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MSP® 2011 Edition

Advanced Practitioner Sample Paper **BX02**

Answer Guidance

GG 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides examination guidance for MSP candidates. It supports the MSP Advanced Practitioner Examination Sample Paper BX02. This Sample Paper, formerly a live paper, contains questions which are similar in style to those used in live examination papers. The guidance below presents advice on how you might analyze and approach the process of answering these practice questions. This understanding can then be applied to answering questions in a live examination paper.

This Answer Guidance should be read in conjunction with the Sample Question Paper BX02 and the MSP Advice for Advanced Practitioner Examination Candidates.

GG 1.2 ANALYSE THE PAPER

Structure

Start by familiarizing yourself with the structure of the examination paper. This paper consists of:

- 2 mandatory questions worth a total of 75 marks
- Q1 is worth 40 marks and uses Exhibit 1
- Q2 is worth 35 marks and uses Exhibit 2.

Planning and timing your answer

You have 3 hours to complete the examination. It is important to plan and manage your time in this examination well, in order to give yourself the best chance of tackling every part of each question in the time available.

You are advised to undertake an initial scan of the complete paper and plan the amount of time you intend to allocate to attempting each question. It may be worthwhile doing a rough breakdown of minutes per part-question, taking into account the need for additional reading and thinking time. Your first reading of the paper may have been done quickly to gain an overall sense of the content. Do ensure that you return to the paper to read carefully and absorb the detail of each question and its exhibit. Also, you might want to consider whether you want to leave some time at the end to re-read your answers.

Everyone works at different speeds, but one possible approach to timing on this paper might be to allow approximately 2 minutes per mark. This will then leave 30 minutes for all reading.

You do not need to make precise calculations, but a rough guide can be helpful in providing a framework for managing your time.

Some candidates find it useful to start by sketching out the rough structure of their answer, e.g. capturing a few key words as reminders of points to expand upon. You can then use this brief outline to identify where you need to get information from - e.g. the Case Study, the Exhibit(s) and/or drawing from your own experience. You will then be in a position to concentrate on expressing your points clearly and convincingly when assembling your actual answer. You will not gain marks for any duplicated text.

GG 1.3 USE OF CASE STUDY AND EXHIBITS

Reminders

1. You have already been assessed on your knowledge and understanding of the MSP Guide in the Foundation and Practitioner examinations.
2. The Advanced Practitioner examination assesses your ability to make and justify proposals and judgements in the appropriate practice of MSP in the context of a complex situation as described in the Case Study, as well as in the question content and additional information provided in Exhibits. You need to be able to deal with the uncertainties, unknowns and ambiguities of the Case Study and Exhibits, but be aware that the descriptions in the Case Study or Exhibits do not always represent the best approach or best use of MSP. As an advanced level candidate you need to be able to recognize specific instances of variation from MSP guidance.
3. Each question and its Exhibit(s) stand alone and any information provided for a specific question does not transfer between questions.
4. You are expected to derive appropriate and justified MSP-based solutions, to be able work with and build on the information provided and to use your own general business experience to develop and express an informed answer.
5. There is no single correct answer to any question and the examiner will mark your answer on its merits.

Question Approach

Use the 'three circle approach' described in the MSP Advice for Advanced Practitioner Examination Candidates. These three elements should be described in statements that together provide a credible and coherent explanation. Unless stated otherwise, it is expected that your answer to each question will contain an appropriate balance between:

1. MSP guidance
2. Related links to the Case Study and relevant Exhibits to explain and justify the point made in your answer
3. Further explanations and justifications derived from your general business experience.

Just restating phrases from the MSP Guide or the Case Study will attract few or no marks.

Your answer may be presented in any format or style of your choice. However, you should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of essay style versus bullet point lists. An approach which combines elements of both might allow you to make best use of your time.

No marks will be awarded for statements that make the same point as an earlier statement, even if different words are used. It may be acceptable to repeat a statement in the answer to another question where the context and point being made are different. However, in such cases you must avoid the use of expressions like, 'see example above in 1a)'. It is not appropriate to expect the examiner to select appropriate parts of your answers to other questions.

Parts of some questions could be answered using a well-constructed diagram with comments. If you choose to answer this way, it is important that you do so only if you can present your points at least as well as you would be able to with carefully devised text. You must be careful when using diagrams not to duplicate points already made in the text, as this will attract no extra marks.

