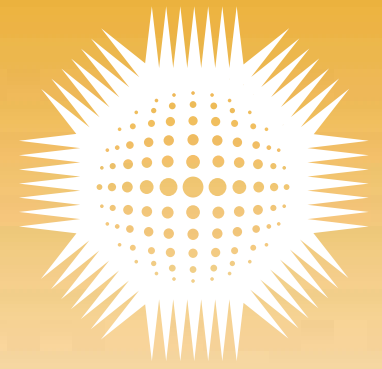


March 2017

Examiners Report

NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (NGC1)



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Examiners' Report

UNIT NGC1: MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

MARCH 2017



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

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
General comments	3
Comments on individual questions	4
Examination technique	10
Command words	13

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 NGC1 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 National 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 NGC1 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 NGC1 'Example question paper and Examiners' feedback on expected answers' which provides example questions and details Examiners' expectations and typical areas of underperformance.

Unit NGC1

Management of health and safety

- Question 1**
- (a) **Outline** the main features of:
- (i) a health and safety inspection of a workplace; (4)
 - (ii) a health and safety audit. (4)
- (b) **Identify** documents that are likely to be examined during a health and safety audit. (8)
- (c) **Outline** how senior managers can assist in the auditing process. (4)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of the following learning outcomes: 5.1: Explain the purpose of, and procedures, for health and safety auditing; 4.1: Outline the principles, purpose and role of active and reactive monitoring; and 3.1: Outline the organisational health and safety roles and responsibilities of employers, directors, managers and supervisors.

For part (a) (i), candidates appeared to be confused between the main features of an inspection and those of an audit. Candidates who gave the features of an audit for (a) (i) and vice versa gained very few marks.

Many candidates did not read the question thoroughly. Some candidates answered by outlining the purpose of an inspection, while others gave the issues that might be checked during an inspection. Consequently, irrelevant information was presented and few marks were awarded.

Some candidates read and understood the question and started well by giving 'looking for hazards', but then went on to outline a variety of types of hazard. This approach wasted examination time and could only be awarded a single mark.

Few candidates appreciated that an inspection was a legal requirement, in spite of it being a requirement of many statutory instruments. Others candidates did not note that an inspection result can provide a measure against standards and almost no answers included that it might look for good points as well as bad, such as unsafe acts.

For part (a) (ii), a number of candidates proposed that an audit is a planned, systematic procedure but did not take this further by outlining that it is a thorough, critical examination of an organisation's health and safety management system that is compared to an agreed standard. Better answers recognised that an audit is conducted by a trained auditor and consists of a series of questions.

Part (b) was well understood by the majority of candidates although some wasted time by not following the command word and provided an outline rather than the identification that was required.

Many candidates gave focused answers, while some simply wrote down every document that they could remember. A small number of candidates missed the point of the question and explained why such documents were important and gained no marks. Few answers included health surveillance records, statutory records, or lists of approved contractors as relevant. A limited number of candidates stated that personal medical records can be accessed, which is incorrect.

Part (c) required an outline of how senior managers can assist in the auditing process. Some candidates did not recognise that the auditing process includes what happens before and after the audit is conducted. As a consequence they did not gain marks for issues such as appointing competent auditors/audit team before the audit, or ensuring that audit findings are discussed at board meetings.

Some candidates did not read the question thoroughly and gave general ways that senior managers might assist in improving safety performance or culture rather than linking their answer specifically to the auditing process.

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| Question 2 | (a) Give the meaning of the term 'risk' AND give a workplace example. (2) |
| | (b) Identify groups who may be a population at risk from a work activity. (3) |
| | (c) Outline why it is important to consider the population at risk when carrying out a risk assessment. (3) |
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.5: Explain the principles and practice of risk assessment.

For part (a) many candidates were able to identify that risk involves the likelihood of potential harm from a hazard being realised. This is written in the syllabus content along with explanation of the meaning of the terms 'hazard' and 'risk assessment'. However, only around half of candidates were able to give an adequate workplace example of risk. Some candidates gave an example of a hazard, say tripping over an electrical cable, without explaining the risk.

A number of candidates had difficulty with part (b) of the question and only considered vulnerable groups rather than groups in the general population a risk.

For part (b) many candidates recognised that the groups within the population are at different risk and therefore might require different control measures to protect them. Few candidates appreciated that it is a legal requirement to consider certain populations, for example new or expectant mothers. Some candidates misinterpreted the question and outlined reasons why 'special case' groups were at risk rather than what the question asked for. Other candidates opted to outline why risk assessments were necessary, or discussed risk assessment methodology and gained few marks.

