
Examiners' Report

NEBOSH INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

UNIT IA: INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

JULY 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, which is an essential requirement at Diploma level.

This report has been prepared to provide feedback on the standard date examination sitting in July 2017. This report covers both the 2011 and 2015 specifications.

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 Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety' which is available via the NEBOSH website. In particular, the guide sets out in detail the syllabus content for Unit IA and tutor reference documents for each Element.

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

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

Unit IA

International management of health and safety

- Question 1**
- (a) **Give** the meaning of the term '*motivation*'. (2)
- (b) **Outline** Maslow's model of the hierarchy of human needs **AND** **give** a suitable example within **EACH** stage of the model. (8)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 8.1: Outline psychological and sociological factors which may give rise to specific patterns of safe and unsafe behaviour in the working environment. Equivalent to 7.1 in the 2011 specification.

In part (a) answers demonstrated a general understanding that motivation is a driving force for individual behaviour. However, few candidates went further than this.

Part (b) sought to test the theory of motivation as described by Maslow. The hierarchy of needs described by Maslow is a useful tool for describing motivation at a basic level. Few candidates were able to recall the hierarchy and therefore were unable to give suitable examples of each stage.

In some answers it was evident that there was confusion between motivational theory and encouragement to make workers work harder.

Understanding the theory will help practitioners apply systems in the workplace to improve the health and safety performance of workers.

- Question 2** **Outline** what should be considered when planning a health and safety inspection programme. (10)

*Information on the specific workplace behaviours or conditions that might be covered in an inspection is **not** required.*

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 4.3: Describe the variety of health and safety monitoring and measurement techniques. Equivalent to 3.3: Describe the variety of monitoring and measurement techniques, in the 2011 specification.

The question included a clear note stating that what may be inspected was **not** required. However, many candidates still focused on this in their answers. Care in reading and re-reading the question and instructions are required. There were several candidates who could not go beyond who carries out the inspections, their competence, recording of findings and management commitment, thus limiting the marks that could be awarded. The broader aspects of inspection planning such as recording methods, etc were seldom referred to.

Planning monitoring activities is an important function of the health and safety practitioner and a knowledge of planning and putting together the processes is required in order to get the most appropriate and useful information to assist health and safety management.

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- Question 3** (a) **Give** the meaning of the term *'health and safety culture'*. (2)
- (b) **Outline** organisational factors that may act as barriers to the improvement of the health and safety culture of an organisation. (8)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 7.7: Explain health and safety culture and climate; and 7.8: Outline the factors which can both positively and negatively affect health and safety culture and climate. 6.1: Explain the internal and external influences on health and safety in an organisation; and 6.7 in the 2011 specification.

Part (a) was generally well answered. Candidates were expected to link attitude, beliefs, etc to safety behaviour in the workplace in order to be awarded the marks available.

Part (b) set out to give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of culture and influences focusing on barriers rather than promoters of culture. Barriers to improving organisational safety culture could have included lack of commitment from senior management, inadequate resourcing, high staff turnover, etc.

Culture and human factors are key parts of the syllabus and candidates should be prepared to tackle questions on these subjects which are framed in both positive and negative formats. Again, reading the question is key. Providing a rehearsed answer to the subject area will not gain good marks at this level of examination.

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- Question 4** **Identify FIVE** groups external to an organisation that may need to be provided with health and safety information for legal or good practice reasons **AND**, in **EACH** case, **outline** the type of information to be provided. (10)
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 5.1: Explain how to use internal and external information sources in identifying hazards and the assessing of risk; and 7.3: Explain the internal and external influences on health and safety in an organization. Equivalent to 6.1: Explain the internal and external influences on health and safety in an organisation; and 6.5: Outline the development of a health and safety management information system, the relevant duties and the data it should contain, in the 2011 specification.

Overall this question was well answered with candidates making reference to: Trade associations, emergency services, government departments, etc.

The question also asked for an outline of the type of information to be provided which posed more difficulty to candidates as several seemed to be unsure of the information requirements and therefore missed available marks.

It is important that candidates recognise the importance of stakeholder management and develop a good understanding of both legal and good business requirements.