You should also be cautious when considering the use of tables, as they can have undesirable limitations. A tabular approach to the presentation of an answer might restrict your answer because the columns or boxes you have created may not allow sufficient space for the detailed explanations required.

In the exam you might feel under pressure and be tempted to rush your answers. It is important to remember that the examiner can only award you marks for answers that are legible. Also,

the examiner can only mark what you have written. You need to convince the examiner of your knowledge and understanding of MSP and its application.

Regardless of the style you choose, you are advised to try to create a series of logically linked statements. The overall score for your script will be based on an accumulation of half marks, where each valid statement may be awarded a half mark. For example, one possible answer construct which might be awarded one mark is:

Statement (proposal, recommendation, description) + BECAUSE + statement (justification).

There are many other constructs which you might choose to use to present your answers. For instance, sometimes you may want to propose more than one recommendation and/or more than one justification.

Take care not to make excessive justifications that may be regarded as duplication. Justifications that are expressed differently, but which make the same point as a justification already made, are not likely to attract extra marks.

Part of a good response to Q1a) which uses logically linked statements might be:

Note: The number in brackets in the text below, and in some examples in the rest of the document, represents the number of marks awarded.

The Draft Programme Mandate needs to be reviewed and possibly rewritten (0.5) because currently there seems to be a lack of clarity about the boundary of the Change Programme (0.5) and very little Sponsoring Group (SG) consensus about what exactly the programme is intended to achieve (0.5). For decision-making bodies such as the SG to be effective, clarity and common understanding is essential (0.5). In particular, the SG will need to ensure that RHO representatives are bought into the Change Programme (0.5) and if MSPCare is to resist the external pressures being brought to bear by the media and changes in NHO policy, an agreed position will be critical (0.5).

The part-answer above attracts 3 marks. For a 12-mark question the answer needs three more similar sets of statements.

In the exam you might feel under pressure and be tempted to rush your answers. It is important to remember that the examiner can only award you marks for answers that are legible. Also, the examiner can only mark what you have written. You need to convince the examiner of your knowledge and understanding of MSP and its application

Guidance on Question 1

GQ1 1.1 QUESTION 1

Analysis and planning

Read the question and Exhibit 1, and analyze both.

For each part of the question:

- Check what it is asking you to do
- Consider which of What? When? Who? Where? Why? How? need to be addressed.

In analyzing the question and Exhibit 1 there are some key points of context. You may want to consider how relevant each point is when you start to plan your answer:

- The question header provides the focus of the question - 'Identifying a Programme'
- You are cast in the role of Christine Day, the Director of Strategy and Change and SRO for the MSPCare Change Programme
- The point in time identified is the start of Identifying a Programme for the MSPCare Change Programme
- You will mentor Jo Smith, an inexperienced Programme Manager, during this process
- Other specific roles mentioned:
 - Sponsoring Group (MSP Corporate Board)
 - Centralshire RHO
 - Michael Jones, BCM
 - Alex Marr, Change Management Consultant
- References to specific parts of Case Study:
 - Draft Programme Mandate
 - Initial Vision Statement
- MSP elements mentioned which might be referenced and cross-related):
 - Identifying a Programme
 - Programme Mandate
 - Vision Statement
 - Programme Brief
 - Programme Preparation Plan
- New information provided:
 - Extracts from Lessons Learned Report from the merger.

Visualization

Visualize yourself in the role of the SRO of the MSPCare Change Programme, in the situation described in the Exhibit and the Case Study. Think about your own general business experience, perhaps where you have observed colleagues in a similar situation, which might help give you ideas about what you might do in the MSPCare Change Programme in the circumstances described.

Break down the question

Q1a)

Your answer to this question should provide convincing arguments with reasons and relevant examples explaining why the programme team, in the circumstances described, needs to carry out some of the activities in Identifying a Programme.

Your answer should not be a theoretical one describing only the steps within the process Identifying a Programme. You must set your answer in the context of the MSPCare Change Programme and the information provided in Exhibit 1.

Imagine how you would describe to an inexperienced colleague something that is new to them which they do not fully understand. You have to make it relevant to them and give explanations which provide reasons for why things should or should not be done. Take this approach in your answer when you are describing what you would do as Christine Day, SRO, to explain and convince Jo Smith of what has to be done and why, in the process Identifying a Programme.