This sitting highlighted that some candidates do not know the difference between hazard and risk and are unable to give satisfactory workplace examples. As such, course providers should help to ensure that candidates understand this topic more thoroughly.

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| Question 3 | Outline the duties and responsibilities of the principal contractor under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM). (8) |
|-------------------|---|
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 1.6: Outline the legal and organisational health and safety roles and responsibilities of clients and their contractors.

This question revealed a sharp contrast between those candidates who had closely studied the duties under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM) and those who had not.

Rather than outline duties and responsibilities of the CDM regulations some candidates chose to give legal duties from a range of other legal requirements such as the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) and were not awarded marks. Others confused the duties and responsibilities with other duty holders covered by the CDM regulations, for example the client or principal designer, which gained few marks.

Many candidates identified that it is the responsibility of the principal contractor to prepare the construction phase plan but did not recognise the general duties to plan, manage, monitor and co-ordinate the construction phase of a project.

There was much confusion concerning the health and safety file with many candidates stating that the principal contractor is responsible for its preparation. It is the principal designer who must prepare the file, and review, update and revise it as the project progresses. If the principal designer's appointment finishes before the end of the project, the file must be passed to the principal contractor for the remainder of the project.

Some candidates stated that it is the principal contractor's responsibility to notify the HSE of the commencement of a project, which is incorrect.

Of the twenty duties and responsibilities the least popular raised by candidates were to report dangerous conditions and organise co-operation between contractors.

This was an outline question which some candidates ignored and produced lists or bullet-point answers thereby restricting the number of marks that could be awarded.

Question 4 *Staff turnover is one indicator that can be used to assess an organisation's health and safety culture.*

*Other than staff turnover, **identify** indicators that could be used to assess an organisation's health and safety culture.* **(8)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.2: Explain the concept of health and safety culture and its significance in the management of health and safety in an organisation.

The majority of candidates seemed to understand this question but were only able to identify a few indicators. The most common correct issues that were raised were accident and near miss rates, and the level of commitment from top management. The least popular indicators raised were numbers of recorded safe behaviour, and the number of civil claims.

Some candidates seemed to misread the question and identified a range of documents without stating the indicator. For example, complaints records are documents, but it is the number of complaints that is the indicator of the health and safety culture.

Of those candidates who either misunderstood or misread the question some focused on actions that could be taken to improve a culture, while others identified what could cause a negative or a positive culture to develop. Marks could not be awarded where these approaches were taken.

Candidates must ensure they observe the command word used and understand what is required. The NEBOSH guidance on command words document is available from the NEBOSH website (link at end of this report).

Question 5 ***Outline** why an organisation should investigate a workplace accident.* **(8)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 4.2: Explain the purpose of, and procedures for, investigating incidents (accidents, cases of work-related ill-health and other occurrences).

Many candidates interpreted the question successfully but did not raise sufficient relevant issues to gain good marks. Some candidates focused on a narrow range of reasons in depth, for example mentioning accident causes but then proceeding to discuss various aspects of accident causation.

Of those candidates who did not understand or misread the question some outlined the possible causes of various types of incident, while others outlined what might be included in an accident report.

While an accident investigation might reveal certain legal breaches many candidates insisted that it is a legal requirement to investigate often citing HSWA or the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) as justification.

In their answers most candidates outlined 'determining causes' and 'preventing recurrence' and those who gained good marks went on to discuss that an investigation might lead to the identification of weaknesses in health and safety procedures that can be used to make improvements. Very few candidates mentioned that an investigation can be used to determine economic loss.

Question 6 ***Outline** ways in which noticeboards can be used effectively to communicate health and safety information to the workforce.* **(8)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.4: Explain how health and safety behaviour at work can be improved. Specific content refers to effective communication within the organisation.

The majority of candidates realised that if the noticeboard is in a prominent or common area of the workplace and is eye-catching, it would effectively communicate health and safety information to the workforce. Those candidates who also suggested that it should hold relevant, up-to-date information tended to gain good marks. Few considered literacy, language barriers or special needs, all of which would have gained marks.

A high number of candidates appeared to be question-spotting or misread the question and outlined what information should be placed on a noticeboard, or focused on the advantages of noticeboards over other types of communication.

Question 7 (a) ***Identify** the three key sections of a health and safety policy.* **(3)**
(b) ***Outline** ways in which line managers can implement their organisation's health and safety policy.* **(5)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 2.2: Explain the purpose and importance of setting policy for health and safety; and 2.3: Describe the key features and appropriate content of an effective health and safety policy.

