



Higher Specialist Diploma
Leadership and Management
Examination - September 2022

Short-answer questions

60 minutes

Attempt all four questions

Instructions to candidates

1. Record your candidate number and HSD discipline on the front sheet of the answer booklet
2. Record your candidate number, the question number and the page number in the spaces provided on the answer sheets
3. Begin each new question on a new page
4. Each question is worth 25 marks

1. A supplier of key reagents fails to deliver a large order without any prior notification. Staff have not previously reported to you any concerns about the stocks but they are critically low and about to run out.
 - a. Explain what actions you would take in the short term and why. (18 marks)
 - b. Describe the measures that you would put in place for the future to minimise the risk of this happening again. (7 marks)

2. You have run a recruitment campaign, appointed a successful candidate and as a result notified other applicants that they are unsuccessful. After making the offer of employment you discover that the candidate has not been truthful on their application and that as a result you wish to withdraw the offer.

Explain, with reasons, how would you approach resolving this situation.

3. There has been a data breach in which confidential, identifiable patient data from a sexual health clinic has reached the public domain. The breach has been noted by local media.

Describe what you would do to manage the situation and prevent a recurrence.

4. A critical piece of equipment breaks down during a run. Clinics are waiting for some urgent results that will affect patient management today. Staff from the clinics are asking laboratory staff about when they will receive the results as they are concerned that delays will lead to impacts on patient care and patient complaints.

Explain how you would address the situation in the laboratory and for users.



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Essay Paper

120 minutes

Attempt 2 out of 5 questions

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1. Record your candidate number and HSD discipline on the front sheet of the answer booklet
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3. Begin each new answer on a new page
4. Each question is worth 100 marks

1. Following the pressures on staff due to the pandemic over the last two years, there has been both a drop in morale across many areas of the NHS and a far higher turnover of staff especially at lower grades.

Discuss the factors that may be involved and what you would do to try to raise morale and retain existing staff and recruit new staff committed to the medium rather than the short term.

2. You have attended IBMS Congress and identified a piece of equipment that you feel would be of real benefit to your department and organisation.

Explain, with reasons, what you would include in a business case presentation to your organisation in order to gain funding for this equipment.

3. Discuss how you would prepare for the appraisal of a staff member who has specifically requested that you carry out the appraisal even though you do not directly line manage them. They indicate there are issues they would like to raise with management.

Explain your approach to assessing and addressing issues that may be raised.

4. On reviewing a trend analysis of incident reports you notice there is a pattern of complaints about specific delayed results on one day of the week only.

Discuss how you would investigate this formally, what factors may be the cause and make suggestions for ways to prevent further occurrences.

5. Critically discuss the factors that mean change is often seen as challenging activity both for managers and staff and the steps that managers should take to prepare for a leading a significant change.



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Case studies

120 minutes

Attempt all case studies

Instructions to candidates

1. Record your candidate number and HSD discipline on the front sheet of the answer booklet
2. Record your candidate number, the question number and the page number in the spaces provided on the answer sheets
3. Begin each new answer on a new page
4. Each question is worth 100 marks
5. For these case study questions you are strongly advised to answer the questions as they arise during the case study to avoid later information impacting adversely on your answers to the earlier questions by presuming an “outcome”.

SEEN CASE STUDY

You manage phlebotomists as well as laboratory staff and have a patient phlebotomy area adjacent to the laboratory. Waiting times tend to be long when the section is not fully staffed and / or there is poor weather and transport disruption, meaning that on occasion staffing can be very limited. You receive a letter of complaint from a patient's relative complaining about a very long delay and also stating that their child was poorly handled by the phlebotomist, was hurt and developed a large haematoma.

- a. What are your first steps? (20 marks)

You discover that on this day, around two months ago, staff numbers were extremely short with only two staff instead of the usual five. You check the rota to see who was in.

- b. Is it reasonable to have to respond to a complaint after such a long time? Justify your answers. (10 marks)

- c. What could you ask the staff who were in about the day? (20 marks)

- d. Explain, with reasons, the other records you feel it might be useful to review? (10 marks)

The phlebotomy staff say they cannot recall the patient although the day was one when there was sickness and serious travel disruption causing them to have to work very quickly and without normal breaks. There was no supervisor in on that day. One of the staff had not had competency assessment for long past the set date. You compile your response which is conveyed to the patient's parent. You comment that the staff cannot specifically recall the patient but offer sincere apologies. The child had a blood clotting disorder.

- e. Can an apology imply admitting fault or guilt? Explain your answer. (10 marks)

- f. What would you do regarding staff? (10 marks)

The hospital receives a letter via the parent's solicitors, sent to the CEO complaining further about the delay, poor treatment and stating dissatisfaction with your response. They accuse the phlebotomist of incompetence, you personally of not taking their complaint seriously and cite "actual bodily harm" to their child with threats of legal action, bad publicity and financial claims.

- g. Describe, with reasons, how you would proceed at this point? (20 marks)

UNSEEN CASE STUDIES

2.

A staff member relatively recently recruited has asked for six weeks of annual leave across the summer holiday period as this was something they had negotiated at their previous NHS Trust.

- a. Explain the key implications of this request and your initial action. (15 marks)

The organisation allows two weeks leave with occasional exceptional allowances of three weeks.

- b. What would you tell your staff member? (10 marks)

The staff member refuses to accept that this is fair in their case and writes long impassioned emails to you.

- c. Describe the actions it might be useful for you to take now and why. (15 marks)

The staff member has been to Human Resources and stated they want to raise a grievance against you based on discrimination which they communicate to you and your line manager by email.

- d. What are your actions now? (15 marks)

Human Resources has been in touch with you over the case to examine whether the grievance is valid or not.

- e. How would you justify to them that your approach is reasonable? (15 marks)

- f. Describe the alternative options you could consider and the potential implications on the department. (30 marks)

3.

You are the manager of one laboratory involved in a phased centralisation process across five hospitals. This involves a major central hub for Blood Sciences, Infection Sciences and Cellular Sciences supplemented by local Blood Sciences laboratories at two other sites carrying out surgery. There are point of care testing facilities in the central hub Emergency Department and at the remaining two sites, one of which has an on-site cytology service supporting a breast screening drop-in clinic once a week.

Assumptions:

- there is a compatible LIMS across all laboratory sites
- staff have been TUPE transferred into one employing entity
- a remote blood component issue system supports the local surgical units and the surgery performed is simple, superficial and elective
- point of care devices are managed by the laboratories

a. As a member of the Pathology management team, what sort of issues do you need to consider? (20 marks)

Although the staff have been TUPE transferred over with minimal job losses and morale is in general good, it is clear that the staff see themselves as belonging to their “home” laboratories.

b. How might you seek to create a new feeling of shared identity? (15 marks)

c. Staff are now expected to rotate between sites, where this is applicable to their discipline: what issues may this raise? (10 marks)

The hospitals used to use different courier companies and still have three providers. It is proposed by senior management that it would be preferable to have a single provider including a schedule of inter site transfers (on a trial basis).

d. Provide reasons as to why a single provider may be sought. (15 marks)

e. How would management go about selecting the single courier service? (20 marks)

f. How could you and your fellow managers take the new laboratory set up forward positively and proactively? (20 marks)