
Examiners' Report

UNIT GC2: CONTROLLING WORKPLACE HAZARDS

MARCH 2019



For: **NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety**
NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational 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 learners annually and are offered by over 600 Learning Partners, 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 learners and Learning Partners 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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Any enquiries about this report publication should be addressed to:

NEBOSH
Dominus Way
Meridian Business Park
Leicester
LE19 1QW

tel: 0116 263 4700
fax: 0116 282 4000
email: info@nebosh.org.uk

General comments

Many learners 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 learners, 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 the standard date GC2 examination sat in March 2019.

Feedback is presented in these key areas: responses to questions, examination technique and command words and is designed to assist learners and Learning Partners prepare for future assessments in this unit.

Learners and Learning Partners will also benefit from use of the 'Guide to the NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety' and 'Guide to the NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety' which are available via the NEBOSH website. In particular, the guides set out in detail the syllabus content for GC2 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.

Unit GC2

Controlling workplace hazards

- Question 1** A worker is required to place boxes of metal components by hand on to shelved racking.
- (a) **Identify** types of injury associated with this activity. (4)
- (b) **Outline** factors associated with the *task* and the *load* that will affect the risk of injury. (10)
- (c) **Outline** good handling techniques that could be adopted by the worker when required to lift one of the boxes from ground level. (6)

This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.2: Explain the hazards and control measures which should be considered when assessing risks from manual handling activities.

Part (a) relating to manual handling injuries, was answered reasonably well by the majority of learners. As the command word was 'identify' in this part of the question, answers that would be able to gain marks were expected to be brief, with one or two words being sufficient. Therefore, responses such as prolapsed disc and abrasions would have gained marks.

In part (b) many learners seemed unable to accurately separate 'task' factors and 'load' factors from the full suite of manual handling risk factors and therefore included 'environment' and 'individual' factors; although these form part of the overall TILE risk assessment, they were not required in this part of the question and would not have gained any marks. Learners who confined their answers to 'task' and 'load' factors, in some instances, did not gain all of the marks by providing 'identify' type answers where an 'outline' was required. Therefore, in relation to 'load' factors an answer that was limited to 'shape of the load' or 'size of the load' would not have gained all of the marks available. An 'outline' answer should include reference to important features, so in this example, an answer such as 'shape of the load, which could be difficult to grasp or have sharp edges' or 'the size of the load, which could be bulky or unwieldy' would have been examples of good outlines.

Part (c) appeared to have caused little difficulty across the breadth of learners in this sitting with many answers gaining above half marks.

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- Question 2** A range of non-powered hand tools is to be supplied to an engineering workshop.
- Outline** what should be considered to help ensure the safe use of these hand tools. (8)

This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 4.2: Explain the hazards and controls for hand-held tools.

This question was reasonably well answered by a number of learners who provided outlines of considerations for the safe use of non-powered hand tools. Better answers would have included reference to suitability for the intended purpose, in good condition and free from defect and inspected prior to use for the first time. Some learners provided answers similar to these, but could not provide any further considerations, indicating a lack of breadth of knowledge on this subject and further marks could not be awarded.

Some learners appeared to either not read the question or to answer a different question. Some answers included reference to electric tools, even though the question was in relation to non-powered hand tools and reference to electric tools would not have gained marks. A list of hand tools, as provided by some learners, was not required and marks could not be awarded. General answers, such as training and maintenance, while correct, without a sufficient outline would not have gained all of the marks available.

Question 3 **Outline** practical control measures to help reduce the risk of injury from electricity when using portable electrical tools. **(8)**

This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 5.2: Outline the control measures that should be taken when working with electrical systems or using electrical equipment in all workplace conditions.

Many learners had knowledge of the breadth of control measures when using portable electrical tools, but could not satisfy the 'outline' command word and provide sufficient depth to their answer. Responses such as earthing, use of RCDs, and double insulated tools, did not have sufficient detail in order to gain the marks required by an 'outline' question. The appropriate depth of answer here could have included 'ensure Class I appliances are earthed with a protective conductor', 'connect the tool to an RCD which will trip rapidly if an earth fault is detected' and 'use Class II tools where internal insulation does not result in the case becoming live under fault conditions', all of which would have gained the marks available.

