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# Examiners' Report

## NEBOSH National General Certificate

### March 2008 examination

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## Introduction

The National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety has been offered since 1989 and, at the time of this examination, there were over 114,000 holders of the qualification. The NEBOSH Certificate is recognised by employers and regulators, both in the UK and internationally, as an extremely worthwhile qualification for those with health and safety responsibilities but who are not engaged professionally in health and safety. Such persons include managers, supervisors and employee representatives. The Certificate qualification demonstrates much more than a basic awareness of health and safety issues; it shows that those holding the qualification, while not deciding organisational policy, are able to make informed decisions and suggest improvements on a day-to-day basis (within the limits of their competence) such that those for whom they are responsible are not harmed by work activities.

The National General Certificate consists of three units, each separately assessed:

- Unit NGC1: Management of health and safety
- Unit NGC2: Controlling workplace hazards
- Unit NGC3: Health and safety practical application.

NGC1 and NGC2 are written examination papers set and marked by NEBOSH.

NGC3 has no syllabus content associated with it, but tests the application of knowledge acquired in the study of the first two units. Completed assessments for this unit are marked by a 'practical assessor' proposed by the centre and approved by NEBOSH. Marked NGC3 assessments are subject to external moderation by NEBOSH.

This Examiners' Report refers only to the two written examination papers, NGC1 and NGC2.

NEBOSH is an awarding body to be recognised and regulated by the UK regulatory authorities:

- The Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual) in England
- The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) in Wales
- The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland

NEBOSH follows the "GCSE, GCE, VCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice 2007/8" published by the regulatory authorities in relation to examination setting and marking (available at the Ofqual website [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk)). While not obliged to adhere to this code, NEBOSH regards it as best practice to do so.

Candidates' scripts are marked by a team of Examiners appointed by NEBOSH on the basis of their qualifications and experience. The standard of the qualification is determined by NEBOSH, which is overseen by the NEBOSH Council comprising nominees from, amongst others, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). Representatives of course providers, from both the public and private sectors, are elected to the NEBOSH Council.

The pass rates for the March 2008 examination units are shown on page 16. Not all candidates, therefore, met the required standard in the examination. Those who succeeded on this occasion should be justly proud for it takes concerted effort to achieve such success. Acquisition of knowledge and understanding across the syllabus through diligent study is an obvious prerequisite but candidates are also required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in the examination. 'Examination technique' is the skill of reading a question, identifying the breadth of issues relevant to that question and putting them down on paper in a logical and coherent way and to the depth required.

It also requires candidates to plan their time effectively. Examination technique is discussed further at the end of this Report (page 17).



- Question 1** *A car maintenance workshop located adjacent to a river was flooded. Repairs were needed to structural steelwork, garage pits and basements, electrical equipment and flammable stores.*
- (a) **Identify FOUR** emergencies that may occur during repair. (4)
- (b) **Outline** why emergency procedures are needed. (8)
- (c) **Identify FOUR** types of permit that may be required to undertake repairs, **AND outline** a relevant task that requires **EACH** of the specified permits. (8)

Answers to the first part of this question were generally to a good standard with most candidates able to identify emergencies that might have occurred during the required repair work such as fire and explosion from the stored flammable liquids and gases; incidents arising from the movement of vehicles; falls from height and/or falls of materials during repair of the steelwork; electrocution or electrical burns from contact with electrical equipment; falls into the river or into the flooded inspection pits; asphyxiation as a result of the lack of oxygen in the basement areas or pits; environmental contamination and the possibility of repeat flooding of the premises. There were a few candidates, however, who identified a hazardous situation but not the specific emergency that might follow.

Candidates did not provide answers of the same quality to part (b). They were expected to outline that employers would need to introduce procedures to satisfy their duty of care to employees and others who might be affected; to comply with statutory requirements such as those of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 and, from an economic point of view, to provide for the continuation of the business. The purpose of these procedures would be to allocate responsibilities to particular individuals for providing first aid and for overseeing evacuation in the event of fire; to provide alarm systems to alert employees and visitors of an impending emergency; to secure assistance from emergency and rescue services if this was required; to ensure isolation of services such as gas, electricity and water; to shut down machinery to minimise the effect of the emergency; and to provide training to employees and contractors to ensure the safe and controlled evacuation of the premises in the event of an emergency recurring. While many candidates were able to identify some of the procedures that would be required, few were able to outline the reason for their provision.