In this examination, you have to think beyond the immediate situations depicted in the questions and Exhibits, just as you would in real life. For example, in Identifying a Programme there will be early engagement with the SG, a key group of stakeholders. In this Case Study the members of the SG are also members of the Corporate Board, so Christine Day would have first-hand experience of how well they work together. If, from your understanding of the Case Study, you believe the members of this group might not function well as a unit, then you might conclude that the need to go through some of Identifying a Programme is all the more important in order to ensure they have a common understanding about the programme, and commit to it as a unified team. This process of bringing together the Sponsoring Group does not represent a formal step in the process Identifying a Programme but is related to Leading Change, an important MSP principle.

One possible way of expressing this last point in an answer could be as follows:

MSPCare is a merger of two previous organizations which had notably different cultures. Ross White, the Chief Executive, has the challenge of developing a new culture which is a blend of the best aspects of both of the previous organizations. This is likely to include developing an effective Corporate Board, which also functions as the MSPCare Change Programme Sponsoring Group (SG). Some of the members of this group were from the previous organizations and are likely to have significantly different views on how MSPCare and the Change Programme should be structured and managed. It will be important for Christine Day to allow sufficient time and opportunity for the SG to reach consensus on the boundary of the programme but also to form good working relationships and build trust in her team.

Your justification might include answers, with reasons, to the following:

- Which steps in the process have been completed?
 - Have they been completed satisfactorily?
- What has still to be done and why is it necessary?

Be guided by the number of marks available to determine how much you should write. There are 12 marks for this question; therefore you should try to create at least 24 linked and contextually relevant statements which would be awarded half a mark each. However you present this, it must include descriptions, explanations and examples.

For example, this extract from a good answer would merit 1.5 marks:

The current initial Vision Statement is inadequate and will at least need to be refined (0.5) because it is too long and complex to be understood by all stakeholders (0.5), e.g. MPs, nurses and residents of Holystone (0.5).

Q1b)

Read the extracts from the Lessons Learned Report provided in the Exhibit. Use these to explain, with reasons, what you might do during Identifying a Programme in order to avoid the same problems arising in the Change Programme.

Each of the lessons learned is relevant and should be referenced in some way within your answer. Your answer should explain how each specific lesson learned can be used to inform the work in stated activities in Identifying a Programme and help avoid similar problems in the Change Programme.

You might include in your answer:

- How the lessons learned might affect who does what, decisions made, timing and emphasis
- How activities, resultant decisions and outputs will help avoid similar problems recurring
- What it is important to do and why, and the dangers of not doing certain things.

Here is one possible example of how you might start your answer:

It is important when using the lessons learned to fully understand what they mean in the context of the current programme. I would arrange a workshop inviting key people such as Ross White the Chief Executive, as well as those who were involved in the merger, e.g. Mohammed Patel the HR Director. The purpose would be to develop a clear understanding of each specific lesson learned and to assess the relevance to the current MSPCare Change Programme.

Q1c)

Base your answer on the activities that are required to produce draft versions of the Programme Brief and Programme Preparation Plan. Then think about which stakeholders Jo should engage with, and in what way, to help her prepare these documents.

Your answer must address both documents and include explanations of the contributions, with reasons, that might be expected of people who might be involved in the development of one or other or both (who, what and why). You will be awarded few, if any, marks if you simply list a range of stakeholders without any justifications. Your answer should describe why relevant stakeholders are important and how they will be engaged in relation to each document and why.

For example, it would be relevant to include Michael Jones (BCM) and Alex Marr (independent consultant) in your answer. Although they may have limited direct input into the content of either document, you could describe how they might support Jo Smith in her work as she is inexperienced in the programme management role.

This further example shows that part of your answer could be on the following lines:

The MSPCare Change Programme involves significant work associated with buildings, Holystone, sales of estates, etc. Jo Smith should, therefore, engage someone from Estates, such as Bob Builder, to get specialist input into work such as estimating the time, cost and risk associated with building works, to inform the Programme Brief.

Q1d)

Identify appropriate people to be involved in the review of the Programme Brief and Programme Preparation Plan. What kind of review might they be involved in? What would be their role or contribution?

In addition to explaining the relevance of specific individuals or groups, your answer should link the relevant experience/knowledge of each one to a valid form of review for these documents.

Part of your answer might look something like the following:

In order to set a good example to other stakeholders, it is important that the Sponsoring Group act as a unified team when giving approval to proceed based on the Programme Brief. As there is likely to be a difference of opinion among the members of the Sponsoring Group about this Change Programme, Christine Day could have one-to-one meetings with each member to talk about and resolve their issues related to the content of the draft Programme Brief.

