
Examiners' Report

NEBOSH INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN CONSTRUCTION HEALTH AND SAFETY



UNIT ICC1: MANAGING AND CONTROLLING HAZARDS IN INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

SEPTEMBER 2017

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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) Accreditation regulatory requirements.

This report provides guidance for candidates and course providers for use 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.

This report has been prepared to provide feedback on standard date ICC1 examination sat in September 2017.

Feedback is presented in these key areas: responses to questions, examination technique and command words 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 Certificate in Construction Health and Safety' which is available via the NEBOSH website. In particular, the guide sets out in detail the syllabus content for ICC1 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 ICC1 'Example question paper and Examiners' feedback on expected answers' which provides example questions and details Examiners' expectations and typical areas of underperformance.

Unit ICC1

Managing and controlling hazards in international construction activities

- Question 1** Workers who are required to work with vibrating hand-held tools for long periods during a work shift have reported tingling and numbness in their fingers. Further analysis has indicated that the workers could be suffering from hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS).
- (a) **Identify** further ill-health effects associated with HAVS. (4)
- (b) **Outline** what to consider when assessing the risk of HAVS. (8)
- (c) **Outline** precautions that could be taken in order to minimise the risk to the workers. (8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 9.2: Outline the health effects associated with exposure to vibration and appropriate control measures.

Part (a) of the question was answered reasonably well with candidates able to identify a number of ill-health effects associated with hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS). Although the question specifically required effects relative to hands and arms, some candidates gave effects on other parts of the body such as legs, feet and backs which were not worthy of marks. Some candidates used general terms such as 'gangrene', 'bad backs' or 'WRULDs' which were somewhat vague without context.

Part (b) appeared to challenge candidates' knowledge of this topic. Few candidates correctly outlined issues such as the source of possible vibration with examples of relevant work equipment. A small number of candidates gave one-word answers such as 'frequency' without clarification of whether this was the number of times a worker is exposed, or the frequency of vibration. Some candidates offered explanations of how to assess levels of vibration rather than what to consider. It is advised that course providers prepare candidates by highlighting the requirement to read and re-read the question to ensure that answers are focused on the topic in hand.

In part (c) many candidates offered non-specific issues such as 'eliminate' or 'trigger time' without any viable context or relationship with the topic. Substitution of equipment for those with lower vibration emissions and frequent breaks or job rotation were identified in better answers. The use of single words without the command word requirement to outline will not gain the same marks.

It is apparent that this topic causes some difficulty for candidates. Vibration exposure and ill-health are a serious concern for many employers working in the international construction sector and being able to explain the effects and controls that should be in place to protect workers is fundamental as a competent industry adviser.

Question 2 **Give** reasons why the physical layout of a construction site may lead to collisions between moving vehicles and workers. **(8)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.1: Explain the hazards and control measures for the safe movement of vehicles and plant within a construction environment, including when using public highways as a workplace.

Overall, this question was not answered well. Many candidates concentrated on what should be in place such as 'enforce speed limits' or 'erect signs' when the question required reasons why the layout of a site may lead to vehicle collisions with workers. Candidates may have misread the requirements of the question and gave positive measures to control site traffic. Again, course providers are reminded to advise candidates to read and re-read the question to reduce the possibility of candidates misinterpreting the content required.

Better answers gave a wider diversity of considerations and correctly identified issues such as inadequate width of roadways meaning that vehicle and workers share the same space leading to collisions. Some candidates had difficulty providing this level of detail and provided single word answers.

Question 3 **Outline** control measures that should be considered when cutting paving slabs with a petrol-driven disc cutter. **(8)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 5.2: Outline the hazards and control measures for hand-held tools, both powered and non-powered.

This question appeared to be popular with candidates and was reasonably well answered.

Those candidates who were challenged by this question provided answers that merely listed control measures rather than providing a sufficient outline as required. Course providers are reminded that candidates must be prepared for the examination and are directed to the NEBOSH guidance on command words (see command word section of this report for further information).