In answering part (c), most candidates had little difficulty in identifying the types of permit that might be required, referring to a safe work permit for controlling work involving high risk activities; a confined space permit to control entry into the garage basement or inspection pits; an electrical permit for electrical testing or work on live electrical installations; a hot work permit for structural repairs involving welding, burning or grinding and a crane permit to control the lifting and replacement of damaged steel work. A few candidates, however, wrote in general terms about a number of different permits without outlining how they were relevant to the scenario described.

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**Question 2** *Outline ways in which the health and safety culture of an organisation might be improved.* (8)

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Whilst the standard of responses to this question varied in quality, most candidates were able to outline ways such as: establishing and implementing a sound health and safety policy; securing the commitment of management and ensuring that they led by example; involving and consulting with employees on matters affecting their health and safety and providing effective supervision and training.

Better answers referred additionally to factors such as the organisation being seen to give equal priority to health and safety issues as other business objectives (such as production and quality); establishing effective means of communication with the workforce; being seen to be consistent in their management decisions; providing a pleasant working environment with good welfare facilities and introducing incentive schemes to increase employee interest and involvement.

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**Question 3** *A new process has been introduced into a workplace. Operators, supervisors and managers have received information and training on a safe system of work associated with the process.*

(a) **Outline** how provision of information and training for the employee contributes to controlling and reducing risks. (4)

(b) **Identify FOUR** benefits to an employer of providing information and training. (4)

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The provision of information and training for employees on the safe system of work associated with a new process will develop awareness and understanding of the specific hazards and risks related to the task; inform employees of the control measures that should be put in place; assist them to identify shortcomings that may exist in the proposed system; assist in overcoming resistance to change and confirm a better understanding through two way communication. Additionally, though the information and training will obviously be directed at one particular process, it will assist in improving the employees' general awareness of health and safety issues. Some candidates may not have read the question with sufficient care and gave generalised answers ignoring the "new process" scenario.

Answers to the second part of the question were generally to a better standard with most candidates able to identify a number of benefits that might accrue to an employer from providing information and training including satisfying statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 for example; securing a reduction in accident frequency and severity and a consequent reduction in injury and ill health related absence; ensuring a reduction in the possibility of enforcement action being taken and a reduction in claims and subsequently in insurance premiums and improving the safety culture of the organisation which will aid in improving staff morale and retention.

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**Question 4** *In relation to a risk assessment undertaken to comply with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999:*

- (a) **outline** the criteria that will determine whether it is 'suitable and sufficient'; (3)
- (b) **outline TWO** 'significant findings' that should be recorded; (2)
- (c) **identify THREE** groups of workers who might be especially at risk. (3)
- 

Every employer is required to complete suitable and sufficient risk assessments and therefore this is an aspect of the syllabus with which candidates are expected to be particularly familiar. Whilst most appeared to have a grasp of the process of carrying out a risk assessment as itemised in the "five steps", very few seemed to be aware of the criteria contained in the Approved Code of Practice to the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 which are designed to ensure the suitability and sufficiency of any assessment that is prepared.

A risk assessment, to be deemed suitable and sufficient, should identify all significant hazards and risks arising from or connected with the activity to be carried out, identify all the persons at risk including employees, other workers and members of the public, evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of existing control measures and identify other protective measures that may be required, enable priorities to be set, be appropriate to the nature of the work and be valid over a reasonable period of time.

Many candidates, too, had difficulty in answering part (b) of the question. Significant findings that should be recorded include an effective statement of the hazard and risk; details of the preventative, protective or control measures in place; further measures that should be taken to achieve a sufficient reduction in the risk and proof that a suitable and sufficient assessment has been made.

Part (c) of the question was generally well answered. In identifying three groups of workers who might be especially at risk, candidates could have chosen from young or inexperienced workers, new and expectant and nursing mothers, disabled workers, night workers, and home and lone workers.

