

**CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)**

**Examiners' report**

**BUSINESS**

**05834–05837, 05878**

**Unit 9 January 2025 series**

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from [Teach Cambridge](#).

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## Unit 9 series overview

Unit 9 is a two-hour examination paper which carries 90 marks. This series the paper comprised of eight questions and 15 part-questions. This series has seen a very wide range of marks achieved by candidates. This has depended on knowledge and understanding of the teaching content and the level of exam preparation.

Less successful responses continue to show a lack of knowledge of the teaching content and key HR terminology. Stronger responses showed good knowledge and understanding of most parts of the specification and used context well within responses. Many of the stronger scripts also showed that candidates had practised structuring Levels of Response questions.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of topics across the specification</li> <li>• were able to use key HR terminology</li> <li>• answered questions in context</li> <li>• focused on key words within each question</li> <li>• understood the difference between labour turnover and employee retention calculations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated a lack of knowledge and understanding of key topic areas within the specification</li> <li>• did not focus on key words within each question</li> <li>• did not use HR terminology</li> <li>• did not answer questions in context.</li> </ul>



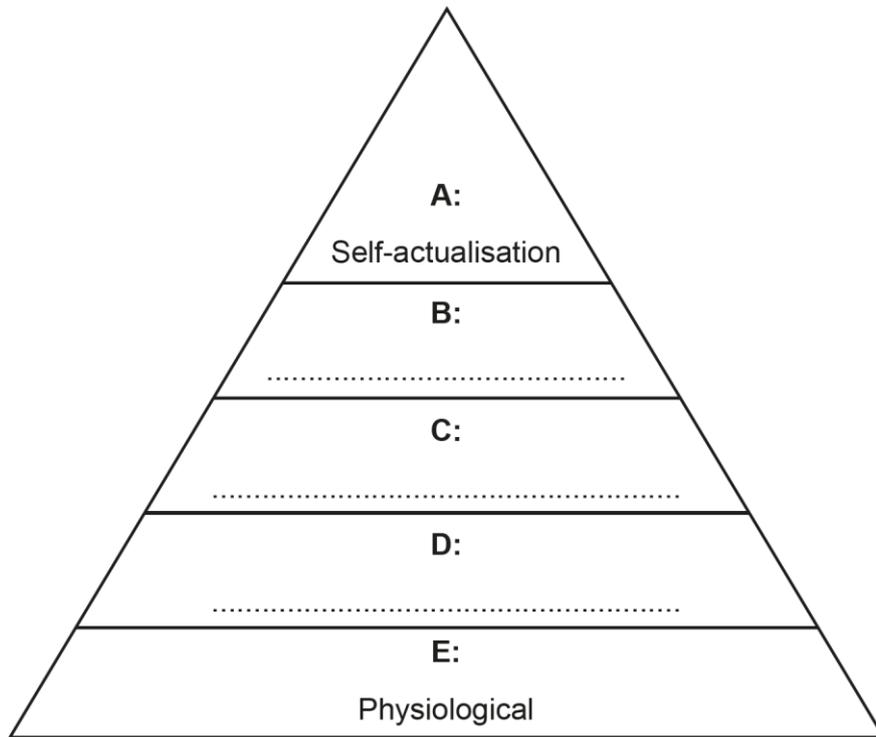






### Question 2 (c)

(c) An incomplete diagram of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is shown below.



Complete the diagram by inserting the names of Needs **B, C and D**, above.

[3]

The full range of marks was awarded for this question. There were many NR answers.

Learning Objective 2.1 lists the motivational theories that may be tested on exam papers for this unit.

## Question 2 (d)

(d) The external training course has motivated the production operatives.

Evaluate likely benefits to Locks Ltd of having motivated production operatives.

[16]

Most candidates made a good attempt at this question; being able to identify at least one benefit to the business of having motivated production operatives.

Some candidates structured their responses so that 'increased motivation' was the business-facing impact of an identified benefit. Candidates need to avoid this, as in a question about motivation this is not awardable.

To achieve Level 3, analysis had to link to the Level 1 benefit, either directly or via explanation. Some candidates did not achieve Level 3 as this link was not evident, e.g. lower labour turnover (Level 1) leads to a better reputation. Explanation would be required to clarify how lower labour turnover could result in a better reputation to achieve Level 3.

To achieve Level 4, candidates needed to make a judgement as to the most significant (most important, most beneficial) benefit and provide a reason for this. Some candidates provided a summary conclusion that repeated the points already made, without making a judgement, and therefore did not achieve Level 4.

In responses, encourage candidates to identify productivity and efficiency as two separate points: similarly with absenteeism and labour turnover. For example, if a benefit were identified as a 'reduction in labour turnover and absenteeism', this would be given two Level 1 marks. Any further development would need to link to the second of the two identified, in this example, a reduction in absenteeism. Many candidates switched between the two during a chain of argument and therefore did not achieve the higher levels. This also negatively impacted candidates who, for example, identified lower labour turnover and absenteeism as the most significant benefit in their conclusion. As they had chosen two benefits then Level 4 could not be awarded.

Phrases such as work harder, work better, work faster are all too vague to be awarded. Encourage candidates to use HR/business terminology, e.g. be more productive and work more efficiently.



## Question 4

- 4 A climate survey has shown that some of the building maintenance team lack employee engagement.

Evaluate methods that Locks Ltd could use to improve the engagement of the employees in the building maintenance team. [16]

This question assessed LO4.1: Methods of employee engagement.

Candidate performance was dependent on whether they understood the difference between employee motivation and employee engagement. Candidates who considered methods of employee motivation did not perform well. However, most candidates who considered methods of employee engagement achieved at least Level 2. There were instances of NR answers.