Again, some learners answered a different question than that asked, which usually related to the items to check on a pre-use inspection - although these would have gained a single mark, no further marks could be awarded for additional detail, as this was not requested in the question. Some learners appeared to have little knowledge of this area of the syllabus and made reference to any control measure that may be associated with powered equipment, including guarding, interlocks, emergency stops and even fire extinguishers - none of which were relevant and no marks could be awarded for such answers.

Question 4

A small quantity of paint is applied by brush to components in a workshop. The safety data sheet supplied with the paint indicates that it is both carcinogenic and an irritant. Workers have been observed regularly licking the tip of the paint brush during use and wiping excess paint from the components with their fingers.

- (a) **Give** the meaning of the following terms: (2)
- (i) carcinogenic; (2)
 - (ii) irritant. (2)
- (b) **Explain** why the observed method of working may increase the risk of ill-health. (2)
- (c) **Identify** ways in which the health of these workers can be monitored. (2)
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This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 7.1: Outline the forms of, the classification of, and the health risks from exposure to, hazardous substances; 7.2: Explain the factors to be considered when undertaking an assessment of the health risks from substances commonly encountered in the workplace; and 7.4: Outline control measures that should be used to reduce the risk of ill-health from exposure to hazardous substances.

In part (a) of this question, it was clear that many learners were aware that a carcinogenic substance can cause cancer and that an irritant substance can cause inflammation. However, learners were asked to give the meaning of those terms and as there were 2 marks available for the meaning of each substance, one or two words would not have been sufficient to gain all of the available marks. With regard to carcinogenic substances, further reference to being inhaled or ingested would have been sufficient and additionally indicating that irritant materials are non-corrosive would be sufficient to gain both of the marks available.

In part (b) most learners could include in their answer that the licking of the brush could lead to ingestion and wiping the paint with fingers would lead to skin contact, however, the command word here was 'explain' and in many cases insufficient detail was given, limiting marks.

Part (c) required learners to identify ways to monitor the health of workers. As an 'identify' question answer such as 'health surveillance' would have been sufficient to gain a mark, which was the case in the majority of answers. However, fewer learners could go further than this and consider biological monitoring (eg blood tests) or even self-reporting by workers, both of which would have gained additional marks.

Question 5 A school sports hall is to be used for temporary sleeping accommodation for local residents who have been evacuated from their homes due to an emergency situation.

Outline what should be considered when reviewing the fire risk assessment for this temporary use of the school sports hall. **(8)**

This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 6.2: Outline the principles of fire risk assessment.

This question gave a scenario that indicated the change of use of premises for temporary occupation and required learners to give consideration when reviewing the fire risk assessment. Although many learners could refer to the fire precautions elements that would be considered in a fire risk assessment, such as means of raising the alarm, means of escape, means of fighting fires and fire procedures, very few learners reflected these elements with regards to the change of use of the premises and the resultant review of the fire risk assessment.

To gain the marks available learners should have considered whether evacuation times could be achieved with the additional population, what the capacity of the premises should be, whether further exits should be made available and whether additional assembly points are required.

Very few learners made reference to fire prevention as part of the fire risk assessment and even fewer learners considered the aspects of fire prevention to review in the fire risk assessment. Fire prevention includes the identification and control of fuels, combustibles and ignition sources. The review of this fire risk assessment should have considered additional combustibles, such as bedding, clothing, waste materials and aerosols, together with consideration of additional ignition sources such as electrical appliances, cooking equipment and smoking activities.

Question 6 Work at height, which cannot be avoided, is to be carried out. Suitable access equipment is required to prevent the workers from falling.

(a) **Identify** access equipment that will provide a safe working platform when working at height. **(3)**

(b) **Outline** what should be considered when selecting suitable access equipment for this work. **(5)**

This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 1.5: Explain the hazards and control measures for safe working at height.