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**Question 5** *Describe FOUR active (proactive) monitoring methods that can be used in assessing the health and safety performance of an organisation.* (8)

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Proactive methods that might have been described included: audits involving comprehensive and independently executed examinations of all aspects of an organisation's health and safety performance against stated objectives; safety surveys focusing on a particular activity such as manual handling, training programmes and employees' attitudes towards safety; sampling where specific areas of occupational health and safety are targeted; tours involving unscheduled workplace inspections to check on issues such as wearing of PPE and housekeeping; benchmarking where an organisation's performance in certain areas is compared with that of other organisations with similar processes and risks; health or medical surveillance using techniques such as audiometry and blood or urine analysis and environmental monitoring involving the measurement of noise and dust levels.

Whilst there were some good answers provided for this question, many candidates confused active and reactive monitoring methods while others described activities that should be monitored rather than the monitoring methods themselves.

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**Question 6** *In order to meet a production deadline, a supervisor instructed an employee to operate a machine, which they both knew to be defective.*

*Giving reasons in **EACH** case, **identify** possible breaches of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 in relation to this scenario.*

**(8)**

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This question required candidates to demonstrate an understanding not only of the requirements of section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in relation to the general duties of employers to their employees in relation to this scenario but in particular, the provision and maintenance of safe plant and equipment (section 2(2)(a)) and adequate supervision (section 2(2)(c)). Candidates were also required to demonstrate an understanding of the possible breaches by the supervisor and employee of Sections 7 and 8 of the Act for failing to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others and from refraining from wilfully misusing equipment. There were also possible breaches of section 36 for which the supervisor may be liable for instructing the employee to operate a defective machine, though some responsibility could lie with senior management under section 37 if there was evidence that they had known about and consented to the practice.

There were some good answers to this question though some candidates referred to possible breaches of Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 which suggested they had not read the question with sufficient care and taken note of the specific reference to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Others were able to refer to the appropriate requirements of the legislation but were then unable to take the next step and identify why these requirements had not been met.

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**Question 7** ***Outline FOUR external AND FOUR internal influences that might initiate a health and safety policy review.***

**(8)**

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This question was generally well answered though some candidates did experience difficulty in differentiating between external and internal influences. As far as external influences are concerned, reference could have been made to changes in legislation and guidance, enforcement action, advice from an insurance company, information from manufacturers and as a result of an audit by an external body.

Internal influences include significant changes in the structure of the organisation or alterations to working arrangements; after the introduction of new or changed processes or work methods; following changes in key personnel; where risk assessments, monitoring exercises or accident investigations show that the policy is no longer effective or relevant; following consultation with employees and after a sufficient period of time has elapsed since the previous review to suggest that another one is due.

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**Question 8** *With respect to section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, outline the general duties of designers, importers, manufacturers and suppliers of articles and substances for use at work to ensure that they are safe and without risk to health.* (8)

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Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. places an obligation on designers, manufacturers and suppliers of articles and substances for use at work to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that articles are designed and constructed to be safe and without risk to health at all times when they are being set, cleaned, used and maintained and that substances are likewise safe and without risk to health when being used, handled, stored or transported. Testing and examination must be carried out to ensure the required level of safety and freedom from risk and additionally employers should be provided with information on the safe use, dismantling and disposal of the articles and substances and given revised information should a subsequent serious risk become known. Importers have a duty to ensure articles or substances comply with the requirements of UK legislation.

Some candidates were unable to outline any of the above duties and most demonstrated little understanding of the requirements of the section. Some referred to the requirements of Chemicals (Hazard Information & Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2002 or Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 while a few confused the duties of designers with those of designers under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994.

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**Question 9** *Identify the questions that might be included on a checklist to gather information following an accident involving slips, trips and falls.* (8)

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In answering this question, it was expected that candidates would identify questions designed to elicit information on: the personal details of the person involved; the time and location of the accident; the type and severity of the injury sustained; the task being undertaken at the time of the accident; the working environment as far as weather, standard of lighting and visibility were concerned; the condition of the floor or ground; the type and condition of any personal protective equipment that was being worn; whether the injured person had been given first aid, had returned to work or had been sent to hospital; the underlying medical condition of the injured person; details of the training and information received and details of any relevant risk assessments that had been carried out or any previous similar accidents that had occurred.

Many candidates did not realise that the purpose of the checklist was to gather basic information to enable a detailed investigation to be carried out. Some therefore concentrated on the need to identify all the immediate and root causes of the accident before confirming whether there had indeed been an accident and whether anyone had been injured, while others concentrated on the remedial measures that should be put in place.

