, a number of candidates expect that by listing or giving bullet points that will be sufficient. At this level of qualification candidates are expected to be able to construct sentences around their answers.

An 'outline' question requires candidates to give the main issue and then provide the key features in the context of the question. Where a question that requires candidates to '**outline** the issues to be addressed in the development of an audit system' the response should provide adequate context to the issues in order to gain the marks. An answer that merely includes issues such as 'scope, training, commitment, etc' will not gain good marks since while the issues are relevant there is no context to the issues in relation to the question asked.

Candidates should provide context to the point being made to demonstrate understanding of the subject.

As required by a Diploma level qualification candidates should be able to demonstrate a detailed understanding of the subject matter and therefore be able to summarise and contextualise technical points in the field of health and safety. Those candidates who did provide good outlines to questions demonstrated understanding of the topic without going into too much detail.

If asked to '**outline** the purpose of local exhaust ventilation' in a given scenario, an answer such as 'contaminant removal, exposure limits' would be insufficient as this represents a listed answer. However, removal of contaminant at source (as far as possible) and ensuring exposure limits are not exceeded would higher gain marks.

If asked to '**outline** how health risks from exposure to lead should be managed...' in a given scenario, an answer such as medical tests, PPE, RPE would be insufficient as this represents a listed answer. However, surveillance tests for lead in blood/urine, the use of PPE such as overalls, the use of RPE such as respirator with appropriate particulate/fume filters would gain marks.

Explain

Explain: To provide an understanding. To make an idea or relationship clear.

Many candidates are still not properly prepared for this examination. A list of points (no matter how relevant) will not satisfy Examiners when the command word is 'explain'. So for example, where candidates were asked to explain the circumstances where heat and smoke detectors would be inappropriate, Examiners were looking for candidates to explain that heat detectors would be inappropriate in environments where temperatures fluctuate suddenly during normal work activities. Just saying 'workshops', for example, is not enough to provide an answer to an 'explain' question.

Commonly, candidates do not provide adequate detail in relation to this command word, eg '**explain** limitations of relying on accident numbers only as a measure of health and safety performance'. An appropriate response would provide the reader with reasons why relying solely on accident numbers would not provide a comprehensive view of the organisational performance in health and safety, eg accident numbers do not indicate incidence of ill-health and accident data may go up following initiatives following underreporting, etc.

Candidates are generally unable to provide clear answers where this command word is used but that may be due to lack of knowledge rather than not understanding what is required, since an explanation requires the candidate to provide reasoning for their answer. For example, when a question specifies 'explain' the candidate is required to provide an understanding or make clear an idea or relationship. For example '**explain** how malaria is transmitted to humans'. If a candidate responded with *mosquito bites humans* this would be insufficient to merit full marks as this does not provide a deep enough understanding or relationship from the specified command word or the context in which the question is asked. However, a candidate would get full marks if they elaborated on this stating that the disease originates with the plasmodium parasite that is then transmitted to humans via a bite from a feeding female mosquito that carries it; the parasite then transferring to the human blood stream, travelling to the liver.

For example, when a question specifies 'explain' the candidate is required to provide an understanding or make clear an idea or relationship. For example '**explain** how the wet bulb globe temperature (WBGT) equation is used to assess heat stress'. If a candidate responded with calculate WBGT and compare with standards this would be insufficient to merit full marks as this does not provide a deep enough understanding or relationship from the specified command word or the context in which the question is asked. However, if a candidate responded with stating the WBGT equation (outside vs inside), the need to compare the calculated result with the international standard values, the need to take account of factors such as metabolic rate (as tabulated in the standard), the assumptions of the typical fit, healthy worker and normal level of clothing etc, this would merit the awarding of marks.

Describe

'Describe. To give a detailed written account of the distinctive features of a topic. The account should be factual without any attempt to explain.'

Candidates are required to provide a word picture in response to this command word and therefore the candidate needs to have a good understanding of the topic of the question in the examination in order to gain good marks. Typically, a limited response to this command word will be an inadequate amount of detail in the answer.

For example, when asked to describe the contents of a safety policy candidates should provide the Examiner with relevant information about the contents of the policy, eg 'the policy should contain details of the organisational commitment to health and safety'. This would be supported with specific targets and commitment resource to ensuring compliance as a minimum but developing the health and wellbeing of the employees, etc'. An answer that goes no further than listing the topics of to be covered in the policy would not attract good marks in the examination.

In the examination, lists and single word answers will rarely satisfy the requirement of the Examiners in terms of answering the question at this level. It is noticeable that the well prepared candidate has less trouble deciphering command words and tends to gain good marks whereas those candidates who use single word answers will tend not to have the knowledge to write anything further in the context that is required.

Give

Give: Only a short answer is required, not an explanation or a description.

'Give' is normally used in conjunction with a further requirement, such as '**give** the meaning of' or '**give** an example in **EACH** case'.

In some circumstances candidates may spend too much time giving unrequired detail in response to this command word. It is often used in conjunction with the meaning of a phrase or statement and candidates can overelaborate the required answer. Time management is important in the examination and candidates should ensure that they respond with appropriate brevity where the command word and available marks suggest that is all that is required.

When asked to '**give** the meaning of motivation', it would appropriate to say that 'motivation is the driving force that leads an individual to behave in a certain way'. It would not be appropriate to discuss in detail different motivational theories.

On the whole most candidates respond well to this command word, often by offering a definition. There is evidence where candidates go into too much detail that left those candidates writing large amounts of text for very few marks.

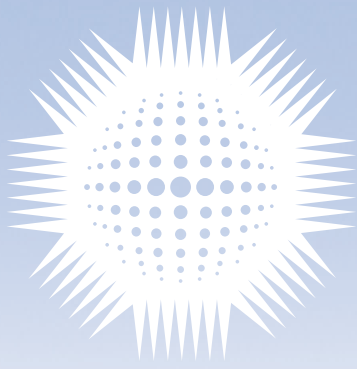
Identify

Identify: To give a reference to an item, which could be its name or title.

As with 'give' above it is not uncommon for candidates to overelaborate their answers in response to this command word. It is adequate for a candidate to provide the key point to the Examiner without further developing the point with supporting theory or examples unless they are specifically asked for.

When providing a response to 'identify' the mental selection and naming of an answer that relates to the question should be sufficient. In most cases, one or two words would be sufficient to be awarded corresponding marks. Any further detail would not be required and impacts negatively on the time limit for completing the examination. For example, if the question was '**identify** possible effects on the body when someone is exposed to lead' suitable responses would include developmental effects in unborn babies, anaemia, nausea/vomiting in order to be awarded a mark.

For additional guidance, please see NEBOSH's '*Guidance on command words used in learning outcomes and question papers*' document, which is available on our website: www.nebosh.org.uk/students/default.asp?cref=1345&ct=2.



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