

Examiner's Report - International 1: Core Unit 1B – Foundation in International Employee Benefits – October 2024

Summary

It is the view of the Examiners that Candidates found this to be a challenging paper. In summary:

- *Candidates who gave targeted answers to the questions, providing the specific detail requested from the relevant section of the study material, were able to score the highest marks.*
- *Candidates who gave short and/or generic answers to the questions, without providing the specific detail requested from the relevant section of the study material, were unable to score the marks necessary to obtain a passing grade.*
- *Many candidates failed to learn the study manual to a degree where they could recall any of the specific details required to gain marks.*

In addition to commentary on the questions below, general guidance for Candidates is provided at the end of this report.

Question 1

In the context of 'Total Reward', describe the differences between Compensation (Salary and Bonuses) and Employee Benefits.

(10 marks)

- Most Candidates were able to make a good attempt at this question, identifying some of the key points.
- More specific detail was required from the relevant section of the study material for higher marks.

Study Manual 1: Section - Part 1, Chapter 1.1 (Page 2)

Question 2

Draft a report which identifies the specific roles and tasks of Lawyers in the area of International Benefits Management.

(20 marks)

- Most Candidates struggled to provide the level of detail required for this question.
- The question required Candidates to learn and recall detail regarding the specific roles and tasks of Lawyers as defined in the study manual.
- Candidates are advised to check the number of marks available for each question and use this as a guide to the level of detail required.
- Candidates are reminded that long form questions can be set to test detailed country specific knowledge and to prepare accordingly.

Study Manual 1; Section: Part 7, Chapter 12.2 (Pages 127-128)

Question 3

List the key features of 'Company Share Option Plans (CSOPs)' in the UK.

(5 marks)

- Most Candidates struggled to provide the level of detail required for this question.
- The question required Candidates to learn and recall detail regarding the key features of 'Company Share Option Plans (CSOPs)' in the UK including limits, timeframes, and tax treatment.

Study Manual: Part 4 (An overview of Key Employee Benefits), Chapter 6.2 (Page 56)

Question 4

Your Company is considering adding Flex Benefits to its International Benefits Strategy.

As the International Benefits Manager you have been asked to draft a briefing note on Flex Benefits that covers:

- a) the main reasons companies give for introducing Flex Benefits,
- b) the conditions required to consider the introduction of Flex Benefits.

(15 marks)

- Candidates demonstrated some good general knowledge regarding Flex Benefits
- However, to score well on this question, it was necessary to tailor the answer to the main reasons and conditions required as per a) and b) of the question.
- Candidates are encouraged to learn and recall detail from the study manual to in addition to using knowledge gained from their day to day experience, in order to be able to cover the full range of points needed to score well.

Study Manual: Part 4 (An overview of Key Employee Benefits), Chapter 7.2 (Page 63)

Question 5

Write a brief note outlining the framework for the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the Euro, and the criteria for automatic qualification for participation in the EMU.

(10 marks)

- Some candidates demonstrated very good recall of the study manual and demonstrated their knowledge on the subject, but many candidates could not recall the details required to gain marks.
- To score well on this question, it was necessary to write down specific detail on the history of the framework of the EMU and precise detail on the criteria for automatic qualification for participation in the EMU.

Study Manual Section - Part 12 (The European Union), Chapter 1.3 (Page 197)

Question 6

In the region of Europe and North America, Poland is a good example of a country that has reformed its social security and supplementary retirement systems.

Draft a report on the 'new environment' in Poland on:

- a) Social Security (Pillar 1),
- b) Compulsory Employer-sponsored Pension Provision (Pillar 2),
- c) Voluntary Employer-sponsored or Individual Plans (Pillar 3), and
- d) whom the 'new environment' applied to and detail any subsequent changes to the 'new environment' in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis.

(20 marks)

- Some candidates demonstrated very good recall of the study manual and demonstrated their knowledge on the subject, but many candidates could not recall any of the details required to gain marks.
- Specific detail was required from the relevant section of the study material to achieve marks.
- Whilst IGP Country Profiles were not examinable material for this exam session, the study manual itself does contain country specific information which is examinable.

- Candidates are advised to check the number of marks available for each question and use this as a guide to the level of detail required.
- Candidates are reminded that long form questions can be set to test detailed country specific knowledge and to prepare accordingly.

Study Manual Section - Part 11 (Regional Round-up: Europe and North America), Chapter 1.2.3 (Pages 186-187)

Question 7

Write down the key objectives of Employee Representation

(5 marks)

- Most Candidates were able to make a good attempt at this question, identifying some of the key points.
- More specific detail was required from the relevant section of the study material for higher marks.

Study Manual: Part 7 (The role of different parties involved in the provision of International Employee Benefits), Chapter 7.2 (Page 113)

Question 8

Describe the four main forms of legislation which may be taken by the European Union (EU) as part of their legislative process.

(15 marks)

- Some candidates demonstrated very good recall of the study manual and demonstrated their knowledge on the subject, but many candidates did not provide sufficient details.
- Specific detail was required from the relevant section of the study material to achieve marks.

Study Manual Section - Part 12, Chapter 1.5 (Page 196)

Generally, Candidates are encouraged to:

- Ensure an understanding of the structure of the course and CU1B syllabus, noting that exam questions can be set on all of the examinable material noted in the course material (Managing International Employee Benefits, Core Unit 1B Study Manual, Preface, Important Notes).
- Read questions carefully to determine to which area of the study material is being examined, and what the question is asking you to focus on.
- Avoid spending too much time providing information which has not been asked for in the question, or which is not described in similar detail in the study material.
- Take note of instructive words given in the question – for example “list” indicates that a list of key items is required, rather than a block of descriptive text.
- Note that of the number of marks available can be used to indicate the level of detail required in an answer.
- Remember to include any dates, amounts, limits and figures detailed in the relevant section of the study material to add sufficient detail to your answer to score full marks.
- Take advantage of any bonus marks available for format.
- An important part of the CU1B syllabus is to test Candidates' knowledge of benefits in different countries, and much country specific information is given in the study material. Where a particular country or jurisdiction is specified within a question, higher marks will usually be achieved by providing information from the section that is

specific to that country rather than generic information on the topic from another area of the study material