Higher Specialist Diploma

Leadership and Management

Examination - February 2021

Essay Paper

120 minutes

Attempt 2 out of 5 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 100 marks.
1. 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.

2. Is staff absence due to stress a symptom of overworked services or the result of enlightened organisational approaches to life pressures? Justify your answer.

3. Is demand management the only avenue to reduce expenditure in a laboratory or are there viable alternatives to cost improvement? Discuss the rationale for any items you would include in a cost improvement programme.

4. How would you go about managing a major change in your department requiring significant staff buy in? Describe a plan and indicate time frames and milestones for your chosen scenario.

5. How can quality objectives and key quality indicators be of real benefit to your departmental performance and delivery of high-quality patient services? Discuss any pros and cons of setting these and how you would measure improvements.
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Case Studies

120 minutes

Attempt all case studies

Instructions to candidates

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3. Begin each new answer on a new page.

4. Each question is worth 100 marks.
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? (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 newly promoted into a laboratory management post in an organisation where you have not worked before. After a few weeks you have seen personalities and patterns of behaviour emerge.

You note that one long serving staff member habitually takes extended tea breaks and lunches beyond contractual allowances and normal custom and practice. They expect to be allowed to take time out of work for personal reasons at short notice or sometimes no notice. Other staff say “that is how it has always been” but you feel this is unacceptable.

a. Which section of the Trust might be helpful to you in addressing this issue and how? (15 marks)

b. Which sort of policies would you hope to be able to refer to and what other documents would be useful to you? What other information could you be seeking? (15 marks)

You meet with the staff member to express your concerns which also include quality of work done. The staff member is clearly unhappy with this. They enlist a very vociferous union representative to meet with you.

c. What ways of managing the staff member would you consider to be best and for what reasons? (20 marks)

d. How would you ensure that time keeping is best monitored? Similarly, how could quality of work done be assessed and monitored? (20 marks)

After several weeks of implementing your planned measures, the union representative writes a formal letter to you stating that their member is claiming that they are being bullied and harassed. The staff member has called in sick with stress.
e. What steps would you now take to address both of these issues? Consider sources of Trust assistance in your answer. (15 marks)

f. Why might other staff have accepted the situation? (15 marks)

3. Your laboratory has a good quality culture and has just been visited by your accrediting/assessing organisation (e.g. UKAS/MHRA/HTA). You have received notification of a non-conformity/non-compliance regarding lack of evidence of the recording of staff training and competence. The training officer is off on maternity leave at the moment and no-one can find her records, although everyone agrees that the quality of training received by all grades of staff has been good. The quality manager thinks that the electronic records may have been lost in a recent hospital computer server failure and this may not have been adequately backed up.

You agree to take personal responsibility for this oversight and immediately agree to act as a temporary training officer for the department.

a. What are your initial actions to try to rectify the situation? (20 marks)

b. What kinds of audit might be useful in identifying where the training need of individuals may not be being met? Explain why the deficiency was not identified prior to the external inspection? (30 marks)

c. What other areas, where evidence has to be recorded, may also need to be reviewed in the light of this finding? (20 marks)

d. Describe the policies and procedures that would need to be put in place to ensure this never happens again? (30 marks)