Learners were required to identify access equipment for working at height that would provide a safe working platform in part (a). The majority of learners had little difficulty in identifying scaffold systems and mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) as suitable access equipment, but very few learners could go further than this and gain the additional mark available.

In part (b) of this question many learners considered the duration and frequency of the work, for which marks were awarded. However, the consequence of a fall was rarely included in answers. Some learners considered a lack of space to accommodate work equipment for which marks were awarded. Overall the marks gained for this part of the question were low.

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- Question 7** Drivers of vehicles can be exposed to whole body vibration (WBV).
- (a) **Give** the meaning of the term '*whole body vibration*'. (2)
- (b) **Outline** control measures to help reduce the risks to the drivers from WBV. (6)
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This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 8.2: Outline the health effects associated with exposure to vibration and appropriate control measures.

In part (a) learners were expected to give the meaning of the term '*whole body vibration*', yet few answers included a suitable or correct response. Whole body vibration is vibration transmitted to a person when in contact with a vibrating structure or surface which could be through the floor or via a seat. As such, very few learners gained both marks available with many learners gaining no marks at all.

Better answers were provided for part (b) of this question and in many cases reasonable marks were gained, especially by learners who related their answer specifically to drivers of vehicles whereby learners who provided an answer relating to 'vibrating machinery' would not have gained all of the marks available.

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- Question 8** A fire started in a multi-storey office building during welding work in a lift shaft and spread rapidly to upper floors, mainly as a result of convection.
- (a) **Outline** how the fire could have been prevented. (5)
- (b) **Outline** the principles of convection in relation to the spread of fire. (3)
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This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 6.3: Describe the basic principles of fire prevention and the prevention of fire spread in buildings; and 6.1: Describe the principles of fire initiation, classification and spread.

Better answers to part (a) would have included a suitable outline of carrying out the work outside of the lift shaft and working under a hot work permit. However, many learners focused on fire risk assessment, or fire precautions such as the use of sprinklers and calling the fire service, which was not relevant to this question. Some learners ignored the task in the scenario and wrote down all that they knew about fire and fire safety, which would not gain the marks available.

In part (b) many learners did not state that hot air rises and few put convection into context and did not make reference to the lift shaft. Learners who did include in their answer that the fire would heat the air in the lift shaft and this hot air would be transferred to upper floors, with this thermal cycle continuing as cold air replaces the displaced hot air in the lift shaft, would have been awarded marks. A number of learners provided irrelevant information on fire prevention and extinguishing media and some either did not read the question properly or did not know the difference and provided an outline on the conduction means of heat transfer.

Question 9 Drivers in a warehouse distribution centre are to have driver training.

Identify content that should be included in the training programme in order to help reduce the risk of accidents to drivers and other workers. **(8)**

This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 2.1: Explain the hazards and control measures for the safe movement of vehicles in the workplace.

This question related to the training requirements for drivers in a warehouse distribution centre, however many learners focused on the word 'warehouse' and provided answers to a different question, usually with regard to the safety of vehicle routes. Some common issues may have gained marks in such cases, but marks that could be awarded would be limited.

Additionally, the question stated that the driver training is to be provided for drivers *in* a warehouse distribution centre, although some learners gave answers relating to work-related road safety which was not required although some common areas may have gained marks. Learners who did relate their answer to driver training in a warehouse and made reference to issues such as, operation of vehicle controls, parking requirements, vehicle checks, local rules and legal duties, would have been awarded marks.

Question 10 The operator of an item of machinery requires regular access to a dangerous part while it is moving.

(a) **Outline** control measures to help reduce the risk of contact with the dangerous part while it is moving. **(5)**

(b) **Outline** control measures that would prevent access to the dangerous part while it is moving. **(3)**

This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcomes 4.4: Explain the main control measures for reducing risk from machinery hazards; and 4.1: Outline general requirements for work equipment.

