

Tutorial Letter 201/1/2012

Practising Workplace English

ENN1504

Semester 1

Department of English Studies

This tutorial letter contains feedback on assignments and examination guidelines.

Bar code

Dear Student,

This tutorial letter is divided into two sections. In the first section we provide general feedback to Assignments 01 and Assignment 02, Semester 1, 2012. Where possible we include a good response by a student, without disclosing the student's identity. There are many different ways of responding to the questions, but you should find it helpful to compare the sample answers with your own answers. Section B consists of guidelines that you need to use to prepare for the coming examinations.

SECTION A Assignment feedback

ASSIGNMENT 1 (Multiple Choice)

Here are the answers to Assignment 1. Please compare your answers to those provided below. For you to learn from this exercise, try to think carefully about the rationale behind each choice of answer. Work on **why** each option is correct, and not just **which** option is correct.

Question	Answer
1	2
2	3
3	2
4	3
5	3
6	2
7	3
8	2
9	2
10	1
11	3

12	2
13	1
14	2
15	1
16	2 & 3
17	2
18	1
19	1
20	2
21	2
22	1
23	1
24	1
25	4

Assignment 2

Question 1 Correspondence (memo)

For this question, you had to write a memo to your colleagues informing them of the results of your investigation into the issue of office theft in your company. You also had to inform your colleagues of measures that would be implemented to tackle the stated problem. For more information on how to write memos, please read Study Unit 2 in your study guide.

Below is an example of a response to this question:

M E M O R A N D U M**VISTA ELECTRONICS**

TO: All members of staff

FROM: Stan Zamale
Head of Security

DATE: 15 March 2012

SUBJECT: Measures to curb office theft

As you are all aware, our company has endured a frustrating spate of office theft in recent months. After a thorough investigation into this matter, I conclude that our premises provide adequate security infrastructure to prevent such theft, and that most incidents are of an opportunistic nature. The criminals seem to take advantage of items lying in full view and in places with easy access. To curb the frequent occurrence of theft, management has decided on the following:

- Staff and visitors will be checked at all exit points.
- Security personnel have been given permission to lock all offices left unlocked in the evenings.
- All offices will be fitted with safes where staff will have to lock away their valuables.
- All laptop security cords will be drilled to the wall.

We understand that these measures will take getting used to, but request your understanding and cooperation to ensure a safer work environment for all.

S Zamale

S Zamale
Head of Security

Question 2 Meeting procedures and documentation

Marking guideline

For this question, we allowed acceptable variations and some flexibility in the amount of detail recorded under each of the subheadings taken from the agenda. Your minutes should reflect that discussion took place, and give some indication of a decision on the matter. We occasionally accepted a straightforward announcement by the chairperson. If no decisions were recorded, what was the point of discussing the problem?

For more information on meetings and minutes, please read Study Unit 3 of your study guide. Below is a sample response to the question.

ExtremEvents

(No event is too extreme!)

MINUTES OF A GENERAL STAFF MEETING HELD IN ROOM B106 ON 21 MARCH 2012

1. Welcome

The chairperson, Ms Vanda, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present. A special word of welcome went to Ms Jenny Lamola, who attended the meeting as part of the "Take a girl-child" to work campaign.

2. Present

Ms T. Vanda Chairperson

Mr P. Gordon Secretary

Ms Z. Sukazi Financial Director

12 members as per attached attendance register.

3. Apologies

Ms de Kock

Mr Salif

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 14 January 2012 had been circulated and were taken as read. The minutes were approved.

[Another way of saying that they were approved is: The minutes were accepted without amendment.]

5. Matters Arising from the previous meeting

None.

6. New Matters

6.1. Chairperson's report

Ms Vanda congratulated everyone for working hard and successfully completing their projects. She noted that in spite of challenges, everybody had pulled together to ensure one of the most productive months for the company.

Ms Vanda assured the meeting that management were working on a rotation plan to ensure that each person would be granted an opportunity to manage a project before the end of the year.

6.2. Finance Director's report

Ms Sukazi reported that the previous month had been the most financially productive for the company, with a 52% increase in profits as compared to the same time the previous year. A detailed financial report had been circulated to staff a week before the meeting.

The offices had been refurbished (blinds and paint) and the costs had been met with no outstanding balances.

Staff had received performance bonuses in recognition of their hard work.

6.3. Disagreement with a client

(See documents attached as Annexure A for background to the discussion.)

It was suggested that the client be compelled to foot the bill, as per the contract. Another suggestion was that ExtremEvents settles the account to maintain good relations with the customers.

