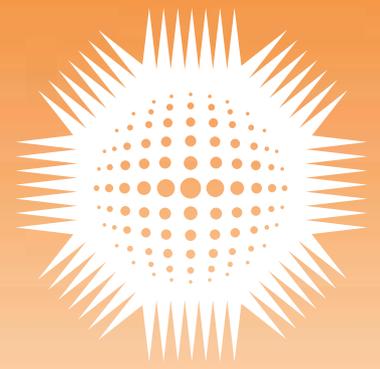


March 2017

Examiners' Report

NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (IGC1)



nebosh



Examiners' Report

UNIT IGC1: MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

MARCH 2017



**For: NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety
NEBOSH International Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management
NEBOSH International Certificate in Construction Health and Safety**

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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 IGC1 examination sat in March 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 General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety' which is available via the NEBOSH website. In particular, the guide sets out in detail the syllabus content for IGC1 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 IGC1 'Example question paper and Examiners' feedback on expected answers' which provides example questions and details Examiners' expectations and typical areas of underperformance.

Unit IGC1

Management of international health and safety

Advice to candidates and course providers

Candidates need to study all of the content of the syllabus for this assessment. The content of each Element and the learning outcomes are set out in the Guide. Candidates need to have the required knowledge and understanding of the learning outcomes.

There are a number of cases in the feedback below where candidates appeared not to have the required knowledge and understanding of the learning outcome that featured in the question. This sometimes led to very limited performance and marks for the question.

Candidates who have the chance to practice questions in examination-like conditions and then receive feedback on their responses are likely to be more able to answer what is required by the questions, what the appropriate breadth of answer needs to be given the marks available, and what depth of answer would meet the requirement of the question (or part of question) command word.

Question 1	(a)	Explain why an organisation should review its health and safety performance.	(8)
	(b)	Identify information that could be considered when reviewing an organisation's health and safety performance.	(8)
	(c)	Identify who should take part in a review of an organisation's health and safety performance.	(4)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 5.2: Explain the purpose of, and procedures for, regular reviews of health and safety performance.

Part (a) of the question had marks available for an explanation of points including: a review will identify points for action; an organisation can compare progress against targets it has set; identify trends in health and safety performance (ie whether performance improving or getting worse); a review can identify new risks or risks that have changed significantly; a review can assist an organisation to respond to change; a review of performance can be a requirement of certification; and carrying out a review is a requirement of OHAS 18001.

Many candidates answered part (a) of the question well. However, there were other candidates who did not perform as strongly sharing some common errors.

The question required an explanation of 'why' performance should be reviewed. However, a number of candidates provided answers that detailed when a review might take place, how a review might be carried out and what might be considered as part of a review of performance. These answers did not explain *why* an organisation should review its performance.

Some candidates provided an answer that detailed why a health and safety policy might be reviewed. Whether this was an error of understanding of the question or some other reason, such as 'question spotting', was not clear.

Part (a) had eight marks available and with 'explain' as the command word required more than just a list of points to gain good marks. Some candidates provided an explanation of valid reasons but explained too few reasons to gain a good mark.

Good answers to part (b) could have included: evaluations of the level of compliance with legal requirements or the level of compliance with the requirements set by the organisation, and issues raised by workers or issues raised by workers' representatives, for example.

Many candidates gained marks by identifying information such as active or reactive data. Some candidates gave only a list of different examples of the same type of information, eg different examples of reactive incident data.

There were eight marks available for part (b) that indicates that a good breadth of points need to be identified, not just one or two. A number of candidates provided too few valid types of information to gain a reasonable mark.

Those candidates who misunderstood or misread part (a) and believed it was related to policy (rather than performance) continued the error into part (b).

Part (c) was generally reasonably answered with some candidates gaining all four marks available. Those workers who might take part in a review needed to be clearly identified in the answer. Some candidates provided answers that were too vague to earn marks, for example just listing 'managers' or 'staff'.

Question 2

Outline what an organisation could do in order to have effective first-aid provision.

(8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.11: Outline the requirements for, and effective provision of, first aid in the workplace.

There were marks available for an outline that included points such as: that the organisation needs to recognise the need for first-aid provision and should include first-aid in their risk assessments; organisations should provide sufficient first aiders to cover all locations where the organisation operates; and first aid provision must have considered the needs of vulnerable persons in the workplace, for example.

A number of candidates provided good answers to this question, outlining an appropriate number of valid points and gaining good marks. However, some candidates provided too few points to gain reasonable marks – where eight marks are available, an outline of only one or two points is not sufficient.

However, some candidates provided a lot of unnecessary detail, for example, details of what items might be included among the contents of a first aid box. Other candidates provided answers that did not answer the question and missed out on all or most of the marks available. Whether that was the result of not reading and understanding the question asked, whether it reflected a lack of knowledge of the question topic, or whether it was due to providing a rote-learned answer to another 'first aid' question, was unclear.