Question 5 **Outline** the essential features of permit-to-work systems. **(10)**
*Detail of the content of permit forms is **not** required.*

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 6.3: Explain the development, main features and operation of safe systems of work and permit-to-work systems (equivalent to 5.3 in the 2011 specification).

This question set out to assess candidates' knowledge and understanding of permit-to-work *systems* rather than permit-to-work *forms*. This was made clear in the question by reference to permit-to-work systems and the instruction in italics that the content of forms was **not** required.

Answers that covered the system such as co-ordination and control of permits, permit suspensions, hand-back and shift handover procedures, etc would have gained marks. Many candidates referred solely to the permit form, which while an important part of the system, is only part of it and therefore several available marks could not be awarded.

It was clear from many of the responses that there is a good knowledge of permits-to-work. However, a more managerial approach to the system was required to gain good marks.

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- Question 6**
- (a) **Distinguish** between prescriptive legislation and goal-setting legislation. **(2)**
 - (b) **Outline TWO** benefits and **TWO** limitations of prescriptive legislation. **(4)**
 - (c) **Outline TWO** benefits and **TWO** limitations of goal-setting legislation. **(4)**
-

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 2.1: Describe comparative governmental socio-legal and regulatory models. Equivalent to 8.1: Describe comparative governmental and socio-legal, regulatory and corporate models, in the 2011 specification.

The key distinguishing characteristic of prescriptive and goal setting legislation is based on the fact that prescriptive legislation describes the minimum standards, whereas goal setting legislation describes the desired outcome rather than the method of achieving the outcomes.

The benefits and limitations of each are related to, among other things, the level of expertise required to interpret the requirements and whether compliance has actually been achieved, as well as the relevance of the legislation over time.

There were some good answers to the question which showed a good understanding of the subject and other responses that suggested that some candidates had never heard the terms *prescriptive* and *goal setting* in this context before.

Given the international nature of the course, candidates should be well prepared on legal principles and systems.

Course providers are reminded of the need to support candidates in their examination preparation. Candidates should develop an understanding of the syllabus requirements and be prepared to answer questions that are not solely based on memory recall, but require an understanding of the subject as the questions are likely to be phrased in various ways to assess knowledge.

Question 7

A forklift truck is used to move loaded pallets in a large distribution warehouse. On one particular occasion the truck skidded on a patch of oil. As a consequence, the truck collided with an unaccompanied visitor and crushed the visitor's leg.

(a) **Outline** why the accident should be investigated. (4)

(b) The initial responses of reporting and securing the scene of the accident have been carried out.

Outline actions that should be taken in order to collect evidence for an investigation of the accident. (8)

(c) The investigation reveals that there have been previous skidding incidents that had not been reported and the organisation therefore decides to introduce a formal system for reporting near miss incidents.

Outline factors that should be considered when developing and implementing such a system. (8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 3.1: Outline theories/models and use of loss causation techniques; 3.3: Explain the significance and use of statutory and internal reporting of loss events; and 3.4: Explain the reasons for loss and near miss investigations and the procedures to be followed. (Equivalent to 2.1: Explain the theories of loss causation; 2.2: Explain the quantitative analysis of accident/incident and ill health data, limitations of their application, and their presentation in numerical and graphical form; 2.3: Explain the external and the internal reporting and recording systems for loss events (injuries, ill-health, dangerous occurrences) and near-misses; and 2.4: Explain loss and near miss investigations; the requirements, benefits, the procedures, the documentation, and the involvement of and communication with relevant staff and representatives, in the 2011 specification).

Part (a) was looking for reasons *why* the accident should be investigated. Most of the candidates who chose to answer this question gained good marks; citing reasons such as identification of causes (direct and underlying), prevention of a recurrence, etc. However, those candidates who did not gain good marks tended to list the reasons rather than provide an outline as required in the question.

In part (b) candidates needed to provide outlines of specific actions to be taken including reviewing CCTV footage, interviewing appropriate persons, examining the forklift truck for defects, etc. Again, most candidates were able to provide a good response to the question and showed they had experience of accident investigation and data gathering tools.