After a discussion, it was decided that ExtremEvents and the client would pay equal parts of the bill. The legal department was tasked to draft an agreement to that effect and circulate it to staff within two days. Ms Vanda was to communicate with the client and ask him to wait for communication from ExtremEvents.

6.4. Fireworks Expo

For capacity building, it was suggested that two staff members attend the Fireworks Expo (see attached invitation and programme: Annexure B). It was decided that one intern and one other staff member would attend. Interested staff should forward their names to Ms Vanda on that same day.

6.5. Forum of businessmen party

The local forum of businessmen had asked ExtremEvents to organise a farewell party for the forum's chairperson. The theme for the party would be "Night of Fireworks". Mr Salif was tasked to conduct an investigation into the feasibility of hosting a fire-related theme in the venue chosen by the forum.

7. General

No further items were raised for discussion.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 12 April 2012. The venue and time would be communicated in due course.

9. Closure

The meeting was closed at 11:30.

Question 3 Report writing

You were asked to write an investigative report on the efficiency of your organization's travel office. You had to pay attention to the report format - appropriate information under each subheading; procedures - methods of investigation had to be appropriate and comprehensive; substantiation of the report by inclusion of at least some accurate and realistic (real or invented) factual information; appropriate style - tone and register; aspects of English usage (fluency and accuracy). For more information on writing reports please read Study Unit 4. Here is a sample answer:

A REPORT ON THE EFFICIENCY OF EASYGO TRAVEL PTY (LTD) IN FULFILLING THE TRAVEL NEEDS OF WRITEWELL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES.**1. Terms of reference**

At a meeting on 30 October 2012 Ms Hanna Ramani, Chief Executive Officer at WriteWell Educational Resources, requested an investigation into the efficiency of the organization's travel office in fulfilling the travel needs of the organization. Recommendations are to be submitted to Ms Ramani by 30 November 2012.

2. Procedure

Procedures used to obtain information include:

- 2.1 Visited the travel office with Mr Sonny Samson, the employee representative at EasyGo Travel.
- 2.2 Consulted Ms Siza Nkonde, one of the team leaders at EasyGo Travel.
- 2.3 Interviewed Ms Ziza Langa, an administrative officer at WriteWell.
- 2.4 Spoke to Mr Emmanuel Roberts, the Chief Financial Officer at WriteWell.

3. Findings

Based on the procedures listed above, the following was found:

- 3.1 The ICT equipment at the travel office is outdated, damaged and in poor working condition.

- 3.2 Most employees at the WriteWell branch of EasyGo were employed as a courtesy to the community; most of them do not have proper training for the jobs they do.
- 3.3 WriteWell employees are frustrated with the booking errors that often lead to cancelled projects and unhappy clients.
- 3.4 WriteWell loses thousands every month due to lost revenue and clientele.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 WriteWell employees are hindered from performing their tasks due to the inefficiencies at the travel office.
- 4.2 The inadequacies at the travel office can no longer be tolerated.
- 4.3 WriteWell cannot afford to lose more money due to the inefficiencies at the travel office.
- 4.4 EasyGo employees are not entirely to blame for their inefficiencies.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The EasyGo headquarters should take the travel office staff for training with immediate effect.
- 5.2 EasyGo should provide professional staff to man the travel office while the regular staff is on training.
- 5.3 EasyGo should provide updated ICT equipment.
- 5.4 Subsequent contracts for service providers should pass through the quality assurance office.

Compiled by

AB Student

AB Student

20 November 2012

Question 4 Proposal writing

You were asked to write a proposal for the upgrading of water supply to Zone 8. The background to the question was to guide your answer. We gave you subheadings that some of you used to conceptualise and frame a meaningful and complete proposal. Read Study Unit 5 for more details. This is how you could have responded:

PROPOSAL FOR UPGRADING WATER SUPPLY TO ZONE 8, PRETORIA.**1. Background**

A low-cost housing project for Zone 8, which falls under this municipality, was completed in 2005. The infrastructure that was put in place to supply households, businesses and the community with water has proved to be inadequate, and has not been properly maintained.

2. Objectives

This proposal details measures aimed at addressing this problem by upgrading water supply infrastructure for Zone 8.

3. Implementation Plan

3.1 Acquire official upgrade plans from the city engineers by the end of April 2012.

3.2 Employ support staff (see roles and responsibilities attached as Addendum A) by the end of June 2012.

3.3 Purchase materials (see attached list). Initial building material will be bought by the end of July 2012, with subsequent materials bought according to the project progression.