This was an 'outline' question and a number of candidates provided only very brief bullet points or a list so did not gain the marks they could have gained had they followed the requirement of the command word and provided a reasonable outline of points.

-
- Question 3** (a) **Outline** economic reasons for promoting good standards of health and safety at work. (4)
- (b) Other than economic reasons, **outline** barriers to achieving good standards of health and safety at work. (4)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes: 1.1 Outline the scope and nature of occupational health and safety; and 1.2: Explain the moral, social and economic reasons for maintaining and promoting good standards of health and safety in the workplace.

Performance by candidates in part (a) of the question was varied, with some candidates outlining a good number of valid economic reasons to gain a good mark.

Other candidates performed less well, with some misreading or misunderstanding this part of the question and providing an answer that did not address 'economic reasons'. Some candidates went into detail as to 'how' good standards of health and safety might be achieved rather than what was asked in the question. While other candidates went into detail about what might be direct or indirect costs of poor performance. The question required an outline of 'economic' reasons and there were no marks for points relating to social, legal or moral reasons.

There were four marks available for part (a) which indicates that a breadth of points needs to be provided by candidates. Some candidates outlined only one or two economic reasons and so missed some of the marks available.

Performance on part (b) was varied. Some candidates performed well and provided a sufficient outline of barriers to gain reasonable or good marks. Answers could have included the complexity of the organisation; and a lack of management commitment will adversely impact on health and safety standards, for example.

Other candidates performed less strongly, with common errors including missing the words '*Other than* economic' in the question and providing an answer based on possible economic barriers. Many candidates did not follow the requirements of the command word 'outline' and only listed points in their answer, providing a lack of sufficient breadth of answer.

-
- Question 4** **Identify** types of health and safety information that might be displayed on a noticeboard in a workplace. (8)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.4: Explain how health and safety behaviour at work can be improved.

Some candidates performed well on this question, identifying a reasonable number of valid types of information and earning reasonable to good marks. Types of health and safety information could have included a health and safety policy; relevant targets and statistics, for example.

Where candidates performed less well, common errors included providing answers that were not relevant to the question asked, for example writing about the strengths and weaknesses of visual information, about other communication media such as emails, or giving a description of health and safety signage.

Some candidates provided a lot of unnecessary detail of one or two types of information. For example, there was a mark available for saying that a health and safety policy might be displayed but none for details of what might be included in a health and safety policy.

The eight marks available indicated that a number of valid points needed to be identified. However, some candidates only identified one or two points and missed out on marks that were available.

Although the command word 'identify' does not require candidates to provide the depth of answer as other command words, some candidates lost out on marks by providing only lists or very brief bullet points that were not an appropriate response to this command word. Further information on command words is included later in this report along with a link to the '*NEBOSH Guidance on command words*' document on the NEBOSH website.

Question 5	(a) Outline why an organisation should carry out reactive monitoring of its health and safety performance. (4)
	(b) Identify examples of reactive monitoring data for health and safety performance. (4)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 4.1: Outline the principles, purpose and role of active and reactive monitoring.

Some candidates appeared to have misread or misunderstood part (a) and explained the difference between reactive and active monitoring. Many candidates provided an answer that correctly included that organisations could learn from mistakes. Other valid reasons were more rarely given in answers and a number of the available marks were missed by many candidates.

Other candidates gave an answer detailing accident investigation rather than 'reactive monitoring' or detailed what might be monitored (eg accident rates) rather than 'why'. Part (b) asks for examples but part (a) does not.

Again, while the command word 'identify' does not require a depth of answer that would be indicated by other command words like 'explain', it does require more than a list of points.

Part (b) was generally better answered than part (a), with many candidates giving valid examples of reactive monitoring data and gaining reasonable to good marks. Examples of reactive data could have included accidents and incident numbers or rates, for example.

Some candidates only gave examples of active monitoring (eg inspections) rather than examples of reactive monitoring and some candidates provided only one or two examples, limiting marks available. This could be either that candidates' knowledge was limited, or it may be an indication of poor examination technique.

Question 6	Outline what an organisation should consider when assessing the competence of a contractor at the pre-selection stage. (8)
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This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.1: Outline the health and safety roles and responsibilities of employers, directors, managers, supervisors, workers and other relevant parties.

Many candidates were able to provide a valid outline of some of the points that might be considered. These included references, the contractor's experience of similar work, and the contractor's health and safety policy or safety management system, etc.

This question gained one of the highest average marks. However, there was a common weakness related to suitable breadth of answer, with candidates only giving an outline of one or two points rather than a sufficient number to gain a reasonable or good mark. Some candidates only listed points in their answer rather than the 'outline' required.

The question asks about assessment at the pre-selection stage. Some candidates misread or misunderstood the question and gave answers that outlined wider contactor management actions.