There was also reference by candidates to 'suitable' or 'appropriate' PPE. For the candidate to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the topic in hand, it is required that they are able to specify the PPE required by the context of the scenario.

Many candidates concentrated on issues around dust and vibration. They were able to gain marks for control measures associated with these issues but very few candidates mentioned fuel and fuelling issues despite the question clearly signposting that the disc cutter was petrol-driven.

While many candidates gave 'training' as an answer, few were awarded marks for the single word without the required detail. Course providers must remind candidates that there should be discussion on the type of training, who it should be provided to, and why it should be provided. For example, training for workers changing discs to ensure their competence or, training for workers in correct manual handling techniques, or postures to reduce the risk of injury.

Question 4 An initial site assessment should be completed before a construction project begins in order to determine possible hazards that could be present on or near a site.

Outline what should be considered when carrying out an initial site assessment.

(8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 2.1: Explain the factors which should be considered when carrying out an initial assessment of a site to identify significant hazards and their risks.

This was a popular question and was reasonably well answered.

Some candidates did not read the question with enough care and provided detailed accounts of how to carry out a risk assessment rather than an initial site assessment. The learning outcome is very specific with regard to the content of an initial site assessment. Those candidates who had prepared for the examination demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the topic. However, candidates are reminded to read and re-read the question in order to interpret the requirements of the examination.

Question 5 A single-storey, flat roofed building requires repairs to roof lights. The work will need to be carried out from the roof area in order to allow the occupants to remain in the building.

(a) **Outline** situations where falling from height could occur while accessing or working on the roof area.

(3)

(b) **Outline** precautions that should be taken in order to help reduce the risk of falling from height when carrying out the repair work from the roof area.

(5)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 10.1: Explain the hazards and risks of working at height and the general requirements necessary to control them; and 10.2: Explain safe working practices for access equipment and roof work

Part (a) of the question was not answered well. Candidates should have outlined *situations* where falling from height could occur. Suitable answers could have included falling from an exposed edge of a roof or falling through fragile roofing materials. The majority of candidates gave answers around fault conditions such as 'roof edge' or 'no guardrail'. Some answers lacked the detail required by the question and marks were limited.

Part (b) of this question was better answered. Candidates were able to provide a range of solutions to the given issues. However, it should be emphasised that marks cannot be awarded to candidates who do not provide sufficient depth to their answers when a question contains the command word 'outline'. This was a particular problem for those candidates who did not gain half marks.

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- Question 6** (a) **Identify** possible effects of a severe electric shock on the body. (4)
- (b) **Identify** emergency action that should be taken if a person suffers a severe electric shock. (4)
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This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 6.2: Outline the control measures that should be taken when working with electrical systems or using electrical equipment.

This question was answered particularly well and there were no significant problems with candidates' responses to this question.

- Question 7** A multi-storey office block is to be demolished piecemeal using a mechanical excavator.
- Identify** the main hazards with this method of demolition. (8)
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This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 12.1: Identify the main hazards of demolition and deconstruction work.

This question was well answered with the majority of candidates gaining over half marks.

The majority of answers provided general demolition hazards such as falling materials or noise and vibration. Some candidates suggested that falling from height was a hazard for workers on the structure during demolition. The question made reference to piecemeal demolition using a mechanical excavator. Some of the responses would suggest that some candidates were not familiar with the use of an excavator or demolition machine if they presumed that workers would be on the structure during the work.

Demolition machines are now a widely used piece of demolition work equipment because it replaces the need to expose workers to the hazards associated with hand piecemeal demolition. Course providers are reminded to include a diverse range of demolition methods so that candidates are prepared for the examination and the wider world of international construction.

For this sitting it was noted that 'identify' questions were the best performing ones with candidates providing better answers where there was less detail required by the question and were challenged by questions with the command word 'outline'.

- Question 8** **Outline** reasons why a telescopic materials handler may overturn on a construction site. (8)
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This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 4.3: Explain the hazards and control measures to reduce the risk in the use of lifting and moving equipment with specific reference to manual and mechanically operated load moving equipment.