Candidates who had difficulty in part (b) tended to repeat similar actions under different guises, eg examine photographs, examine sketches or measure parts of the scene, or gave a list rather than outline the actions to be taken.

Part (c) seemed to offer the biggest challenge to candidates in this question since it focused on the system rather than the activity of accident investigation. Candidates were expected to take the broader managerial view of the development and implementation of the system required. Marks were available for factors such as consultation with workers, no blame culture, clear reporting lines, etc. Those candidates who were able to move from the process to the system (and there were many) gained good marks.

Accident theory and investigation is a core part of the health and safety practitioner role, as is the process of system development and implementation. Candidates should be prepared to tackle this type of managerial question at this level.

Question 8 **Outline** the key elements of **ONE** of the following:

ILO-OSH-2001 Guidelines on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems;

OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.

(20)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 1.4: Explain the principles and content of an effective health and safety management system including the reasons for integration with other management systems. Equivalent to 1.3: Explain the principles and content of effective health and safety, quality, environmental, and integrated management systems with reference to recognised models and standards, in the 2011 specification.

This was not a particularly popular Section B question despite the prevalence of health and safety management systems in organisations.

Candidates who did attempt the question tended to focus on the OSHAS 18001 management system. However, many candidates did not seem to know the key stages of the OHSAS 18001 management system, ie policy, planning, implementation and operation, checking corrective action, management review and continual improvement and therefore did not structure their answer in this sequence. Some answers mixed not only the OHSAS 18001 system contents and the ILO OSH system contents, but other management system contents as well.

It could be that answers tended to reflect an operational view of health and safety in the workplace rather than a higher level managerial or strategic view. However, it is an expectation that candidates of the International Diploma are able to understand and communicate the principles and content of health and safety management systems. Furthermore there is a reasonable expectation that candidates will be prepared to explain the application of management systems in a workplace setting.

Question 9 (a) **Outline** the meaning and relevance of the following terms in the context of controlling human error in the workplace:

(i) ergonomics; **(2)**

(ii) anthropometry; **(2)**

(iii) task analysis. **(2)**

(b) *Other than* ergonomic issues, **outline** ways in which human reliability in the workplace may be improved. **(14)**

In your answer, consider 'individual', 'job' and 'organisational' issues.

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 8.5: Explain how organisational factors can contribute to improving human reliability; 8.6: Explain how job factors can contribute to improving human reliability; 8.7: Outline the principles, conditions and typical content of behavioural change programmes designed to improve safe behaviour in the workplace. (Equivalent to 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7 in the 2011 specification).

A fairly popular choice of the Section B questions that sought to test a mix of theory and practice.

In part (a) candidates were generally able to outline the meaning of the terms 'ergonomics', 'anthropometry' and 'task analysis'. However, fewer candidates were able to gain the full mark allocation as the question required reference to the *relevance* of the terms in controlling human error. Marks were awarded for points such as including accounting for human limitations, application of reach distances to equipment design and analysing the scope for human error.

In part (b) candidates were prompted to structure their answers using the headings of *Individual, Job and Organisational* issues, which it was expected would be helpful to candidates. However, there were many candidates who did not refer to these prompts. Those who structured their answers using the prompts tended to gain more marks than those who did not. Marks were available for consideration of individual skills, use of job rotation and developing a positive health and safety culture, for example.

Where a question includes a structure or prompt to candidates for their answers it is recommended that candidates follow the prompt as they are designed to assist the candidate in their answer.

Question 10 The management of a chemical store with major on-site and off-site hazard potential is analysing the risks and controls associated with a particular storage facility and potential containment failure. Following containment failure ($f=0.5$ per year), an automatic failure detection mechanism should detect the release. Once detected, an alarm sounds followed by a suppressant being dispersed. Finally, in order to reduce the consequences of the event an operator is required to take manual control measures following the release of the suppressant. As part of the analysis, the organisation has decided to quantify the risks from the containment failure and develop a quantified event tree from the data.