-
- Question 7**
- (a) **Identify** types of emergency in the workplace for which persons may need to be evacuated. (4)
- (b) **Outline** why it is important to have emergency procedures in order to evacuate persons from the workplace. (4)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.10: Outline the need for emergency procedures and the arrangements for contacting emergency services.

Part (a) of this question was well answered with most candidates knowing some types of emergency and some candidates being able to identify enough valid types to gain all four of the marks available.

This question gained the highest average mark and, in general, candidates gained most marks from their answer to part (a) rather than part (b).

Some candidates missed out on marks because they provided several examples of the same type of emergency, for example several examples of natural disaster.

Part (b) was less well answered by candidates. This part of the question required candidates to outline reasons why it is important to have emergency procedures. Many candidates provided the reason 'to protect workers' and gained the mark for that point. However, most candidates had difficulty in providing a good breadth of reasons to gain all the four marks available.

Some candidates misread or misunderstood the question and provided answers that detailed the content of emergency procedures, not why it is important to have them. While other candidates did not follow the requirement of the command word in part (b) and did not provide an adequate outline of points.

-
- Question 8** **Outline** an employer's health and safety responsibilities. (8)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 1.3: Explain the role of national governments and international bodies in formulating a framework for the regulation of health and safety.

This question required candidates to outline an employer's responsibilities. Most candidates could outline some employer's responsibilities, and with eight marks available some outlined a good breadth of valid points to gain reasonable to good marks.

As with other questions on this paper where the command word was 'outline', some candidates did not follow the command word's requirements and only listed points, limiting marks that could be awarded.

Some candidates misread or misunderstood the question and included workers' responsibilities in their answer.

Question 9 *Identify the possible content of the 'arrangements' section of a health and safety policy.* (8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 2.3: Describe the key features and appropriate content of an effective health and safety policy.

Good answers included points such as safe systems of work; safety training and welfare arrangements, for example.

The performance of candidates on this question varied considerably. Some candidates identified a good breadth of possible content of the arrangements section and gained reasonable to good marks.

Other candidates did not perform as well. A common error was candidates providing answers that included content of other sections of a health and safety policy, in particular, from the organisation section (eg roles and responsibilities).

Some candidates misread or misunderstood the question completely and wrote about carrying out risk assessments or a hierarchy of control of risk and missed out on all of the marks available.

Question 10 *Outline ways to help ensure the effectiveness of a health and safety committee.* (8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.4: Explain how health and safety behaviour at work can be improved.

This question achieved the lowest average mark, with some candidates not even making an attempt to answer.

Ways to help ensure the effectiveness of a committee could have included a clear meeting agenda; and commitment from managers and from workers, for example.

It appeared that a number of candidates did not read the question carefully to make sure they understood what was required. The question asked candidates to '**Outline ways to help ensure the effectiveness of a health and safety committee**'. However, some candidates wrote about the topics a health and safety committee might consider, or other aspects of health and safety committees but not 'ways to help ensure the effectiveness'.

Once again, despite the command word of 'outline' a number of candidates only provided a list of points. Many candidates only outlined one or two points in their answer. As there were eight marks available for this question candidates needed to outline a breadth of ways to gain reasonable to good marks.

Question 11	(a)	Outline why an organisation would carry out a health and safety inspection.	(3)
	(b)	Outline the benefits of using a checklist to carry out a health and safety inspection.	(5)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 4.1: Outline the principles, purpose and role of active and reactive monitoring.

Generally, candidates' performance on part (a) was limited. Many candidates missed the requirement to outline 'why' and provided answers that related to inspections (eg how an inspection might be carried out, or what an inspection might check) but not why inspections are carried out.

Where candidates did answer the question, an outline of 'to identify unsafe acts/identify unsafe conditions' was the most common correct point in answers.

Some candidates misread or misunderstood part (b) and described what might be included in a checklist or inspection form. Many candidates included that it reduces the chance of important areas being missed, but fewer candidates were able to provide a reasonable breadth of valid points in their answer.

Both parts of this question begin with the command word 'outline' and, as with other questions on this paper there were many candidates who did not follow the requirements of the command word and missed out on available marks as a result.

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: http://www.ielts.org/institutions/test_format_and_results.aspx

Candidates wishing to assess their own language expertise may consult the IELTS website for information on taking the test: <http://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

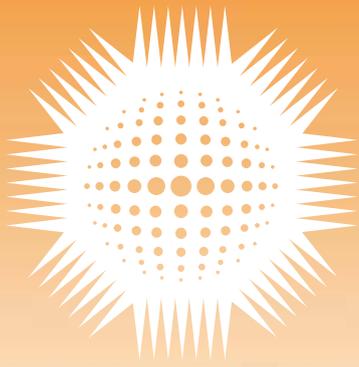
The command word 'describe' clearly requires a description of something. The NEBOSH guidance on command words says that 'describe' requires a detailed written account of the distinctive features of a topic such that another person would be able to visualise what was being described.

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.



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