Candidates were able to offer a number of reasons for a vehicle overturning on a construction site such as cornering at excessive speed, or the vehicle striking and colliding with structures or roadside features. Few candidates outlined issues specifically related to telescopic handlers, for example, travelling across site with the load or boom extended raising the centre of gravity of the vehicle or, extending the boom arm increasing the radius of the load and overloading the vehicle.

Once again, answers to questions that include the command word 'outline' do not contain sufficient depth. While a candidate has knowledge and understanding in the subject of this question, brief reference to tyre pressures or gradients would fall short of the requirements of the command word and limit the marks awarded.

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| Question 9 | (a) Outline precautions for confined space working. (4) |
| | (b) Outline monitoring arrangements for confined space working. (4) |
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This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 11.4: Outline the control measures for confined space working.

Part (a) of the question was answered reasonably well by most candidates. Those who answered this part well gained most of their marks for the whole question. Most candidates provided a range of technical precautions such as competent persons and carrying out atmospheric testing. Better answers included managerial issues such as risk assessment, permits-to-work and lock out tag out procedures.

As previously stated for question 3, there was reference by candidates to 'suitable' or 'appropriate' PPE. Candidate must be able to demonstrate their knowledge of confined space working and to specify the PPE required, such as breathing apparatus or rescue harnesses.

Part (b) of the question proved to be a challenge for the majority of candidates who gave limited areas for marks to be awarded. Most candidates mentioned atmospheric monitoring, but only better answers gave an outline of when it should be carried out such as before entry, continuously or at prescribed intervals.

Some candidates gave accident statistics, near-miss data, auditing and inspections as monitoring techniques. This response is more likely to be appropriate for the International General Certificate and does not feature in the syllabus for this award. It would appear that candidates were challenged by the need to monitor confined space working and missed a valuable opportunity to gain marks.

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| Question 10 | Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) will be required when removing asbestos. |
| | Outline what an employer should consider when selecting RPE for this task. (8) |
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This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 8.4: Outline control measures that should be used to reduce the risk of ill-health from exposure to hazardous substances; and 8.5: Outline the hazards, risks and controls associated with specific agents

This question proved the most challenging for candidates.

Asbestos has historically been widely used in construction around the world. Some countries have banned the use of the material in new buildings but it is commonly discovered during refurbishment, maintenance and demolitions. It is important for all construction workers to be aware of the hazards associated with the material and relevant control measures. Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) is a key measure to reduce the risk of exposure.

Most answers were limited and the question was not well answered. Most candidates provided answers relating to how the RPE fitted individuals and training in its use. However, candidates demonstrated a lack of preparedness for this type of question. With setting the question around exposure to asbestos, candidates could have discussed approval of the RPE by local enforcers to a national standard to determine levels of protection afforded by the equipment to maintain exposure below national or local limits.

It is apparent that candidates were challenged by the technical aspects of selecting RPE for use with a specific agent. However, a general appreciation of the issues around selection would have been sufficient for candidates to apply their knowledge to the question and provide a satisfactory answer. Course providers must ensure that candidates are given sufficient support to prepare them for applying their knowledge to the diverse range of issues required by the syllabus learning outcomes and provide them with the confidence to answer these questions.

Once again, there was a lack of detail in answers that did not satisfy the command word 'outline'.

Question 11 **Outline** what should be considered when determining the adequacy of an escape route. **(8)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 7.5: Outline the requirements for an adequate and properly maintained means of escape in a construction workplace

Most candidates were able to discuss issues of adequate width of escape route in relation to the amount of workers who would be required to evacuate. Another popular issue was keeping the escape route as short as possible.

Marks could have also been awarded for discussion of protection, maintenance and housekeeping of escape routes, ensuring they are free from obstructions that may delay evacuation.

Some candidates had difficulty distinguishing between a means of escape and a fire precaution. There were a number of offerings that were not appropriate such as siting and location of fire extinguishers, appointment of Fire Marshalls and Automatic Fire Detection.