For example, David Silver is skeptical about the likely success of the whole Commissioned Health Centre (CHC) concept. As this is likely to be a key component of the programme, Christine will need to gain his commitment to trying to make CHCs work.

If there are still issues of conflict between SG members then Christine should enlist the help of Ross White the Chief Executive to resolve them before formal approval to proceed at the SG meeting. This demonstration of good leadership and commitment should help to gain the buy-in from a wider group of stakeholders as the programme progresses.

Sample answer statements

Q1a)

A **good** answer statement is:

The draft Programme Mandate needs to be reviewed and possibly rewritten (0.5) because currently there seems to be a lack of clarity and Sponsoring Group (SG) consensus about what exactly the programme is going to do (0.5). For decision-making bodies such as the SG to be effective, clarity and common understanding is essential (0.5).

Because:

It starts with a correct and appropriate MSP statement, then explains why it is appropriate, using information derived from the Case Study and Exhibit, rounded off with the general business statement about good decision-making bodies.

A **satisfactory** statement answer is:

When the SG is satisfied with the content of the Mandate (0.5), it is important that the members approve it as a unified body to demonstrate their joint commitment to the programme (0.5).

Because:

It starts with a correct and appropriate MSP statement, followed by another correct and appropriate MSP statement, but does not explain why it is appropriate using information derived from the Case Study and Exhibit, so does not attract more marks.

A **poor** answer statement is:

SG should confirm draft Mandate (0).

Because:

This is just theory, direct from the MSP Guide. The answer does not explain what it means to confirm the Mandate. The answer does not indicate whether the Mandate is adequate or if the SG should agree to use it in its current form. To achieve any marks this answer would require further explanation.

Q1b)

A **good** statement answer is:

Ensure that all members of SG understand the purpose and objectives of the programme (0.5). To get this clarity, Christine Day, SRO, could run a workshop to discuss (0.5) and get agreement on content of the Mandate, which in its present state is unclear and confusing (0.5).

Because:

There is a correct and appropriate statement derived from MSP guidance, followed by a sensible method of achieving this via a workshop (candidate's own experience) ending with a good justification of the action which is linked to an MSP activity in Identifying a Programme (confirm the Programme Mandate). Candidates should be able to understand from the Mandate in the Case Study that it is unclear and confusing.

A **satisfactory** statement answer is:

A revised Vision Statement will give clear direction and provide clarity about the purpose and direction of the programme (0.5), thus avoiding differences of opinion among members of the SG later and prevent Lesson 1 being repeated (0.5).

Because:

There is a statement about the Vision Statement which is correct and derived from MSP guidance, and a reasonable explanation, but there is nothing to suggest how revision might be done.

A **poor** statement answer is:

Hold facilitated workshops with Corporate Board (0).

Because:

There is no explanation of the purpose of the workshops. There is no acknowledgement that the Corporate Board is the SG. With further explanation in context this statement may be awarded 0.5.

Q1c)

A **good** statement answer is:

The Programme Preparation Plan is needed to plan and gain commitment to the time, budget and resources required (0.5) to ensure good execution of the work in Defining a Programme (0.5). Seek advice on time and resource requirements from other LHOs who have already done this (0.5) because MSPCare has little experience of programme management (0.5).

Because:

There is a correct and appropriate statement derived from MSP guidance, with a good justification of the action which is linked to dependencies between documents in MSP (App A.4) followed by a sensible suggestion about the use of lessons learned (MSP Principle and candidate's own experience) justified by MSPCare's lack of experience (from the Case Study).

A **satisfactory** statement answer is:

Establish a clinical reference group, chaired by David Silver (0.5), to help define programme boundary (0.5).

Because:

The answer starts with a sensible suggestion influenced by a candidate's own experience, followed by a valid explanation of why. This could have achieved more marks if the statement had gone on to state that one of the purposes of the Programme Brief is to specify the programme's boundary.

A **poor** answer statement is:

Corporate Board - meetings (0).

Because:

There is no explanation of who is on the Corporate Board or the purpose of the meetings. The answer should include an explanation of what these people will contribute, and to which document, in what way and why. With further explanation in context this may be awarded 0.5.

Q1d)

A **good** answer statement is:

The SRO will have commissioned the review (0.5). An independent Benefits Realization Manager (i.e. not Michael Jones) should scrutinize the benefits in the Programme Brief (0.5) to ensure that the benefits are both achievable and set at the right level (0.5).

