

**ADVANCED GCE
LEISURE STUDIES**

Human Resources in the Leisure Industry

G184/CS

CASE STUDY

**Wednesday 20 January 2010
Afternoon**

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes



INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- This is a clean copy of the Case Study which you should already have seen.
- You should refer to it when answering the examination questions which are printed in a separate booklet.
- You may **not** take your previous copy of the case study into the examination.
- You may **not** take notes into the examination.
- This document consists of **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Out and About

Out and About is an outdoor pursuits centre located in the North Pennines, in the north east of England. It was initially established as a charity but has since become a privately run facility. It is a large centre, in its own grounds. The centre is well established. The main customers are schools and colleges, with many returning every year. During the school holidays, team-building activities are run for corporate groups. Demand for these services is influenced by external issues.

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Facilities at Out and About include:

- dormitory based accommodation for 140 visitors;
- drying room;
- dry ski slope;
- high ropes course;
- camp site;
- access to hills, crags and water for a range of outdoor pursuits.

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The centre is owned and managed by a couple, Simon and Yvonne Braithwaite. Prior to buying the centre four years ago they had always worked for someone else and had limited experience of managing staff. Out and About has a range of staff; full, part time, permanent and seasonal. Some instructors are self-employed (see Fig. 1). Simon is responsible for the instructors and activities and has a very autocratic management style; whereas Yvonne is responsible for household management and the staff in that area. Her approach could be said to be more democratic.

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Organisational Structure for Out and About

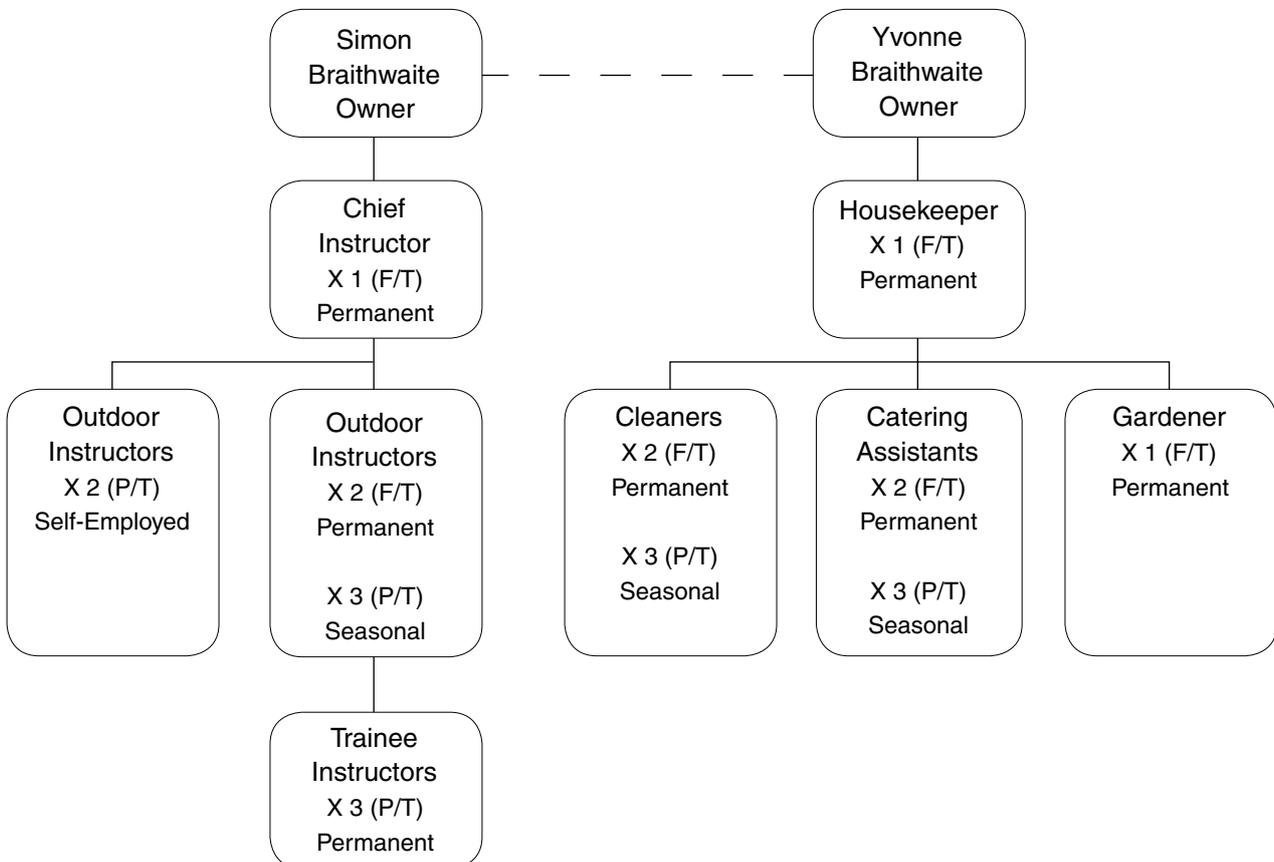


Fig. 1

The location of the centre is remote, with the nearest village being six miles away. The permanent instructors live on site whilst working and have food and accommodation provided as part of the job. Although wages are seen as quite poor, they are in line with industry standards. The household staff at present are all female and are recruited from the local villages. One human resource issue which is ongoing for the centre relates to the household staff. There are limited progression opportunities within the centre, a high level of staff turnover and problems in recruiting new people to clean and cater. At the moment, the housekeeper is pregnant and due to start maternity leave shortly; therefore, a replacement is needed. 25

Yvonne has a constant word of mouth recruitment drive. She has never produced job descriptions or person specifications and often employs anyone willing to work, without collecting references or any other information about them. Yvonne relies on the existing staff to show the new employees the way things work. This results in very inconsistent training. 30

Unlike the household staff, many of the outdoor instructors have been working at the centre for up to 10 years. In this aspect of the business there is low staff turnover. 35

Chief instructor, Sam, has been at the centre for the last 10 years, but of late has not been carrying out his duties as expected. He is often late when meeting his groups for activities. The last two schools he has worked with have made formal complaints about his lateness and his lack of interest in the group. Simon has spoken to Sam about this and has started the disciplinary process with an oral warning. During this discussion Sam said, "I'm bored, I've done the same thing day in day out for the last 10 years, I'm sick of the long hours, both day and night that I'm expected to work and at a minimal rate of pay and you don't give me any opportunity to contribute to the decisions about the development of the centre. I've been here longer than you and you wonder why I lack motivation!" 40

Three years ago Simon established a training programme for school leavers. They pay for instruction and experience which leads them to become fully qualified instructors over a period of 18 months. This scheme is working well with three trainees being taken on every 18 months. The majority of the training offered to the trainees is in-house and on the job; however, some areas of training such as First Aid are done externally. Although the trainees are happy with the training and experience provided, they are in the dark about how they are progressing. Simon recognises this and is looking at a range of appraisal techniques to address this problem. 45 50

Both Simon and Yvonne recognise they have staffing issues and are planning to review the whole centre's operations in the hope that they can become more professional and consistent in their approaches.

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