



**Higher Specialist Diploma**

**Leadership and Management**

**September 2025**

**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 field safety notice from the supplier of one of your main reagents that a problem has been found with one batch which should be withdrawn from use. You have been using this batch for over a week and the IQC has always been acceptable. Explain how you would manage the notice and what actions you would take with regard to this batch of reagents.
2. A large number of staff contact the department to say they will be very delayed arriving because of a major accident on the motorway many of them use and its knock-on effects on other roads. What will you do in this scenario?
3. You have run a recruitment campaign, appointed a successful candidate and as a result notified other applicants that they are unsuccessful. After making the offer of employment you discover that the candidate has not been truthful on their application and that as a result you wish to withdraw the offer.

Briefly explain, with reasons, how would you approach resolving this situation.

4. There has been a data breach in which confidential, identifiable patient data from a sexual health clinic has reached the public domain. The breach has been noted by local media.

Outline what you would do to manage the situation and prevent a recurrence.



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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.

1. You have attended IBMS Congress and identified a piece of equipment that you feel would be of real benefit to your department and organisation. Explain, with reasons, what you would include in a business case presentation to your organisation in order to gain funding for this equipment.
2. ISO 15189 requires the demonstration of management competence: discuss what management competence looks like and how it can be measured to add value to continuing personal and professional development.
3. Critically discuss the factors that mean change is often seen as challenging activity both for managers and staff and the steps that managers should take to prepare for a leading a significant change.
4. Discuss how you would prepare for the appraisal of a staff member who has specifically requested that you carry out the appraisal even though you do not directly line manage them. They indicate there are issues they would like to raise with management. Explain your approach to assessing and addressing issues that may be raised.
5. On reviewing a trend analysis of incident reports you notice there is a pattern of complaints about specific delayed results on one day of the week only. Discuss how you would investigate this formally, what factors may be the cause and make suggestions for ways to prevent further occurrences.



## **Higher Specialist Diploma**

### **Leadership and Management**

**September 2025**

**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 are the manager of one laboratory involved in a phased centralisation process across five hospitals. This involves a major central hub for Blood Sciences, Infection Sciences and Cellular Sciences supplemented by local Blood Sciences laboratories at two other sites carrying out surgery. There are point of care testing facilities in the central hub Emergency Department and at the remaining two sites, one of which has an on-site cytology service supporting a breast screening drop-in clinic once a week.

Assumptions:

- there is a compatible LIMS across all laboratory sites
- staff have been TUPE transferred into one employing entity
- a remote blood component issue system supports the local surgical units and the surgery performed is simple, superficial and elective
- point of care devices are managed by the laboratories

a. As a member of the Pathology management team, what sort of issues do you need to consider? (20 marks)

Although the staff have been TUPE transferred over with minimal job losses and morale is in general good, it is clear that the staff see themselves as belonging to their “home” laboratories.

b. How might you seek to create a new feeling of shared identity? (15 marks)

c. Staff are now expected to rotate between sites, where this is applicable to their discipline: what issues may this raise? (10 marks)

The hospitals used to use different courier companies and still have three providers. It is proposed by senior management that it would be preferable to have a single provider including a schedule of inter site transfers (on a trial basis).

d. Provide reasons as to why a single provider may be sought? (15 marks)

e. How would management go about selecting the single courier service? (20 marks)

f. How could you and your fellow managers take the new laboratory set up forward positively and proactively? (20 marks)

## UNSEEN CASE STUDIES

2.

A child has suffered actual harm as a result of a clinician acting upon a result released by your laboratory. The indications are that this incident could have long term, if not permanent effects. The parents have complained to the Chief Executive and issued a legal claim for damages using the interpretation services as English is not their first language. Staff are very affected and already morale is low. Several senior staff recently took advantage of early retirement packages and a programme of restructuring is in place. To keep staff levels adequate several locums have been taken on who are either pre-registration or not experienced in UK laboratories.

- a. How will you provide laboratory input into the patient complaint? Which staff will you approach to assist you? (20 marks)
- b. Describe how you will undertake a local investigation, the processes you will follow and the documentation you will complete. (15 marks)
- c. What do you feel are the key contributing causes to this incident? (15 marks)
- d. How would you deal with the staff and morale? (15 marks)
- e. What recommendations will you make to the Clinical Director and Trust executives as a result of this event? (15 marks)
- f. What practical measures will you put in place and what follow up will you undertake? Who will assist you? (20 marks)

3.

A staff member relatively recently recruited has asked for six weeks of annual leave across the summer holiday period as this was something they had negotiated at their previous NHS Trust.

- a. Explain the key implications of this request and your initial action. (15 marks)

The organisation allows two weeks leave with occasional exceptional allowances of three weeks.

b. What would you tell your staff member? (10 marks)

The staff member refuses to accept that this is fair in their case and writes long impassioned emails to you.

c. Describe the actions it might be useful for you to take now and why. (15 marks)

The staff member has been to Human Resources and stated they want to raise a grievance against you based on discrimination which they communicate to you and your line manager by email.

d. What are your actions now? (15 marks)

Human Resources has been in touch with you over the case to examine whether the grievance is valid or not.

e. How would you justify to them that your approach is reasonable? (15 marks)

f. Describe the alternative options you could consider and the potential implications on the department. (30 marks)