Some candidates only offered a small amount of points for consideration or bullet pointed lists.

Examination technique

The following issues are consistently identified as the main areas in need of improvement for candidates taking Certificate level qualifications:

Candidates misread/misinterpreted the question

Candidates misreading or misinterpreting the question is by far the most common cause of candidates not gaining the maximum marks available.

NEBOSH questions are systematically and carefully prepared and are subject to a number of checks and balances prior to being authorised for use in question papers. These checks include ensuring that questions set for the Certificate level qualifications relate directly to the learning outcomes contained within the associated syllabus guides. The learning outcomes require candidates to be sufficiently prepared to provide the relevant depth of answer across a broad range of subject areas. For example, a candidate could be asked about the causes of stress, or could be asked about the effects of stress. A question could require a response relating to the principles of fire initiation, or a question could require a response relating to the spread of fire. Therefore, a candidate should focus not only on the general topic area (eg stress, fire) but also the specific aspect of that subject to which the question relates.

Candidates must also pay attention to the command word. For example, a question could ask candidates to '**identify** the hazards associated with demolition work', or a question from the same element could ask candidates to '**outline** the control measures required during demolition work'. Candidates appear to focus solely on the object of the question (demolition) and do not pay sufficient attention to the subject (hazards or control measures in the examples given) or the command word ('identify' or 'outline' in the examples given). There is often some confusion between hazard and risk. If a question requires an outline of hazards for a given situation, candidates must be careful not to provide risks, or even in some circumstances precautions, as they will not be able to attract marks.

Examiners suggest that while many candidates do begin their answer satisfactorily and perhaps gain one or two marks, they then lose sight of the question and include irrelevant information. Although further points included in an answer can relate to the general subject area, these points are not focused on the specific learning outcome and marks cannot be awarded. However, some candidates appear to misread or misinterpret several questions. This situation is more likely due to candidates preparing for the examination with a number of memorised answers obtained through rote-learning, that again can provide answers that are loosely associated with the subject matter but do not provide answers specific to the question. Such an approach is clearly evident to an Examiner and demonstrates little understanding of the subject matter and marks are not awarded.

Candidates are advised to allow sufficient time to read and re-read the question in order to determine the key requirements prior to committing their answer to paper. Preparing a time plan before the examination will indicate how many minutes are available for each question and then part of this time allocation can be given to reading the question. Underlining or highlighting key words can assist in keeping focused on the salient points and simple mind maps or answer plans can also be useful. Maps and plans should be kept simple so as not to use up too much examination time.

Candidates did not respond effectively to the command word

A key indicator a 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 and relates to the amount of detail that should be included in each point of the answer.

The learning outcomes in each element of all syllabus guides include the relevant command word that dictates the level of detail that should be covered in a course of study and the depth of answer that a candidate would be expected to provide in an answer to an examination question.

Examiners report that candidates continue to incorrectly observe the command words and therefore compromise their ability to gain the marks available. The majority of cases where command words are not observed relate to insufficient detail being given by a candidate in their examination answer. A significant number of candidates, irrespective of the command word given in the question, provide all answers in the form of a brief list of one or two words. This would normally not be sufficient to gain marks where the command word given was 'outline', 'explain' or 'describe', all of which require answers of more than one or two words.

Some candidates do provide too much information, which would not be required where a command word limits the expected answer to 'give' or 'identify'. Candidates would not be penalised for providing excessive detail but this would not be an efficient use of the time allocated.

Course providers should ensure that learning materials complement the command words in the syllabus guide and the NEBOSH guidance on command words and that sufficient time is given to advising candidates on suitable examination technique during a course of study.

Candidates unnecessarily wrote the question down

Developing a time plan is a key element in preparing for an examination. Advice included on Certificate question papers suggests that 30 minutes should be allocated for the answer to the long 20-mark question, and 90 minutes should be allocated to the answers for the remaining ten, 8-mark short questions. Therefore there are around 9 minutes available to answer an 8-mark question. This time will be required for reading the question properly at least twice, developing an answer plan, and then committing the answer to paper while regularly referring back to the question in order to maintain focus. Therefore any inefficient use of this time should be avoided.

