

Delta Module Three

Standard and ELTM Options

Examination Report

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CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
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Delta Module Three Principal Examiner's Report

December 2017

1. REPORT ON THE STANDARD OPTION

1.1 Introduction

Delta Module Three aims to develop candidates' knowledge of and competence in assessment and course planning in relation to a specialist area, and includes: research into a specialist area; approaches to needs analysis; curriculum and syllabus design principles and different types of syllabus; course design and evaluation; and assessment of learners. The module is assessed by means of a 4,000–4,500 word Extended Assignment, submitted in June or December of each year, in which candidates carry out an independent investigation leading to the design of a course programme related to their chosen specialist area. Candidates choose a specialism which is relevant to their current or intended teaching context (for example, Business English, Young Learners, ESP, EAP, Exam Classes, One-to-One, etc.). The Extended Assignment consists of five parts: (1) specialist topic area (2) needs analysis (3) course proposal (4) assessment and (5) conclusion. To complete the assignment, candidates need to:

- review the relevant literature of their chosen topic area and identify key issues
- explain how they identified the needs of a chosen group of learners, and how they used diagnostic tests to establish learning priorities
- design a course of at least 20 hours, providing a rationale for its design, goals and teaching approach
- explain how the course will be assessed and evaluated
- outline how the proposed course design relates to the issues identified in the introduction.

In doing so, candidates are expected to demonstrate an informed understanding of: their chosen topic area; key principles of needs analysis and diagnostic testing; key principles of, and types of, course and syllabus design; as well as key principles and roles of assessment.

The Extended Assignment is assessed according to a detailed Mark Scheme which allocates marks for each of the five assessment categories each of which is divided into three sub-categories:

Grasp of topic

- Review of the relevant literature in the topic area
- Understanding of key issues in the topic area
- Application of knowledge to practice and identification of key issues

Needs analysis and commentary

- Key principles of needs analysis and diagnostic testing
- Analysis of the diagnostic test and identification of learner needs
- Discussion and justification of priorities supported by the needs analysis

Course proposal

- Key principles of syllabus and course design
- Justification of learning aims, teaching approach and the course in terms of learner needs
- Design of the course

Assessment

- Key principles of different types of assessment
- Justification of assessment procedures in terms of course design and learner needs
- Application of assessment procedures

Presentation and organisation

- Academic writing, language and referencing
- Presentation, coherence and organisation
- Clarity of argument and quality of ideas

These categories are marked in line with the grade descriptions as outlined in the *Delta Handbook for tutors and candidates* (p. 70). Marks are awarded for each category and then totalled to form an overall grade (Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail). The weighting for the assessment categories is as follows:

- Grasp of topic (25%)
- Needs analysis and commentary (20%)
- Course proposal (25%)
- Assessment (20%)
- Presentation and organisation (10%).

1.2 Purpose of this report

This Delta Module Three Report is based on Extended Assignments submitted in December 2016 and June 2017. These assignments are independent research projects owned by candidates, so it is not possible to provide sample assignments. However, this report highlights some of the areas which were considered by examiners to be particularly strong or weak so as to give clearer guidance to candidates and centres.

A separate section on the English Language Teaching Management (ELTM) option is included at the end of this report.

1.3 Examiners' comments

The topic areas focused on (and the percentage of candidates who chose these) for the December 2016 and June 2017 sessions were as follows:

- Teaching exam classes **EX** (28%)
- English for Academic Purposes **EAP** (12%)
- Teaching young learners **YL** (12%)
- Teaching one-to-one **1to1** (12%)
- Business English **BE** (6%)
- Teaching monolingual classes **MON** (6%)
- Content and Language Integrated Learning / Embedded ESOL (teaching English through subject/work-based learning **CLIL**(1%)
- ESOL learners with literacy needs **ESOLLIT** (2%)
- Teaching in a non-English-speaking environment **NESE** (2%)
- Teaching in an English-speaking environment **ESE** (3%)
- Language development for teachers **LDT** (1%)
- English for Specific Purposes **ESP** (2%)
- Teaching learners online/through distance/blended learning **DL** (2%)
- Teaching multilingual classes **MUL** (2%)
- Language support **LS** (0.5%)
- Teaching English to learners with special requirements **SR** (0.5%)

A further 8% of candidates chose the ELTM option.

