



**Higher Specialist Diploma  
Leadership and Management**

**September 2024**

**Short-Answer Questions**

**60 minutes**

**Attempt all Four Questions**

**Instructions to Candidates**

1. Record your candidate number and HSD discipline on the front sheet of the answer booklet.
2. Record your candidate number, the question number and the page number in the spaces provided on the answer sheets.
3. Begin each new answer on a new page.
4. Each question is worth 25 marks.

1. You receive a complaint from a member of ward staff that an identified laboratory staff member has been rude and abusive towards them. How would you investigate this and follow it up?
2. You as laboratory manager, and the manager of the LIMS administration team are off-site at a management training session when you are contacted and informed that the Pathology LIMS has failed.

Explain with reasons your approach to managing the immediate situation and the follow-up actions that you would implement.

3. Your department has a large cold storage facility close to the laboratory area which is used for critical reagents of high value which is linked to an electronic temperature monitoring system. This sends an alarm to designated telephone numbers in a cascade system ensuring there is always an acknowledgement. Once acknowledged, there is no follow up by the system. There has been an alarm which was picked up and thought to be due to a staff member loading supplies in to the unit. The following day, Friday, it transpires that the unit has been above temperature since alarming.

What is your approach to dealing with this situation in terms of immediate and future actions? How will you justify any financial losses to your organisation?

4. Internal Quality Control picks up a failure in the main analyser / equipment in your department however a significant number of samples have already been processed and the results issued. Explain with reasons the actions that you would take.



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**Essay Paper**

**120 minutes**

**Attempt 2 out of 5 Questions**

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2. Record your candidate number, the question number and the page number in the spaces provided on the answer sheets.
3. Begin each new answer on a new page.
4. Each question is worth 100 marks.





## **Higher Specialist Diploma**

### **Leadership and Management**

**September 2024**

**Case Studies**

**120 minutes**

**Attempt all Case Studies**

#### **Instructions to Candidates**

1. Record your candidate number and HSD discipline on the front sheet of the answer booklet.
2. Record your candidate number, the question number and the page number in the spaces provided on the answer sheets.
3. Begin **each new case study** on a new page.
4. Each question is worth 100 marks.
5. For these case study questions you are strongly advised to answer the questions as they arise during the case study to avoid later information impacting adversely on your answers to the earlier questions by presuming an “outcome”.

## SEEN CASE STUDY

1.

You manage a department where patients also attend to have samples taken or drop off samples they have collected at home. This is also the delivery point for hospital samples and GP samples, all of which are deposited via one hatchway, whether delivered by staff, patient or courier. Couriers' record deliveries using an electronic system whilst patients dropping off samples collected themselves have to have this information recorded manually by reception staff.

You receive a formal letter of complaint addressed to your department from someone writing on behalf of an elderly relative claiming they were repeatedly ignored by reception staff in favour of couriers and ward staff.

a. What would you do first? (10 marks)

The letter does not state a date, time or either sample or reason for attendance.

b. How will you proceed? (10 marks)

You receive the date, approximate time (12.30pm) and reason for the attendance: to deliver a complete 24 hour urine collection sample. The patient is an 82 year old female.

c. What would you do now? (20 marks)

The event took place during half term week on a day noted for flooding. There was a special open clinic in the nearby sexual health centre offering sample testing on the day, with treatments and advice based on the results from the laboratories. The sample was recorded as having been received at 12.48 pm.

d. What other information might you seek out? (10 marks)

e. What sort of picture could emerge with regard to staffing and activity at sample drop off that could have resulted in the alleged delay? (15 marks)

f. As a result of your investigation into the complaint, would your recommendation to the organisation be that the complaint was valid or not? Please state yes or no and justify your rationale. (15 marks)

- g. Is an apology an admission of guilt? Briefly explain your answer. (5 marks)
- h. Based on this event, what improvements might you make with regard to the patient experience? (15 marks)

### UNSEEN CASE STUDIES

2.

You are informed by a colleague that a staff member has been posting photographs of the department on social media along with comments that are detrimental and critical.

Management is spoken of scathingly and there are implications that the state of the equipment and premises may be causing patient harm.

The postings have picked up a number of followers and several Freedom of Information (Fol) requests have recently been received asking questions about equipment and its accuracy.

The Chief Operating Officer has become aware and asked you to meet with them over the impact of the postings on the organisation's reputation.

It is two weeks before a Care Quality Commission inspection.

Discuss your approach to each of the different elements of the case demonstrating understanding of each point and its implications and how you would deal with each one.

3.

You are the manager of a medium sized laboratory that works an extended day with minimal overnight working hours. You have been in post for several years and the staffing is relatively stable and seems satisfied in the workplace. You notice that there has been a little of slippage in a few staff member's discipline with regard to punctuality of arrival and returning from formal and discretionary breaks.

- a. Describe a few ways in which you can communicate the need for punctuality and time keeping to staff in a relatively informal style. (10 marks)
- b. Your communication improves things well in most cases. However one member of staff does not change their behaviour: what could you do here? (5 marks)

- c. The staff member, when you speak to them, says you are being unreasonable and singling them out. What should you do now? (5 marks)
- d. You are later contacted by Human Resources to let you know that the staff member has alleged bullying and that you have made sexist and racist comments about them. What can you do about this? (15 marks)
- e. You are then contacted by the staff member's union representative about the same issues. How would you act? (5 marks)
- f. HR get back in contact again to say the staff member has taken out a grievance against you formally and that they have asked the union representative to be involved. A formal case is being prepared. How can you prepare? (15 marks)
- g. The case is chaired by a senior manager with HR staff and the union representative in attendance. The staff member becomes very emotional, crying and saying you have made their position untenable. Their union representative is combative and accusatory. How should you behave? (15 marks)
- h. The outcome of the hearing is delivered, and you are given a first written warning. Is there anything you can do? The staff member has in the meantime taken sick leave due to stress but prior to this told other staff about the decision despite being told this should be confidential. (10 marks)
- i. You enter a formal appeal which is heard in due course by a different senior manager. It is decided that the written warning is too severe given your original case and appeal case. You will receive an informal warning which will remain on your record for a few months and not permanently. How would you go forward? (20 marks)