Activity	Frequency / reliability
Process containment failure	0.5 per year
Failure detection	0.98
Alarm sounders	0.99
Release suppression	0.8
Manual control measures activated	0.7

- (a) Using the data provided, **construct** an event tree that shows the sequence of events following process containment failure. **(6)**
- (b) **Calculate** the frequency of an uncontrolled release resulting from process containment failure. **(6)**
- (c) **Outline** factors that should be considered when determining whether the frequency of the uncontrolled risk is tolerable. **(5)**
- (d) **Outline** a methodology for cost benefit analysis with regard to the process described. **(3)**

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 5.5: Explain the principles and techniques of failure tracing methodologies with the use of calculations (equivalent to 4.4 in the 2011 specification).

This was a popular question that seemed to attract either very good marks or very few marks.

The tree construction was the most consistent part of the question for gaining marks with many candidates achieving top marks.

The calculations required in part (b) were a little more mixed, with a range of responses that were accurate, some contained calculation errors and some that used the wrong methodology. Candidates who calculated a frequency of around every 4.4 years were correct. However, it is important to emphasise that candidates must show their calculations at each stage in order to gain good marks. Stating that the frequency was 4.4 years without providing the relevant calculations is not worthy of marks in the context of this examination.

Part (c) required candidates to provide evidence of understanding the use of such tools as event tree analysis in determining the tolerability of risk. Candidates who had referred to published data and comparative data, as well as other implications (such as societal), gained good marks. There were several candidates who showed little or no understanding of the term '*tolerable*'.

In part (d) candidates were required to offer the methodology that recognises quantification of loss in terms of monetary value, quantification of improvement costs in terms of money, and a comparison of the two values to assist in the process of cost benefit analysis and decision making. While full marks were often awarded, equally there was evidence that the concept was not well understood by many candidates.

Calculation-type questions offer candidates a good chance to gain good marks provided they understand the methodology required. However, it is equally important that candidates understand the overall process being examined and how to apply and analyse the data to help make useful risk management decisions.

Question 11	(a)	Outline the purpose of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Codes of Practice.	(2)
	(b)	Outline how International labour standards are created at the International Labour Conference.	(5)
	(c)	Outline how the ILO can influence health and safety standards in different countries.	(5)
	(d)	Outline how the media can influence attitudes towards health and safety.	(8)

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 2.3: Explain the role and limitations of the International Labour Organisation in a global health and safety setting; and 2.4: Explain the role non-governmental bodies and self-regulation has in securing common health and safety standards in a global economy (equivalent to 8.2 and 8.3 in the 2011 specification).

The International Diploma requires a knowledge of the role, function and processes of the International Labour Organisation along with other influences on organisational health and safety.

This was not a popular question with candidates and those who did attempt it showed a range of knowledge on the subject, indicating that it may have been a forced choice in some cases.

In part (a) candidates were required to offer an outline of the advisory nature of the Codes of Practice in supporting the ILO conventions.

Part (b) required candidates to offer the process of standard creation at the International Labour Conference. Marks were available for elements of the process such as amendments proposed and voting qualified by a 2/3 majority.

Part (c) then required candidates to recognise how the ILO can use the standards among other things to influence health and safety in different countries. Marks were available for the ILO role in monitoring implementation of standards, dealing with complaints, and providing technical assistance, for example.

Part (d) required candidates to provide an outline of how the media (news, television, printed, online, etc) can influence attitudes towards health and safety. Nowadays there is instantaneous global coverage of events through online reporting and social media as well as traditionally broadcast and paper news, which provides information to readers and observers and therefore can influence perception and attitudes. Also there are concepts such as state media control that can affect individual and group views of events and situations.

A good answer to this question required a good understanding of influential organisations and social development worldwide. As such, course providers and candidates are reminded to read widely while studying the International Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety.

Examination technique

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

Candidates misread/misinterpreted the question

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

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

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

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

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

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

Candidates' handwriting was illegible

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

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

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

Candidates unnecessarily wrote the question down

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

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

Candidates repeated the same point but in different ways

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

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

Candidates did not respond effectively to the command word

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

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

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

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

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

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

Candidates did not allocate enough time to the question

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

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

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

Structured Answers

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

Candidates answered by posing a question

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

Command words

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

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

Outline

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Explain

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

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

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

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

Describe

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

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

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

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

Give

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

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

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

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

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

Identify

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

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

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

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