There was again a good range of chosen topics, although EX, EAP, YL and 1to1 constituted the four most popular topics and were still chosen by over two out of every three candidates.

1.3.1 Overall comments on the work of candidates

The standard of assignments has generally improved session on session since this modular content was introduced. However, there are still some candidates who do not follow the guidelines carefully enough and are thus unable to demonstrate a solid enough understanding to achieve a pass grade.

The majority of assignments submitted for assessment again met the criteria and represented work which demonstrated a sound grasp of candidates' chosen specialism, principles of needs analysis, course design and assessment. There was again a good range of assignments which met the criteria for a Merit or Distinction.

Fewer candidates inserted visual diagrams into the body of the essay in these last two sessions compared to previous sessions, following warnings not to try and circumvent the overall word limit through excessive use of charts or over-use of bullet points at the expense of prose. Candidates should be advised that content within pictures in the main body of the work **does** count towards the word limit, and over-length assignments will continued to be penalised or returned unmarked even if some written content is in picture form.

1.3.2 Specific strengths

There were again many excellent assignments which:

- researched the chosen specialism in insightful ways and critiqued the relevant literature
- identified key issues in the specialism and their practical implications
- used a range of tools, whose choice was justified, to identify needs
- analysed the results thoroughly, and summarised the key findings in the text itself
- clearly identified learning priorities which subsequently informed their choice of course objectives
- designed comprehensive, and sometimes innovative, course plans which were well justified
- were complemented by useful, logical, creative and relevant assessment procedures
- were well-written and clearly organised, with plentiful reference to key sources in each section.

Most assignments kept to the word limit, while those that exceeded the word limit were penalised accordingly. Candidates who wrote significantly fewer than 4,500 words tended to struggle to provide sufficient depth of discussion throughout the assignment. Candidates who radically departed from the suggested word limit for each section again tended to do poorly overall.

Stronger assignments tended to integrate the background reading into principled decisions, whereas weaker assignments often summarised the reading without explicitly linking it to decisions made. Stronger assignments also showed clear links between sections such that there was a logical thread running throughout the assignment, something which weaker assignments often failed to do.

Some specific strengths were as follows:

PART 1

- Stronger candidates who narrowed the focus of Part 1 did so sensibly, e.g. exam classes to IELTS writing, where the focus on writing was clearly situated within exam classes rather than writing in general.
- Stronger candidates did more than just display that they had done relevant reading; they were able to take a critical stance, have a personal opinion on different authors and/or show how ideas should be interpreted.
- Stronger candidates demonstrated a solid grasp of the specialism, with a sufficient number of sources underpinning the discussion.
- Stronger candidates discussed a good range of issues related to the chosen specialism and included concrete practical applications.

PART 2

- Stronger candidates showed explicitly how their understanding of the principles of needs analysis (NA) and diagnostic testing (DT) informed their choice of instruments.
- Stronger candidates selected a range of instruments to identify needs, analysed the results and summarised the key findings in the text itself with clear cross-referencing, and clearly identified learning priorities which informed their subsequent choice of course objectives.
- Stronger candidates clearly designed their DT instruments logically based on their NA results.
- Stronger candidates presented their data in a reader-friendly way, with clear signposting to further data in the appendices, and showed explicitly how their learning priorities were arrived at, often using numbering/coding to make the links clear.

PART 3

- Stronger assignments showed explicitly how the candidate's understanding of the principles of course design and types of syllabus informed the design of the subsequent course.
- More candidates justified their course design choices well in Part 3, with explicit reference back to the data in Part 2 and the specialism in Part 1.
- Most courses were well planned with clear links to the course objectives and the learning priorities in Part 2.
- Stronger assignments again made good use of colour-coding and arrows to show the development of strands of the syllabus and links between individual lessons.