Because:

The answer starts with a statement correctly derived from one of the activities in Identifying a Programme. The need for an independent reviewer comes from MSP guidance on quality and possibly also from the candidate's experience. The phrase 'not Michael Jones' is derived from the Case Study, because as BCM for the programme he is not independent. This is followed by a good explanation of why, which is correctly related to MSP guidance on benefit management.

A **satisfactory** answer statement is:

Bring in Gateway™ or programme quality reviewers (0.5) to ensure programme management best practice is being adhered to (0.5).

Because:

The candidate has experience of Gateways or has noticed the reference to them in the MSP Guide. They have recognized this as a valid activity and given a correct explanation of one of the purposes of a Gateway review. However, the statement does not explain what is being reviewed.

A **poor** answer statement is:

Alex Marr - content re MSP (0).

Because:

No reason is given for including Alex Marr and the answer does not explain what he would do. There is no explanation of the relevance of any or all of the content of MSP in relation to Alex Marr. With further explanation in context this may be awarded 0.5.

Guidance on Question 2

GQ2 1.1 QUESTION 2

Analysis and planning

Read the question and Exhibit 2, and analyse both.

For each part of the question:

- Check what it is asking you to do
- Consider which of What? When? Who? Where? Why? How? need to be addressed.

In analysing the question and Exhibit 2 there are some key points of context, and you might want to consider their relevance when you start to plan your answer:

- The focus of the question is 'Programme Change'
- You are cast in the role of an experienced MSP Programme Manager
- You will provide advice to Jo Smith, the Programme Manager for the MSPCare Change Programme
- The point in time identified is 11 months since the start of the MSPCare Change Programme and part way through Tranche 2
- Other specific roles mentioned:
 - Christine Day, on a long-term break from her role as SRO
 - Frederick Bean, replacement SRO
 - Sponsoring Group
 - Programme Board
 - Estates, Holystone and sale of estates
 - Contracts, private sector partnerships
- References to specific parts of Case Study, for example:
 - Holystone Project
 - Health Solutions
- MSP elements mentioned that, might be referenced and cross-related:
 - Programme Plans
 - Tranches
 - Project Briefs
 - Realization of benefits
 - Benefits Realization Plan
 - Risk management
- New information provided
 - Current situation as at 1 December in year 1 of the programme
 - Summary of review of current state of programme
 - Summary plan for Tranche 2.

Visualization

Visualize yourself in the role of an experienced MSP Programme Manager advising Jo Smith, the Programme Manager for the MSPCare Change Programme, in the situation described in the Exhibit and the Case Study. Think about your own general business experience, perhaps where you have observed colleagues in a similar situation that might help give you ideas for what you might do in the MSPCare Change Programme in the circumstances described.

Break down the question

Q2a)

If no corrective action is taken, this implies that the programme continues:

- without consideration of the impact of the new circumstances
- without invoking formal processes for risk and issue management, and change control
- without proactive management of the programme plan.

In other words, the programme is allowed to slip in timescale to allow for the additional time needed for the Holystone Project, without attempting to understand or manage the consequences of this slippage.

This question is asking you to explain these likely consequences on two aspects of the MSPCare Change Programme:

- realization of benefits
- risk exposure.

Some parts of your answer might relate to each of these aspects separately and other parts may relate to both. For example, consequences common to both benefits and risks might include:

- impacts on stakeholders
 - some (name the stakeholders) may be disillusioned or demoralized
 - closer scrutiny and more pressure from RHO or national government
- the collective outputs from projects 1-6 at transition.

Your explanation of the impact on realization of benefits might be linked to elements such as:

- impacts on Tranche 2
- projects in the Tranche 2
- transition
- future tranches
- value of benefits
- delays in realization of benefits
- dependencies
- stakeholders
- partners
- increased risk
- relationship with national government
- relationships being developed with the private sector.

The list above is neither complete nor a definitive list. It is a suggestion as to some of the elements that might be used as the basis for expanding an answer. Also, your answer should not be expressed using the generic terms listed above but should be specific in its references to named outputs, projects, stakeholders, partners, benefits, risks, etc. Make sure that your explanations are specific to the circumstances described in the question, Case Study and Exhibits and not simply theoretical or generic statements that could apply to any programme.