As in previous series, common incorrect responses were, give them a bonus, have a social event, give them praise, give them a staff appraisal, have an employee of the month, etc. Candidates must also recognise the difference between team-working and team building.

Some candidates did not achieve Level 3 because the business-facing impact given was linked to employee engagement rather than the method that had been identified. In questions, such as this, candidates must analyse the method not the benefits of having engaged employees/drawbacks of having disengaged employees (see Exemplar 1).

To achieve Level 3 there also needed to be a clear link between the Level 1 method and the Level 3 business-facing impact. This could have been via additional explanation that did not necessarily achieve Level 2. For example, some candidates jumped from increased team-working to lower absenteeism; however there needed to be explanation of how increased team-working might result in lower absenteeism for Level 3 to be awarded.

To achieve Level 4, candidates needed to make a judgement of the most appropriate method to introduce and provide a business-facing reason for this. Some candidates provided employee-facing reasons and therefore did not achieve Level 4, e.g. Flexible working is the most appropriate because it can be fit around the best times for the employees to work.

There was good use of context by many candidates within their response for this question.

Candidates should also note that job rotation is a form of training and therefore candidates who suggested training and job rotation were only credited for one of these methods.

### Assessment for learning



Candidates must know the difference between employee engagement and employee motivation, and the methods of encouraging each of these.

Candidates could approach a question such as Q4, by asking themselves how their response would differ if it were the alternative i.e. in this instance, if the question had been 'Evaluate methods that Locks Ltd could use to improve the motivation of the employees in the building maintenance team', rather than the engagement. This may help them to choose appropriate methods.

## Exemplar 1

[16]

One method ~~that is~~ ~~team work~~ is teamwork, this is because the building maintenance team lack relationship with the others because they all work on alone and far away from each other. This could lead to an improve employee engagement, therefore they are able to improve employee relations.

This candidate has correctly identified team-working to achieve Level 1. They have then explained why this has been suggested by referencing the scenario to achieve Level 2.

However, the potential Level 3 of improving employee relations is linked to employee engagement being improved, not the method of team-working. As such Level 3 was not achieved.

To achieve Level 3, this candidate needed a clear link explaining how introducing teamwork would lead to an improvement in employee relations (that did not include reference to employee engagement).

### Question 5

5 Explain **three** reasons why Locks Ltd would want to avoid conflict in the workplace.

1 .....

.....

.....

2 .....

.....

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3 .....

.....

.....

[9]

The full range of marks was awarded for this question. Candidate performance depended on whether candidates had responded in the positive or negative.

The question asks candidates to explain three reasons why Locks Ltd would want to avoid conflict not what might happen if conflict is not avoided. Many candidates responded in the negative and as such, did not achieve marks for this question.

### Question 6 (a)

- 6  
(a) Explain **one** way that onboarding can positively influence the relationship between operatives and managers at Locks Ltd.

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.....  
.....  
..... [3]

This was a very low-scoring question as most candidates did not show understanding of onboarding. There were many NR answers.

### Exemplar 2

The onboarding process at the shampoo and conditioner company helps new production operatives become familiar with the businesses operations and culture. This helps positively influence the relationship as production employees are able to have one-to-one conversations with management to become more comfortable and to better understand their management style. [3]

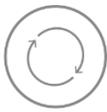
This candidate achieved the full 3 marks available for this question. They identified a purpose of onboarding to achieve the first mark (as per bullet point one on the mark scheme) They then explained how this can positively impact the relationship between operatives and managers. The response was also in context.

Exemplar 3

Onboarding can positively influence the relationship between operatives and managers at Locks Ltd because it will allow them to work on the closely together which will automatically help form a relationship between them.

This response was awarded zero marks as the candidate did not show understanding of onboarding.

**Assessment for learning**



If presented with a question such as this, encourage candidates to review their response to identify whether it is clear from what they have written what the term in the question is.

Question 6 (b)

(b) Identify **two** services that a trade union is likely to provide for the production operatives.

1 .....

.....

2 .....

.....

[2]

Candidates needed to identify services that a trade union is likely to provide i.e. things that a trade union would 'do' for their members.

Many candidates provided responses that were too vague, e.g. better pay and help in court. Correct responses would be, negotiate better pay and provide legal advice.

Some candidates interpreted this question as being about trading with the European Union.



### Question 8 (a)

8

(a) Explain **one** benefit to Locks Ltd of completing a skills audit before advertising the vacancy for an additional Production Manager.

.....

.....

.....

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.....

..... [2]

Most candidates showed understanding of a skills audit; however some did not identify that the question related to before advertising the vacancy. As such, many responses related to later points in the recruitment and selection process.

A common incorrect response was 'so only people with the necessary skills will apply' (or similar). However, a skills audit does not prevent anyone from applying for a role, even if they do not have the necessary skills.

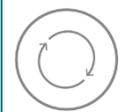
### Question 8 (b)

(b) Evaluate benefits to Locks Ltd of **only** advertising the job vacancy for an additional Production Manager **internally**. [8]

The full range of marks was awarded for this question. Candidate performance depended on whether responses related to advertising the job vacancy or recruiting for the vacancy. Candidates who identified that the question related to advertising, performed much better than those whose responses related to the benefits of recruiting someone who was already employed by the business.

Some candidates also considered the drawbacks of advertising the job vacancy internally. If a question asked for benefits to be evaluated then there is no requirement to consider the drawbacks.

#### Assessment for learning



Candidates should identify the key words and/or terms within each question. In this instance, 'advertising' was very key to candidate performance.

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