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- Question 10** (a) **State** the legal requirements whereby employers must prepare a written statement of their health and safety policy. (2)
- (b) **Identify** the purposes of **EACH** of the following sections of a health and safety policy document:
- (i) 'statement of intent'; (2)
  - (ii) 'organisation'; (2)
  - (iii) 'arrangements'. (2)
- 

In answering part (a) of the question, candidates should have stated that employers have a duty to prepare written statements of health and safety policy under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 when there are five or more employees and that this statement needs to be brought to the attention of the employees. Most candidates produced answer on these lines though a few confused the legislation involved and referred to the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Answers to part (b) were again to a reasonable standard though some candidates tended to give examples of what would be found in each section of a policy document rather than identify their purpose. The "statement of intent" should both demonstrate management's commitment to health and safety and set goals and objectives for the organisation. The purpose of the section of the policy on "organisation" is to identify health and safety responsibilities within the company and ensure effective delegation and reporting lines while the section on 'arrangements' is to set out in detail the specific systems and procedures that aim to assist in the implementation of the general policy.

- 
- Question 11** **List** the documents that are likely to be examined during a health and safety audit. (8)
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In answering this question, candidates were expected to list documents likely to be examined during an audit such as maintenance procedures and records, safety monitoring procedures, accident and incident reports, emergency procedures, health surveillance records, environmental monitoring records, training records, consultation arrangements with staff as well as the company safety policy and risk assessment documentation.

Most candidates had little difficulty with this question and answers were generally to a good standard.

## Paper NGC2

### Controlling workplace hazards

- Question 1** *A telecommunications worker needs to lift a 20kg manhole cover in order to repair fibre optic cables. The working area is 1.5m below ground and 1m from the kerb of a busy road.*
- (a) **Identify FOUR** factors associated with the worker that may affect the risk of injury when removing the manhole cover. (4)
- (b) **Outline SIX** types of hazard associated with these activities. (6)
- (c) **Outline** possible control measures to minimise the risk to the worker and pedestrians whilst carrying out these activities. (10)

Factors associated with the worker that might affect the risk of injury when removing the manhole cover include his physical strength and stature, his age and health status, his capability which might be affected by an inherent disability, the training or lack of it that he had been given in manual handling and lifting techniques and a failure by his employer to provide appropriate personal protective equipment such as gloves and safety footwear. Many candidates identified factors associated with the task rather than the individual worker as was required by the question.

Answers to part (b) were to a better standard with candidates outlining a number of hazards associated with the activities that was to be completed such as those arising from the need to lift the heavy manhole cover; the possibility of falling into the open manhole; hazards arising from passing traffic such as noise, fumes and the possibility of being struck by a vehicle; hazards connected with working in a confined space such as means of access, and the possibility of flooding or lack of oxygen; electrical hazards from handling the fibre optic cables; biological hazards from contaminated water in the working area – Weil's disease; the ever present possibility of slipping and /or tripping over the manhole cover or tools left on the ground and hazards associated with lone working.

For part (c), candidates who had successfully outlined hazards associated with the task should not have found it difficult to outline the necessary control measures such as making an initial arrangement for two persons to be involved in removing the manhole cover using appropriate tools such as T-piece keys. There would then be a need to provide safe access/egress to the manhole such as fitting dedicated rungs; arranging for the provision of ventilation for the manhole by mechanical means where testing has shown this to be necessary; the provision of a suitable temporary cover for the manhole in times of inclement weather; the provision and wearing of personal protective equipment such as helmets, boots, gloves and high visibility jackets and ensuring employees have adequate means of communication with a control centre such as a mobile telephone or radio. Finally there might also be a need to arrange for the management of passing traffic and pedestrians by the provision of barriers, cones and warning lights and to ensure that the manhole cover when removed and tools in use do not cause a tripping hazard for pedestrians. Whilst some candidates concentrated solely on traffic management and the provision of personal protective equipment, answers to this part of the question were generally to a good standard.

- 
- Question 2**     *A chainsaw is to be used to fell a tree. In relation to this task:*
- (a)     **identify FOUR** hazards associated with the use of the chainsaw;     **(4)**
- (b)     **list** the items of personal protective equipment that should be used by the chainsaw operative.     **(4)**
- 

In answering part (a) of the question, most candidates were able to identify the four hazards required referring to contact or entanglement with the chain, noise and vibration, dust and fumes, ejected particles, hot surfaces, manual handling and the hazard of being struck by falling branches.