PART 4

- Stronger assignments showed explicitly how the candidate's understanding of the principles of assessment informed the choice of assessment procedures.
- Candidates differentiated well between formative and summative assessment and made some good use of the relevant literature to support their practical application.
- More candidates explicitly linked their assessment procedures to the course by showing how each of the course objectives was to be tested, and indicated on the actual course plan exactly when assessment would take place in their 20-hour course.
- Stronger assignments explicitly justified the assessment decisions made with reference back to Parts 1, 2 and 3.

WRITING

- Many assignments were well written with appropriate and consistent use of referencing conventions both in-text and in the bibliography.
- Most candidates presented their essays well with good use of subheadings and good signposting of clearly organised appendices, which were appropriately sequenced and clearly labelled, with an appropriate number of relevant appended materials.
- Stronger assignments logically developed a sense of argument throughout each part of the assignment and showed good coherence overall.

1.3.3 Specific weaknesses

The main areas of weakness continue to be issues such as:

- not adequately researching the chosen specialism, and not basing the whole assignment and course on the specialism
- lack of theoretical underpinning in some or all sections; not linking the background reading to specific decisions taken
- failure to analyse learners' needs adequately and to identify learning priorities from the analysis
- failure to justify the design of the course with reference to the identified needs
- lack of clarity as to which course objectives were to be tested, when and how during the course
- lack of clear development of argument within sections and lack of links between sections.

A recurring issue among some weaker assignments was that they seemed to be based on an already prepared course and assessment, and were therefore not convincingly linked to a principled analysis of learner needs and/or a clear understanding of the specialism. Another recurrent theme was weaker candidates failing to make sufficient reference to research, in some or all sections of the assignment, to

support their discussion and/or failing to integrate this into an analysis of their own course. Some candidates did not refer to the reading they had done, while others seemed not to have done much reading at all. Weaker assignments also tended to rely too much on general methodology books, such as Thornbury, Harmer, Scrivener and Hedge, instead of more specialised key sources, to discuss the specialism, course design, assessment, etc.

Failing candidates also tended to have some or many of the following specific problems:

PART 1

- Some candidates seemed unclear what their specialism was, and in some cases the title mentioned one specialism while Part 1 discussed another.
- Weaker assignments often failed to link the whole assignment to their chosen specialism.
- Some candidates narrowed the specialism without integrating this with a general discussion of the overall specialism, for example, by writing too extensively about the IELTS exam without going into enough depth about teaching exam classes.
- Weaker assignments failed to contrast different positions in the literature and say which point of view they agreed with and why, instead simply listing or summarising what they had read.

PART 2

- Weaker assignments made little reference to theory, and failed to use relevant terminology.
- Some weaker assignments focused on one skill in the DT without adequate justification for this from their NA. In some cases the NA results suggested a different skill should have been focused on in the DT.
- Weaker assignments failed to collate the results of their NA/DT. In some cases data in the appendices was not discussed in the main body, while in other cases the appended data was not adequately signposted in the discussion of results.
- Some weaker assignments briefly listed their learning priorities without discussing how they emerged from the findings of the NA/DT, and how/why they were prioritised; some failed to list priorities at all, leaving the reader to surmise from the findings what the priorities might be.

PART 3

- Some candidates discussed course design principles and types of syllabus without showing how these principles informed their decisions about the course content, course approach and sequencing of objectives and lessons.
- Weaker assignments failed to clarify how the course objectives linked back to the learning priorities identified in Part 2.
- Weaker course plans failed to show clearly how lessons linked to each other and how each lesson linked to the course objectives.
- Some course plans lacked sufficient detail to show what would be taught and how, while some simply provided a series of individual plans for each lesson.

