

**ENN1504**  
**REN1504**

October/November 2013

**PRACTISING WORKPLACE ENGLISH**

Duration 2 Hours

100 Marks

**EXAMINERS**  
FIRST  
SECOND

MR JD PROCTOR  
PROF MMK LEPHALALA

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**Closed book examination**

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**This examination question paper consists of 7 pages.**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- 1 ANSWER ALL THREE QUESTIONS
- 2 READ THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY TO ENSURE THAT YOU MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF EACH QUESTION
- 3 ATTEND TO BOTH CONTENT AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN YOUR ANSWERS

## Question 1

### MINUTES OF A MEETING

#### BACKGROUND

As a result of renovations to the buildings in which your business (BrightStar College) is housed, a number of departments and sections are temporarily being accommodated in one huge open plan office. The departments in question are *Dispatch, Training, Project Management, Legal Services Policy Development, and IT*. This has resulted in a number of minor conflict situations, caused by noise levels and security-related issues such as theft.

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) has placed these issues on the agenda for the next monthly inter-departmental meeting. As secretary to the Chief Operations Officer (COO) it is your task to take minutes of staff meetings.

Below is a transcript (exact words written down) of what was said under agenda item 5.1 of this meeting, presented in the form of a dialogue.

Write the minutes of this discussion, which covers only one agenda item, and not the whole meeting. THIS MEANS THAT THE COMPLETE FORMAT FOR MINUTES IS NOT REQUIRED. Minute the discussion under the following subheading.

#### 5.1 Conflict in temporary accommodation

##### Transcript of part of the meeting:

Ms Moroke (Chair) Right then, if we're all on the same page, let's move on to item 5.1 of the agenda. **Conflict in temporary accommodation**. I've had a number of upsetting complaints via internal memos about two aspects especially security-related issues such as petty theft, and noise levels. Seriously, this is most unsettling. This was one of the aspects which the project co-ordinators didn't even consider when we were all lumped together in one office. And now these matters are seriously starting to negatively affect the whole renovation project.

Mr Smith Oh, for heaven's sake! Can't you other managers keep tabs on what is happening in your departments? I keep a tight rein on each and every employee, and if anyone is any place where he or she shouldn't be, I give a written warning. I don't stand for nonsense.

- Mr Jacobs (softly in an aside to Ms Singh)  
And that's why he's the most unpopular manager around, with 30 grievances against him at the last count!
- Ms Moroke            Mr Jacobs, only one meeting at a time, please. If you have something to share, please tell us all!
- Mr Jacobs            Sorry Ma'am. I was just thinking aloud.
- Ms Singh             The fact of the matter is that we're constantly getting complaints. I've had three cases of petty theft in as many days, and really, I feel Management must come up with workable and realistic solutions.
- Ms Mpanda           I've even had veiled and open threats about "going to the union" if Management doesn't quickly and as a matter of urgency do something concrete, in a manner of speaking.
- Adv Marais           I agree with Ms Singh. And to add insult to injury – my department regularly objects to the noise levels in the open-plan office. As you all know, we all have to do a great deal of intensive reading of legal documents, and the noise levels in the office are most irritating. I realise that departments such as Dispatch don't have much work to do at this time of the year, and that the girls there can spend their time knitting and socialising, but come on guys, a bit of consideration wouldn't be bad. Is this too much to ask? And the chaps at IT all sit with headphones on, and this gives them an excuse to shout at each other in an attempt to be heard!
- Ms Diphofa           Now, just a minute! I strongly object to you calling the women in my department "girls"! And your tone of voice is most insulting! Yes, we don't all have to read terribly important documents, and make terribly important legal decisions, but I'll have you know -
- Mr Jacobs (interrupting)            And my team are hard at work putting together new training manuals for next year. We find the noise levels impossible. But there's no need for the two of you to act like a couple of kids – let's try and arrive at a solution.
- Ms Moroke            Order! Order! Mr Jacobs, seriously, I think you have a very valid point. Let's look past personal feelings and let's move on. We're all adults here. I want suggestions from the floor. Let's take the issue

of noise first. What do you suggest, Mr Jacobs, since you seem to be the calmest one here?