There are many examples of items of machinery that cannot be fully guarded, such as pedestal drills and circular saws, in which case workers can be exposed to dangerous moving parts during operation. In part (a), although many learners could provide a list of types of guards and devices that could be used on machinery, these were not in context with this part of the question and reference to fixed guards or interlocked guards would not have been appropriate as access to the moving part would be prevented and marks could not be awarded. Learners who included reference to user adjustable guards, vices and clamps and hold-to-run devices would have gained marks.

In part (b) learners who included reference to fixed guards and interlocked guards with suitable outlines, would have gained marks as this is the function of such guards. Few learners referred to sensitive protective equipment, such as light curtains or pressure mats that would stop a dangerous part if a person enters the danger zone, but those learners who did mention such devices with adequate outlines would have gained marks. Some learners repeated their answers for part (a) and part (b) with a list of types of machinery guards or devices in both parts, with little or no outlines provided. Marks for such an approach would have been limited.

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| Question 11 | (a) Identify possible effects on health that may be caused by working in a hot environment. | (2) |
| | (b) Outline control measures that could be taken in order to help reduce the risk of ill-health when working in a hot environment. | (6) |
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This question assessed learners' knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 1.1: Outline common health, welfare and work environment requirements in the workplace.

Working in a hot environment was interpreted by many learners to be working outside and being exposed to sunlight. This narrow view of the question did not compromise many learners in their answer to part (a) as answers such as dehydration would be common to exposure to hot temperatures in any location.

In part (b) where learners had restricted their answer to exposure to sunlight, the ability to gain marks was limited. Few learners considered the protection of the worker from radiant heat and very few thought the workers should become acclimatised prior to working. Provision of drinking water and regular breaks were listed by the majority of learners, but vague reference to PPE was not awarded marks, as any clothing should be in context to the exposure. This could include heatproof suits for protection against radiant heat, for example when working near a furnace.

Examination technique

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

Learners misread/misinterpreted the question

Learners misreading or misinterpreting the question is by far the most common cause of learners 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 learners to be sufficiently prepared to provide the relevant depth of answer across a broad range of subject areas. For example, a learner 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 learner 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.

Learners must also pay attention to the command word. For example, a question could ask learners to '**identify** the hazards associated with demolition work', or a question from the same element could ask learners to '**outline** the control measures required during demolition work'. Learners 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, learners 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 learners 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 learners appear to misread or misinterpret several questions. This situation is more likely due to learners 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.

Learners 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.

Learners 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 learner 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 learner would be expected to provide in an answer to an examination question.

Examiners report that learners 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 learner in their examination answer. A significant number of learners, 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 learners do provide too much information, which would not be required where a command word limits the expected answer to 'give' or 'identify'. Learners would not be penalised for providing excessive detail but this would not be an efficient use of the time allocated.

Learning Partners 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 learners on suitable examination technique during a course of study.

Learners 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 learners 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 learners 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.

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

It is clear that there are a significant number of learners 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 learner's **understanding** of the subject and reciting a pre-prepared and memorised answer will not show a learner's understanding. In fact, if a learner 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.

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

There are instances where learners 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.

Learners 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 learners and makes it much clearer in the stress of the examination for learners to see which points have been made and reduce the chances of the same point being made several times.

Learners did not answer all of the questions

It has been noted that a number of learners do not attempt all of the questions and of course where a learner 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. Learning Partners 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. Learners 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 learner 'going blank' in an examination situation, in which case learners 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, learners 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.

Learners 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 learners 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 Learning Partners and learners 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.

Learners 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.

Learners' handwriting was illegible

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

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

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

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

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

Learning Partners 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 learners. 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 learners 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 learner 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 learner 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 learners 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 learners do answer such questions sufficiently and satisfactorily, other learners 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 learners 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 Learning Partners should use the NEBOSH guidance on command words within their examination preparation sessions in order to prepare learners 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. Learners 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: <https://www.nebosh.org.uk/i-am/a-learner/> - from this page the document can be found by clicking on the relevant Qualification link, then on the 'Resources' tab.