For part (b), reference should have been made to personal protective equipment such as forestry boots, helmets fitted with mesh face shields, hearing protection, and Kevlar gloves and overalls which would afford the necessary body and leg protection. A general reference to the wearing of safety boots, gloves and eye protection was not sufficient to gain the marks available since the question specifically referred to the personal protective equipment that should be used by a chainsaw operative.

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- Question 3**     **Outline** the precautions necessary for the safe storage and handling of small containers of flammable solvents.     **(8)**
- 

Precautions that should be considered when storing and handling flammable solvents in small containers include selecting containers that are suitable for the purpose; labelling the containers clearly with information about their contents; marking the storage area in which they are held; ensuring that empty containers are tightly closed and stored outside the building or in a store constructed of fire resisting materials; taking measures to prevent vapour build-up by the provision of a good standard of ventilation and to prevent or reduce the impact of spillages by using non-spill caps or bunding the area where the containers are held; removing likely sources of ignition; limiting the quantities stored and the amounts in use; controlling the disposal of flammable waste and providing suitable appliances for fighting fire.

Answers to this question were generally not to the required standard. Some candidates treated it as a COSHH question and discussed health hazards while others appeared to misunderstand the reference to "handling" and referred to precautions for manual handling activities.

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- Question 4**     *Staff are employed to clean a large science college in the mornings and evenings.*
- Outline** the specific hazards the cleaners could be exposed to.     **(8)**
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In answering this question, better answers identified that the hazards to which the cleaners might be exposed fell into three key areas namely those relating to cleaning in general, those particular to the college situation and those associated with "out of hours work".



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**Question 7**     ***Identify** control measures that can be implemented to reduce the risk of violence in a busy accident and emergency department.*     **(8)**

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In answering this question, candidates might initially have identified control measures which can help to reduce the build-up of confrontation and violent episodes such as the design of the public areas of the department in terms of décor, seating, lighting, the absence of obvious barriers and the means of providing information to the patients particularly on waiting times. A balance must be drawn, however, between presenting a calm and open environment and protecting staff from any violent incidents that could arise. Thus there could be a need for wide counters, coded locks on doors, CCTV systems, panic buttons and alarm systems. Whether these are made discreet or obvious will depend on the particular circumstance. In addition to designing the department and the task to minimise the risk of assault, it would be necessary to ensure that the staffing levels are adequate and that the staff are provided with awareness training to enable them to recognise the early signs of aggressive behaviour and avoid, defuse or otherwise deal with a violent situation. It will also be necessary to have strict security procedures in place to deal with the storage and issue of drugs and to employ security staff who would assist in the exclusion of known offenders.

There was generally a good standard of response to this question.

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**Question 8**     (a)     ***Describe** the differences between acute and chronic health effects.*     **(4)**  
                  (b)     ***Identify** the factors that could affect the level of harm experienced by an employee exposed to a toxic substance.*     **(4)**

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For part (a), candidates should have described acute health effects, when the adverse effects appear after a single or short term exposure to the agent, and the response is invariably rapid or immediate. In most cases, acute effects recede on cessation of exposure. Chronic health effects, on the other hand, usually result from prolonged or repeated exposure to the agent. The response is normally gradual, often progressive and irreversible, and may go unrecognised for long periods of time. Answers to this part of the question were generally below the regulated standard with some candidates only giving long or short term as the difference between the health effects.

Answers to part (b) were generally to a better standard though a few candidates provided health effects rather than factors. The majority identified factors such as: the route of entry of the toxic substance into the body and the associated mode of exposure; the concentration, physical state and toxicity of the substance; the level, duration and frequency of exposure; the effectiveness of the control measures in place and personal factors such as the age, gender, health status and susceptibilities of those exposed.

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**Question 9**     (a)     ***Identify TWO** work activities that may give rise to work-related upper limb disorders (WRULDs).*     **(2)**  
                  (b)     ***Outline** control measures that can be implemented to reduce the risk of WRULDs.*     **(6)**

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Candidates generally had little difficulty in identifying work activities that might give rise to work-related upper limb disorders referring to work with display screen equipment, manual work such as bricklaying, carrying out tasks involving repetitive gripping or twisting and work on a continuous production line.