- Ms Mphanda: I object. As the only member here with Project Management training apart from you, Chair, I should be the first one to suggest remedial actions!
- Ms Moroke: Ms Mphanda, please raise your objections through the Chair. I've noted your request, and you'll have your turn to suggest remedies. Everyone here will get to say something. Mr Jacobs, please?
- Mr Jacobs: I suggest we move *Training* and *Legal Services* to the furthest end of the open plan office. Both these departments require silence, and we could try to isolate them as much as present office space will allow.
- Ms Moroke: Excellent idea! Anyone else on this matter?
- Ms Diphofa: I know there are a number of padded partition screens in storage on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. I saw them last week when I was doing an audit of available assets. What about putting these up to screen the legal eagles and trainers from the rest of the departments? This should help to cut down on noise.
- Adv Marais: Colleagues, this would help tremendously. But I beg each and every manager here present to talk to your people, and remind them to be considerate. No music. No loud chit-chat across the floor – they should get up and walk to the next colleague.
- Ms Moroke: Excellent! Excellent! I knew we'd arrive at solutions if we put our heads together. Now what about the theft issue? Ms Mphanda, then Ms Singh. Oh yes, and I see your hand. Mr Smith, I acknowledge you.
- Ms Mphanda: One security guard at the entrance to the office is not enough. I suggest that three or four be placed around the office.
- Ms Moroke: Thank you for the idea, but unfortunately our budget for security staff has been stretched to the limit. There are just no more funds. Ms Singh?
- Ms Singh: I suggest a set of lockers for each department, to be placed as close to each department's workstations as possible. Then when people arrive in the mornings, they can immediately put their

handbags, manbags, laptop bags and valuables away and lock them up

- Ms Mphanda      This means we'll have people locking and unlocking all day long, and this will raise the noise levels again. I can't see that this will solve anything. And in any case, lockers are big and clumsy, and there isn't much space available, at least not where we are sitting.
- Ms Singh          They needn't be big and clumsy – MobileMart has some very compact ones available.
- Ms Moroke        Thanks Ms Singh. Please make the arrangements. We can have each locker fitted with a combination lock. Thanks for a good suggestion. Mr Smith and then Adv Marais.
- Mr Smith          If there's still money available in the budget, we could consider having the surveillance cameras fixed in the open plan office. If I remember correctly, they stopped functioning three years ago, and no-one had them fixed, since the venue was unused until we all moved in. Advocate, do you know the state of the budget for repairs?
- Adv Marais        There's still quite a sum left for repairs. I can't give you exact amounts, but I'll look into the matter and give my recommendation to Ms Moroke.
- Ms Moroke        I think we've come up with some excellent suggestions. I seriously commend you all for your positive attitude. If no-one else has anything to add, we'll move on to the next item. Should we take a ten minute break?

[30]

**Question 2**

**WRITING SKILLS IN WORKPLACE CORRESPONDENCE**

Read the draft memo below critically and then improve on it by revising, editing, and proofreading it. This means that you should write your own version of the message, and may add or leave out information. In your revised version, you should have grammatically correct English, appropriate style and well-structured paragraphs.

Your answer should not exceed one page in length.

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Everyone concerned  
**FROM:** College Workers Union (CWU)  
**DATE:** 5<sup>th</sup> of June, 2013  
**RE:** Eating

I have been told through various fair and foul means, that there's managers which object to incumbents eating at their desks during lunch and teatimes. They object to the lunchtime mess and chat in the offices where we deal with the public. Management of CWU understand how they feel, but what are we to do if we are being expected to be having a skeleton staff at our desks at lunchtimes. We are being reminded constantly of what it means to be having a good service delivery, but then the interests of the workers who earn their bread and butter at mealtimes are being forgotten.

CWU is very much concerned that worker's rights' is being infringed. To this end, we were having tentative talks with management and the vice principal of our esteemed college, as precursor to the meeting of our bargaining forum which as you know is happening every year, annually, in June. We mentioned our concerns, and our vp suggested that CWU does a investigation and sets up a report into how many departments have places allocated for eating and tea drinking during a working day, and informal communications. He also suggested that CWU must ask each and every manager of a department where there is no allocated chill room for staff what is he going to do about it, and if he has any space available where his workers can chill out and eat.

This memo then serves to inform every one of you managers that CWU will be coming round during the three weeks' starting from 10 June until 31 June 2013, to chat to you and find out the state of eating affairs in your section. Please know that CWU has nothing against you personally, but that it is of the utmost importance that we once and for always look into and report on this state of affairs. We will be glad to listen to your problems in regards to this, and listen to your positive suggestions and rest assured, all your comments will be included into our report to the vp.

As a final comment, please know that this investigation carries the full and comprehensive support of top management and the office of our esteemed vp.

Yours Sincerely  
Pottie Potomak

[30]

### Question 3

#### REPORT WRITING

You have been asked by the Principal of BriteStar College to prepare a report on the adequacy of staff room facilities throughout the college, as indicated by Mr P Potomak in the memorandum dated 5 June 2013

The departments which you should include in your investigation are the following

- Registration and tellers
- Dispatch
- Call Centre
- Student support
- IT Support

These departments have different and unique problems with regard to available space, differing time schedules and the number of staff members

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Write a short investigative report. You should include a title and use the following subheadings

- 1 Terms of reference
- 2 Procedures
- 3 Findings
- 4 Conclusions
- 5 Recommendations

Your report should be 2-3 pages in length

[40]  
**TOTAL MARKS: [100]**

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