In your consideration of risk exposure, your answer might explain, in relation to the MSPCare Change Programme:

- the overall risk exposure
- risk by perspective
- examples of some threats
- links to benefits

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- what is likely to be in the Risk Register and whether or not it is being actively managed.

Don't spend time restating the current issues in the Exhibit but focus your answer on describing the impact of risk on the outcomes.

Some of these points could be combined, as in the following sample answer statement:

If no corrective action is taken the tranche will be delayed. This in turn will delay the realization of benefits, a knock-on effect of which might mean MSPCare does not achieve its strategic targets, such as reducing mortality rates. As some of these targets could be part of national health initiatives, this might jeopardize MSPCare's future funding from national government.

Q2b)

This question is in effect asking you what you would do to avoid the negative consequences you described in Q2a). As for Q2a), you must ensure that you address both aspects of the question:

- How would you reduce risk?
- How would you minimize the negative impact on the realization of benefits?

Your answer should provide a justified proposal that is likely to be built around recognition of the interdependencies between the projects, their outputs and relationship to benefits and risks. There may be many equally valid alternative options that could be presented here, but the question requires you to suggest **one** way ahead.

For example, your proposal may be based on one or more ideas such as:

- Split Tranche 2 into two separate tranches and, therefore, two transitions which would enable simpler change and incur less risk. All changes not dependent on Holystone could be delivered in the first tranche, thus reducing the impact on benefits to just those affected by the Holystone issues.
- As Holystone is the cause of the delay, remove it from this tranche and run it as a separate tranche or as a standalone project. This is a variation on the above suggestion and could be more appropriate if you believe that as two separate tranches there would be more focus on solving Holystone issues.
- Incremental or modular changes in transition, effectively phasing the implementation of capabilities from project outputs where they are not constrained by dependencies, so some parts of the tranche need not be delayed by Holystone. The downside of this is that transition might be more complicated and higher risk.

Examples of good sample answer statements are:

It is the Holystone Project that is causing the delay. While partnerships with the private sector are relevant to the running of Holystone they are also relevant to other parts of MSPCare (e.g. CHCs).

- Project 6 (Partnerships) could be accelerated to finish early
- Projects 4 (Process Improvements) and 5 (New Metrics) started early creating an early transition and early realization of some benefits, compensating for losses due to Holystone.

This then results in two tranches so the additional cost of programme management must be taken into account.

Whether or not based on one of the above options, the most important thing to remember is that your marks will be accumulated through the expression of valid and situation-specific justifications provided in support of your proposal. These may be achieved by explaining the reduction of the negative consequences of the elements of benefit realization and risk exposure that you chose to address in Q2a).

Q2c)

There are many MSP programme information documents that may change as a result of the proposal you made in Q2b). You are only asked to consider resultant changes to the Benefits Realization Plan (BRP) of the MSPCare Change Programme. However, to determine some of the changes to the BRP you will need to consider how some of these changes could be derived from other MSP documents that inform the Benefits Realization plan (App A.4).

It may be helpful at this point to open your MSP Guide at the page that gives you suggestions for the typical content of a BRP. Consider what you think might be the actual entries in this plan before and after your proposed changes to the programme, as described in your answer to Q2b).

Focus on your programme changes and the specific changes that would need to be made to the current BRP at that time.

For example, your suggestions for change might provide entries which expand on some of these BRP elements:

- schedule for realization of benefits
- milestones for Benefits Reviews
- dates for outcomes which will enable benefits
- dependencies
- details of embedding and handover activities
- activities to prepare staff
- requirement for two transition plans if your proposal was based on a split into two tranches.

Your answer should not just list as many elements in the BRP that you think might change. To gain marks you must address each change in full by:

- naming the element that needs to change
- explaining why it needs to change
- suggesting, with reasons, an alternative entry for that element.

It may be that your approach to answering the question is to think of four possible changes, and to attempt to build up a 2-mark description for each one.

One possible way to start your answer could be as follows:

If the tranche is split into two tranches, the BRP now needs to manage two transitions. While this is an extra overhead, given that MSPCare is inexperienced at programme management there could be two upsides to this. Firstly, each tranche will be simpler and, therefore, less risky. Secondly, there is an opportunity to learn from the earlier, simpler new tranche, about how to manage the more complicated transition for Holystone in the subsequent new tranche. The BRP will need to include activities to collect and review these lessons learned.