Part (a) used the command word 'identify'. However, some candidates proceeded to outline their answer and wasted valuable examination time by providing too much detail. As a result this part of the question was reasonably well answered with the majority of candidates demonstrating a good understanding.

Those candidates who responded well to part (b) appreciated that a line manager who leads by example and consults and communicates effectively with the workforce is likely to be successful in implementing their organisation's health and safety policy.

Some candidates seem to be confused between the roles of senior and line managers by stating that it is the line manager's responsibility to sign the health and safety policy and to provide resources.

Other candidates missed the point of the question and wrote about what a policy should contain or the steps that a manager should take to update or review a policy, for which marks could not be awarded.

Some candidates did not seem to understand what the health and safety responsibilities of line managers were and did not see line managers as being hands-on.

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- Question 8**
- (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.

There was a reasonable response to part (a) with most candidates able to identify types of emergency procedures. Some candidates did not fully read the question and simply gave types of emergency, while others missed the phrase 'in order to evacuate persons' and gave examples that were not relevant, for example a person trapped in a collapsed building.

Part (b) was answered well by most candidates with the most popular reason given being 'to help employees know how to respond in an emergency'. Many candidates knew that it was a statutory requirement to have emergency procedures and that having those procedures might satisfy third party requirements.

A small number of candidates misread the question and gave what procedures should be provided in the event of an emergency. Others listed the contents of an emergency plan and marks could not be awarded for either of these approaches.

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- Question 9**
- (a) **Identify** 'specified injuries' reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). (4)
- (b) **Identify** how 'specified injuries' should be reported to the relevant enforcing agency. (4)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 4.3: Describe the legal and organisational requirements for recording and reporting incidents.

Some candidates appeared to have a lack of knowledge of reportable 'specified injuries' in part (a). Incorrect suggestions from candidates included: MSD's, occupational ill-health and over 7-day injuries. Some believed that death was a specified injury, while others gave work activities that might cause injury, for example a fall from height.

Some candidates demonstrated correct knowledge but did not provide sufficient detail, for example 'crushing'. The correct response should be 'any crush injury to the head causing damage to the brain' or 'any crush injury to the torso causing damage to internal organs'.

Generally part (b) was not well answered with little knowledge shown of the reporting procedure. There was much confusion regarding the issue of 'over 7-day injuries' and few candidates knew that the report form should be completed within 15 days. Many candidates knew that the specified injury should be reported by the quickest practicable means but did not include who is responsible for submitting the report. A few candidates stated that doctors or hospitals can submit a report.

Some candidates mistakenly wrote about reporting to RIDDOR rather than to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) either online through the website or by telephone to the Incident Contact Centre.

Question 10 *Outline reasons why organisations may need to carry out refresher training on health and safety issues.* (8)

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

Those candidates who read the question carefully and recognised that this question concerned refresher training and not training in general achieved reasonable marks.

Many candidates restricted their answers to situations where there were changes or where something new was introduced and did not gain many marks. For example, if a candidate cited 'when there is a change of premises' or 'when new technology is introduced', the employee would not undergo refresher training but would require 'new' training.

Course providers should help ensure that candidates understand the differences between refresher training and other forms of training.

Question 11 *Outline the powers of an enforcement inspector.* (8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 1.3: Explain the legal framework for the regulation of health and safety including sources and types of law.

Overall most candidates demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the powers of an enforcement inspector and produced well written responses.

Some candidates covered the powers, but did not give sufficient depth to their answers. For example, many candidates knew that an inspector has the power to enter premises, but did not complete the statement by adding that they can enter at any reasonable time. Further, many candidates knew that a person is required to answer questions but did not mention that persons were required to sign a declaration of the truth.

The least common responses were that the inspector can use any other powers necessary to exercise the above (other) powers and that they can take any authorised person with him/her.

Some candidates appeared to be repeating rote-learned information and might benefit from relating the powers to real examples of how the powers are practically enforced.

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: <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

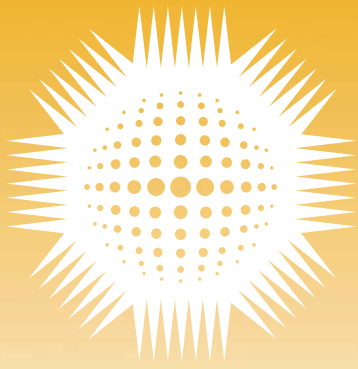
The command word 'describe' clearly requires a description of something. The NEBOSH guidance on command words says that 'describe' requires a detailed written account of the distinctive features of a topic such that another person would be able to visualise what was being described.

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.



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