4. Resources

4.1 R 280 000 for the engineers.

4.2 R 3,500 000 for staff recruitment.

4.3 R 7,800 000 for building material.

5. Conclusion

It is envisaged that the project will be completed in six months at a total cost of R11,580 000. The dilapidated state of the water system requires that urgent action be taken to avoid further damage and health hazards.

SECTION B: EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

ASSESSMENT

Evaluation of your answers to examination questions will be carried out in much the same way as for Assignment 02. Your marks will be determined by considering three broad areas:

- Content and structure
- Writing style
- Correct English usage

The following Assessment Criteria describe these in detail.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Clarity is the combined effect of the following qualities of good business writing:

CONTENT

[Writing skill: Revising]

- **Information accuracy and completeness** - information is reliable and specific, and includes everything that is useful and necessary. The reader should not have to ask When? Where? Why? Who? What? How? There is no unnecessary or insignificant information and there are no irrelevant ideas.

- **Structure** - ideas and information are clustered and organised in a sequence that makes sense. The structure reflects the various clusters of information and the various aspects of meaning in the text. Where a conventional format is used, the information provided should be appropriate to each section or subheading.

STYLE**[Writing skill: Editing]**

- **Appropriateness** - using language that suits the purpose (to inform, describe, explain, persuade, argue, complain, request, etc.), the subject matter and all probable readers. The language is also suited to communication in the written *mode*. Sentence construction contributes to readability and clarity.
- **Conciseness** - not writing more than is necessary to achieve the purpose.

LANGUAGE ACCURACY**[Writing skill: Proofreading]**

- **Correctness** - using error-free grammar, spelling and punctuation that make the text easy to read and comprehend, and enable the reader to attend to the contents of the message without distraction. Complete accuracy (correctness) is not always attainable or essential, but is generally preferred, and so remains a target.

EXAM TECHNIQUE

Answers must meet the requirements of the question. Although we do not require you to show your planning, **you need to think very carefully about the precise wording of the question.** Questions and instructions are often complex, and need to be analysed step-by-step. You will be tested partly on your ability to comprehend and give well-planned responses to specific instructions.

Answers should be well-structured - pay special attention to your paragraphing.

Remember to make your answers as realistic as possible by including sufficient 'factual' information. Where you do not have access to actual information, you may invent (i.e. make up) the appropriate details.

If you need to do some rough work, use the back pages of your answer book and rule a line through it so we can see it is not to be marked. However, be sure that you have enough time to finish all the answers that we must mark.

Plan your time carefully to ensure that you respond to all questions. On the other hand, you should not rush so much that you do not use all of the time available to you. On the basis on the Question Paper format described below, you should be able to estimate how much time you can spend on each question.

QUESTION PAPER FORMAT

You will write one 2-hour paper worth a total of 100 marks. Your examination mark will contribute towards 80% of your final mark, the remaining 20% will come from your semester mark.

Here is an **example** of how your final mark will be calculated:

A. Assignment 01 = 60%

Assignment 02 = 70%

Assignment mark: $60 + 70 = 130 \div 2 = 65\%$

$65 \times 0.20 = 13\%$

Your semester mark is then 13 (out of 20).

B. Exam mark = 52%

$52 \times 0.8 = 41.6$ (out of 80)

C. Final mark = assignment mark + exam mark

Final mark = $13 + 41.6 = 54.6 = \mathbf{55\%}$

You are required to answer all three questions asked.

Question 1 Meetings

30 marks

You will be given a transcript of the discussion of just one agenda item, and you will minute this one item. We are not examining your knowledge of the format of minutes, but are concerned with how you use English to minute a given item. You need to select and record all the important information. Your answer will show that you are able to summarise and write in an appropriate style, adopt a neutral tone, change to mainly past tense and change spoken to written language. This means that the quality of your answer counts more than the quantity.

Question 2 Workplace Correspondence- Writing skills

30 marks

You will be given a draft text which you will revise, edit and proofread, paying careful attention to the ideas and information, paragraphs, writing style, grammar and punctuation.

The context of this writing task will be described in the question.

Question 3 Report Writing

40 marks

You will write a short formal (investigative) report in a given context. Please familiarise yourself with the relevant subheadings and how they are used in this type of report.

FINALLY...

Study the relevant sections of the study material - including your study guide - containing information on the work referred to above.

The ENN1504 team wishes you all the best for your examination!

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