In answering part (b), the first control measure to be considered would be the possibility of automating the task to be carried out. If this is not possible, then a risk assessment of the task would have to be completed with particular reference to ergonomic issues. This should lead to the introduction of a number of control measures such as re-designing the equipment in use; reducing the duration of repetitive tasks and the force that needs to be applied; reducing the use of striking or vibrating tools; improving the grip on the tools in use; introducing job rotation and ensuring employees are given adequate rest breaks; keeping the working environment warm and ensuring employees are fully trained in the procedures to be followed and the precautions to be taken.

Answers to this part of the question varied in standard. Some candidates referred only to display screen equipment while others despite the wording of the question concentrated on manual handling issues rather than WRULDs.

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**Question 10** *Identify the hazards a skip collector could be exposed to when moving a full skip from the ground onto the back of a skip loader vehicle.* (8)

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In answering this question, candidates were expected to identify hazards such as contact with the vehicle mechanisms such as the hydraulic arms and loading frame; becoming trapped in the chains and skip or lifting lugs; contact with the moving skip; contact with overhead obstructions; uneven loading of the skip; overloading of the skip which might lead to mechanical or structural failure; skip contaminants which could include biological material, asbestos or sharps; trips or falls caused by the slippery surface on the flatbed of the vehicle or uneven ground conditions whether on the road or in the skip location and being struck by passing traffic.

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**Question 11** *With respect to the use of portable electrical appliances in the workplace, identify EIGHT examples of faults and bad practices that could contribute to electrical accidents.* (8)

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Answers to this question varied in standard and many candidates only gave general references to fuses, overloading sockets and checking cables. Other faults and bad practices that should have been identified included an initial failure to select the right equipment for the job and/or environment; inadequate checks on the equipment before use to ensure it was not damaged and a lack of procedures for its regular maintenance; misuse and abuse of the equipment by employees; poor earth protection; the use of coiled extension cables and cables that were insufficiently protected and liable to damage particularly in workshop or construction environments.

## Examination statistics

### NEBOSH National General Certificate, March 2008 examination

#### Standard examinations

#### March 2008 - Declared results

	<b>Unit NGC1</b> Management of health and safety	<b>Unit NGC2</b> Controlling workplace hazards	<b>Unit NGC3</b> Health and safety practical application
Number of examination candidates	1797	1658	1567
Absent	200	191	179
Number of passes	1030	1136	1287
Number of refers	567	331	101
Number of Unit Certificates	1030	1355	1287
	(64%)	(77%)	(93%)

## Examination technique

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Good examination technique is required if candidates are to do full justice to themselves in the examination. Guidance on this is available from tutors, and there are also various helpful booklets on the subject that are available from most bookshops. Here we can concentrate on only one or two absolute fundamentals.

Time management is very important in the examination. For the 20-mark question, the Examiners expect an answer to take about 25 minutes to write. This should be sufficient time for most candidates to write about a page and a half – but people's writing comes in a variety of layouts and sizes so this is an approximate guide only.

For the ten short-answer (8-mark) questions, the average time available for each question – which is about 8 minutes – should normally be sufficient for about half a page of considered response. It is important that candidates do not spend too long on any particular question, to ensure that sufficient time is available to answer *all* questions.

Candidates should remember to allow enough time to read each question properly, and to make sure that they understand what it is asking, before starting to write the answer. The action verb that indicates the depth of answer required by the question – explain, outline, list, etc – is printed in **bold** letters. Candidates should ensure that they understand the meaning of these terms (see below). Full marks will not be awarded for a list if an explanation is required; conversely, it is wasting time to provide a detailed explanation if the question asks only for a list.

Candidates should answer the questions that have been set and not the ones they wish had been set. Examiners expect answers to be based on current legislation and generally accepted practice. Answers based solely on 'what we do in our organisation' can often fall short of these criteria and as such do not earn high marks.

### **Examples of 'action verbs'**

<b>action verb</b>	<b>meaning</b>
define	provide a generally recognised or accepted definition
describe	give a word picture
explain	give a clear account of, or reasons for
give	provide without explanation (used normally with the instruction to 'give an example [or examples] of ...')
identify	select and name
list	provide a list without explanation
outline	give the most important features of (less depth than either 'explain' or 'describe', but more depth than 'list')
sketch	provide a simple line drawing using labels to identify specific features
state	a less demanding form of 'define', or where there is no generally recognised definition.

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