Sample answer statements

Q2a)

A **good** answer statement is:

If the Programme Plan is unchanged:

- Holystone (H) will not deliver on the planned date which will undermine stakeholder confidence (0.5), e.g. the RHO (0.5)
- The risks associated with this project will significantly increase (0.5), for example:
 - Other projects which remain dependent on Holystone, such as the process improvement project (0.5), will be put at greater risk. Because of these dependencies it will not be possible to implement changes from this project ahead of Holystone (0.5) and any slip to Holystone will mean a delay in the implementation of the outputs from this project (0.5).

Because:

The candidate demonstrates a good understanding of the Programme Plan, and the statements explain some valid consequences of doing nothing. This is an example of good analysis of Exhibit 2. Some of these consequences are directly related to the slippage, e.g. Holystone will not deliver, and some are indirect, e.g. stakeholder confidence, a combination of MSP guidance, Case Study and own general business experience. There are also knock-on effects stated, showing a more advanced understanding of the situation.

A **satisfactory** answer statement is:

If no corrective actions are taken:

- The real causes for the delays and cost increases are not understood and can recur (0.5)
- The increased cost and time may pose a serious question about the viability of the programme (0.5) which needs to be addressed via the Business Case (0.5).

Because:

Bullet 1 - This valid statement could be improved by explaining who would not understand, and by giving reasons why the delays and cost increases might recur.

Bullet 2 - Again, two good points, but the answer could be improved by explaining how viability is determined and what needs to be done with the Business Case.

A **poor** answer statement is:

There will be a knock-on delay to the realization of benefits. The transition plans to achieve the benefits will have to be delayed (0.5), and this could put additional pressure on the rest of the programme.

Because:

There is no explanation as to why there is a knock-on delay. The second sentence should explain the additional pressure on the rest of the programme.

Q2b)

A **good** answer statement is:

Move Holystone Project from Tranche 2 (T2) to Tranche 3 (0.5) to enable it to be completed in a realistic timescale (0.5) and so avoid impact of delayed transition for T2 (0.5). Although extending the timescale on a project is always a difficult step (0.5), it is better to do this now than wait until people's confidence is undermined (0.5), especially as some people have openly expressed doubt about Jo Smith's ability to manage this programme (0.5).

Because:

The answer contains a suggested action that is worthy of consideration, e.g. move Holystone (candidate understands how the Programme Plan works), followed by a good explanation of why (from candidate's own general business experience), and a clear justification for how this will help (MSP principle 'leading change', with a Case Study extract).

A **satisfactory** answer statement is:

Investigate ways of recovering the slippage on projects 1 and 2 (0.5) such as revisiting the scope of projects 1 and 2 (0.5) to re-assess the relationship between the delivery of capability and the delivery of the benefits.

Because:

Two valid points have been made but there are no suggestions about how the investigation would be conducted or how the projects could be re-scoped. There is no explanation of a particular relationship between specific capabilities and specific benefits.

A **poor** answer statement is:

Re-plan this tranche (0.5) to allow the transition and benefits measures to progress without Holystone.

Because:

To gain more marks, this answer should include an explanation of what should be re-planned and describe measures for specific benefits. It is not clear what has happened to Holystone.

Q2c)

A **good** answer statement is:

Even in such adverse situations there may be new benefits that arise from the revised approach (0.5). For example, delays in the Holystone Project may provide time for greater community consultation (0.5) leading to increased community support (0.5). The timescale for the realization of any such new benefits will be scheduled in the Benefits Realization Plan (0.5).

Because:

The answer starts with a valid statement which could be partly from the candidate's own general business experience; even in difficult situations you can often find something good. The answer then follows on with a good and relevant example of something good which is relevant to the Case Study where the needs of the local community and working in partnership with the local people are mentioned. In the last part of the statement there is

a correct statement following MSP guidance of what will need to be changed in the BRP as a result.

A **satisfactory** answer statement is:

New review milestones need to be put in place to measure the benefits from T2 (0.5) because the timescales for realization might be longer now based on reduced implementation (0.5).

Because:

Two valid points are made, based on MSP guidance, but could be improved by describing what is meant by a review milestone and providing some examples.

A **poor** answer statement is:

The BRP will need to reflect that the benefits originally anticipated will be delivered later. The sum total of the benefits will need to be considered within the context of the programme (0).

Because:

This answer should explain which specific benefits will be delivered later and why. There is no indication of what element in the BRP has to change and why. The second sentence does not add anything meaningful.