



Higher Specialist Diploma

Leadership and Management

Examination - September 2021

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 answer on a new page
4. Each question is worth 25 marks

1. On arrival at the laboratory you are informed that there has been a significant leak from the sewage pipeline which runs above. This has contaminated a main piece of equipment central to the services provided by the laboratory. Also, some staff are refusing to enter the area.

Explain your immediate actions and how you would go about handling the situation to ensure as little disruption to services as possible.

2. A staff member interrupts your senior management meeting to tell you that there has been a row heard in a side laboratory and a member of staff has walked out in tears. There were only the two staff in the area at the time and it is known that they are not on the best of terms. How would you approach the situation and how would you seek to resolve the relationship between the staff members?
3. It is the start of a new rotation in the laboratory when staff move round between sections. On performing IQC in one section a staff member alerts you that this has been running out of range on one analyser for over a week and nothing has been done to correct it. What would you do in the short, medium and longer term and why?
4. Your department has a large cold storage facility close to the laboratory area which is used for critical reagents of high value which is linked to an electronic temperature monitoring system. This sends an alarm to designated telephone numbers in a cascade system ensuring there is always an acknowledgement. Once acknowledged, there is no follow up by the system. There has been an alarm which was picked up and thought to be due to a staff member loading supplies in to the unit. The following day, Friday, it transpires that the unit has been above temperature since alarming.

What is your approach to dealing with this situation in terms of immediate and future actions? How will you justify any financial losses to your organisation?



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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
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

1. Critically discuss the effectiveness of a cost improvement programme in improving departmental efficiency.

2. Discuss the type of information you would include in a business case for departmental resources and how you would justify to the organisation that the investment would be beneficial.

3. “Delegation is a key management tool”: Critically evaluate this statement.

4. Are staff with a laboratory background the optimal choice as managers or should Pathology services recruit professional managers? Compare and contrast the two ideas and state your final viewpoint.

5. Pathology laboratories are reactive services and consequently cannot define a forward strategy. Discuss this statement and explain your views on the value, or not, of strategic planning.



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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

1.

A qualified, experienced staff member is refusing to attend laboratory meetings and also has a very poor record of acknowledging e-mails sent to notify changes in SOPs for example agreed in meetings. This method has been agreed previously with the team and for all other staff members works well. They also very rarely enter error information into the departmental log despite a positive and open approach to managing errors and using them to develop preventive action.

a. How could you begin to investigate and improve this situation? (10 marks)

During the conversation the staff member says they feel marginalised by other staff and that it is not fair to talk to them about errors as their work is so good. You know from experience of taking over from them that this is in fact not always the case and this has been noted by others in the team.

b. How would you respond to them?

c. What more could you do after the meeting?

(10 marks for both b. and c. together)

You write to the staff member with the meeting notes to seek their agreement on the content and actions going ahead. You talk to a couple of very reliable and trustworthy staff confidentially: they tell you the person is becoming more difficult to interact with and people are tip toeing around them.

d. What do you think the impact of this could be for the department? (10 marks)

The staff member asks to see you: they say they are taking out a grievance against you as you are picking on them and singling them out when they know that others make far more mistakes than they do. It transpires they are married to one of the organisation's more tenacious union representatives.

e. What action would you take at this point? (10 marks)

You are informed of a loud argument in the department between the staff member and a section leader. The section leader comes to see you and says they felt compelled to raise something with the staff member: performing their daily cross check on quality control results they note that the staff member is performing investigations on an instrument where the QC is completely out of range which will affect all results obtained. The staff member has reacted very badly and stated that the instrument is perfectly fine and the controls must have deteriorated which is not their fault.

f. What do you do now? (20 marks)

The staff member has in fact decided to leave the workplace and texts you to say they are sick and that their GP has advised them to take two weeks off work as they are suffering from stress.

- g. What actions can you take at this point? (20 marks)
- h. Do you consider that the overall situation involving the staff member is resolvable? Justify your response and offer any solutions. (20 marks)

UNSEEN CASE STUDIES

2.

Your Trust has undergone a procurement exercise to renew the transport services provider. These services include transport of samples from satellite clinics and health centres, including maternity and sexual health centres. A driver delivers a batch of samples at the end of the day when only minimum staff are working in specimen reception. He is carrying blood samples in a plastic bag and one of them has leaked heavily including onto his hands.

You arrive the following morning to see a hand written note from a member of reception staff saying that a blood sample has leaked onto a delivery driver. This reception staff member is on leave for the next few days.

- a. Describe what actions you will take as a result of reading this note? Explain why in each case. (35 marks)
- b. Pathology does not manage the drivers: what sort of information will you be seeking from the Transport provider? What follow up actions will you take? (25 marks)
- c. It transpires that the driver had a cut on his hands: what further actions might you take? (15 marks)
- d. You are about to have an external assessment by UKAS what will you record with regard to investigating and managing this event? (5 marks)
- e. What actions and procedures might you implement as a result? (10 marks)
- f. How will you monitor their effectiveness? (10 marks)

3.

A child has suffered actual harm as a result of a clinician acting upon a result released by your laboratory. The indications are that this incident could have long term, if not permanent effects. The parents have complained to the Chief Executive and issued a legal claim for damages using the interpretation services as English is not their first language. Staff are very affected and already morale is low. Several senior staff recently took advantage of early retirement packages and a programme of restructuring is in place. To keep staff levels adequate several locums have been taken on who are either pre-registration or not experienced in UK laboratories.

- a. How will you provide laboratory input into the patient complaint? Which staff will you approach to assist you? (20 marks)

- b. Describe how you will undertake a local investigation, the processes you will follow and the documentation you will complete. (15 marks)

- c. What do you feel are the key contributing causes to this incident? (15 marks)

- d. How would you deal with the staff and morale? (15 marks)

- e. What recommendations will you make to the Clinical Director and Trust executives as a result of this event? (15 marks)

- f. What practical measures will you put in place and what follow up will you undertake? Who will assist you? (20 marks)