The efficient use of this time is essential in order to ensure that all questions can be answered within the 2 hours available. Many candidates feel it necessary to write out the question, in full, prior to providing their answer and although this practice will not lose marks it will lose valuable time. A significant number of candidates do not answer all of the questions in the time permitted and do not complete the question paper, some of whom obviously run out of time.

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

It is clear that there are a significant number of candidates who seem to recite answers in the examination that have been rote-learned in advance and do not answer the question.

While knowledge of material forms a part of the study for a Certificate-level qualification, a key aspect being assessed is a candidate's **understanding** of the subject and reciting a pre-prepared and memorised answer will not show a candidate's understanding. In fact, if a candidate gives a memorised answer to a question that may look similar, but actually is asking for a different aspect of a topic in the syllabus, it shows a lack of understanding of the subject and will inevitably result in low marks being awarded for that answer.

Candidates repeated the same points but in different ways / Candidates provided the same answer to different questions

There are instances where candidates repeat very similar points in their answers, sometimes a number of times. This is easily done in the stressful environment of the examination. However, once a point has been successfully made and a mark awarded for it, that mark cannot be awarded again for similar points made later in the answer.

Candidates are advised to practise examination technique in their preparations to avoid this kind of pitfall. Writing an answer plan where points can be ticked off when made, or structuring an answer so that each point made is clearly shown, for example by underlining key points, can be of great use. This technique aids candidates and makes it much clearer in the stress of the examination for candidates to see which points have been made and reduce the chances of the same point being made several times.

Candidates did not answer all of the questions

It has been noted that a number of candidates do not attempt all of the questions and of course where a candidate does not provide an answer to a question, no marks can be awarded. This seriously affects the potential marks available and the possibility of achieving a pass. Course providers must emphasise the importance of attempting all questions in order to maximise the opportunity to attract marks.

There can be several reasons for this issue: running out of the allocated time for the examination, not knowing the answer to the question, or forgetting to answer a question.

Questions can be answered in any order and answers can be written in any order in the answer book provided. Candidates are advised to clearly keep track of questions they have attempted, such as

marking them on the question paper that would minimise the risk of inadvertently missing a question to answer.

If the subject of the question is unfamiliar or the answer is not known, then it will be challenging to provide an answer. This can result from rote-learning and preparing for an examination with a number of memorised answers, or simply not being adequately prepared for the examination across the breadth of the syllabus. There is always the risk of a candidate 'going blank' in an examination situation, in which case candidates should be prepared with some techniques to help. Rather than trying to remember what was taught or what has been read, ask yourself 'what would I do, in this situation?'. Reference to personal application or experience is sometimes enough to stimulate an answer that otherwise may have been missed. Alternatively, candidates can go back to first principles and break a question down into elements such as 'people', 'equipment', 'materials' and the 'working environment'. Approaching a question in small sections can minimise the risk of being overwhelmed by it as a whole.

Running out of time can be avoided by having an examination time plan and working to it. The question paper advises that you should spend 30 minutes on the long answer (question 1) and 90 minutes on the remaining ten short answer questions. This will provide around 9 minutes per short answer, follow the clock and when the time per question has expired, move on. Answering a question partly is better than not answering at all.

Candidates did not allocate enough time to the question / Time management

In a number of cases question 1 is left until last or later in the question paper and does not appear to be answered completely. Other candidates appear to rush the last one or two questions by providing very brief or bullet point answers, even when these questions require an outline. This indicates a lack of time management. It is advised that course providers and candidates spend time developing the skill of writing answers to questions bearing in mind the number of marks and time available. A 20-mark question requires significantly more detail than an 8-mark question.

Candidates might benefit from writing abbreviations to save time and to recognise that there is no need to write out the question at the beginning of their answer. Standard abbreviations such as HSE, RIDDOR, COSHH, PPE and DSE are acceptable.

Candidates' handwriting was illegible

Sometimes Examiners have difficulty in reading the handwriting of some candidates. Although allowances are made for candidates under the pressure of an examination, course providers must remind candidates that their writing needs to be legible or valuable marks may not be picked up during marking.

There is a minimum literacy requirement for candidates on NEBOSH qualifications. As stated in the syllabus guides the standard of English required by candidates studying for Certificate level must be such that they can both understand and articulate the concepts contained in the syllabus.

NEBOSH recommends to accredited course providers that candidates taking this qualification should reach a minimum standard of English equivalent to an International English Language Testing System score of 6.0 or higher in IELTS tests in order to be accepted onto a Certificate level programme.

For further information please see the latest version of the IELTS Handbook or consult the IELTS website: <https://www.ielts.org/about-the-test/test-format>

Candidates wishing to assess their own language expertise may consult the IELTS website for information on taking the test: <https://www.ielts.org>

Course providers are reminded that they must ensure that these standards are satisfied or additional tuition provided to ensure accessible and inclusive lifelong learning.

Command words

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

Outline

The command word 'outline' is by far the most challenging for candidates. Referring to the NEBOSH guidance on command words available on the NEBOSH website, 'outline' means *"To indicate the principal features or different parts of"*.

Many candidates do not give sufficient detail in order to warrant an 'outline' answer. The NEBOSH guidance on command word states that *"an exhaustive description is not required. What is sought is a brief summary of the major aspects of whatever is stated in the question"*.

If the use of the command word in everyday language or conversation is considered it may help the candidate understand what is required. If asked to '**outline** the risks to an operator when manually closing a valve' an answer such as 'cuts, bruises, burns and strains' would be insufficient as this represents a listed answer. However, 'cuts from contact with sharp edges of the hand wheel, bruises from impact with adjacent plant items, burns from contact with adjacent uninsulated pipe work and strains from using excessive force' would be sufficient.

Explain

The command word 'explain' requires the candidate to provide an understanding of the subject of the question and will usually be used in conjunction with 'why' or 'how'. Such as '**explain** how an interlocked guard operates' or '**explain** why a forklift truck may overturn'.

Some candidates approach an 'explain' question the same as an 'outline' and provide a number of individual points rather than providing an explanation as to how something operates or why something occurs. While some candidates do answer such questions sufficiently and satisfactorily, other candidates have difficulty in explaining in a logical sequence and many repeat the same point.

Identify

'Identify' questions require the name or title of an item, such as, '**identify** the effects of electricity on the human body', or '**identify** the features of a vehicle route'. In most cases one or two words will be sufficient and further detail will not be required to gain the marks.

For example, if asked to '**identify** types of equipment found in an office' appropriate answers could be personal computer, printer, telephone, photocopier, etc. There would be no need to embellish those points with a description of the equipment or its function.

However, in contrast to 'outline' answers being too brief, many candidates feel obliged to expand 'identify' answers into too much detail, with the possible perception that more words equals more marks. This is not the case and course providers should use the NEBOSH guidance on command words within their examination preparation sessions in order to prepare candidates for the command words that may arise.

Describe

The command word 'describe' clearly requires a description of something. The NEBOSH guidance on command words says that 'describe' requires a detailed written account of the distinctive features of a topic such that another person would be able to visualise what was being described.

If asked to describe the clock in the examination room, a person would have little difficulty in doing so and would most probably refer to its shape, its size, the colour of the clock and the style of numerals. Answers to such a question would almost certainly not result in general unconnected information about clocks, the history of clocks, or an explanation of why the clock is present in the room. Candidates should consider the general use of the command word when providing examination answers.

Give

'Give' questions require a statement that is relevant to the subject asked for in the question but additional explanation is not required. Often, 'give' questions ask for the meaning of a particular term. While detailed explanation of the application of the term would not be required, a correct knowledge of the term itself is needed in order for the Examiner to award marks.

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.