PART 4

- Weaker assignments either failed to discuss assessment principles explicitly or did so without showing how the principles informed the choice of assessment procedures.
- Some candidates failed to adequately distinguish between formative and summative assessment tools, and this led to confusion as to what was to be tested and why.
- Weaker assignments failed to link their assessment procedures explicitly and logically to Part 3, in order to show how the course objectives were to be assessed.
- Weaker assignments failed to clearly show what was to be tested, when and how during the 20-hour course.

WRITING

- Weaker assignments evidenced poor proofreading in terms of language inaccuracies, misspelt author names, problems with inconsistent margins, font size, line spacing between sections and subsections, etc.
- Weaker candidates continued to poorly signpost/acknowledge appended materials, while others still put too much discussion in the appendices rather than in the main body.

- Some candidates consistently ran some words together or misused hyphens throughout the essay, presumably as a way to circumvent the word count overall. This was penalised.

1.4 Advice to centres and candidates

Centres are advised to consider the following when preparing candidates:

- Encourage candidates to challenge what they read in the literature, using their own teaching experience to do so, and avoid making over-simplistic generalisations such as, '*exam learners are highly motivated*', or using sources just to say something obvious.
- It needs to be impressed on candidates that applying theory to practice is a fundamental part of this assignment. Analyse real NA tools, course plans and assessment tools in light of theoretical areas to reinforce this, e.g. look at a questionnaire and decide what kind of data it will yield; look at plans and identify syllabus and sequencing principles; determine what systems/skills are being addressed with assessment tools, etc.
- Training also needs to be given in linking what is discussed to previous sections, whether it be to the concerns of the specialism in Part 1, the needs in Part 2 or the course objectives in Part 3.
- Candidates need to be trained to think of assessment not generically but to look at each objective and brainstorm four or five ways to assess it formatively and summatively. They should then challenge each other to choose the most effective assessment tool based on the specialism.
- Candidates should avoid trying to cover too much in the plan. There is a limit to what can be effectively covered in 20 hours. Help candidates to be able to properly prioritise.
- Tell candidates to avoid putting the subtotals of word counts under each section: they are not needed and will be included in the overall word count.

Candidates are advised to use the following checklist as a final check before submitting their assignment.

Have I	clearly chosen a specialism from the list provided, and indicated this on the cover page?	Yes/No
	outlined key features of the specialism and indicated what distinguishes it from other forms of teaching, such as general English?	Yes/No
	referred to and commented on background reading and key sources throughout?	Yes/No
	discussed principles underlying NA/DT, course and syllabus design, assessment, etc.?	Yes/No
	clearly justified my choice of NA tools?	Yes/No
	included completed samples of DTs used in the appendix?	Yes/No
	analysed the results of the DTs adequately?	Yes/No
	justified the learning priorities I have identified clearly in relation to my NA?	Yes/No
	justified my course objectives in terms of learner needs?	Yes/No
	added my course plan and NA/DT summary results as an appendix to the main body of the text?	Yes/No
	included sufficient detail in my course plan?	Yes/No
	made it clear what I will assess and how, with samples in the appendix?	Yes/No
	outlined how the course will be evaluated?	Yes/No
	respected the word limit and indicated the word count on the cover page?	Yes/No
	linked all parts of the assignment coherently to one another?	Yes/No
signposted all the appendices clearly in the main body of the text?	Yes/No	

Centres are advised to continue to monitor candidates' progress in this assignment through individual tutorials and by commenting on drafts, in order to ensure that they are meeting the criteria before they complete the whole assignment (although the final submission should be checked to make sure tutor comments have been removed and addressed). Some candidates might require additional advice, such as how to include quotes within the text.

Centres should also continue to advise candidates that all assignments are automatically checked electronically for plagiarism and that plagiarism has already been and will be penalised. Plagiarism checks include checks against previously submitted assignments as well as assignments or parts of assignments

which include passages copied from online resources or books, or from assignments obtained from colleagues or given by centres as a model. Centres should inform candidates that submission of assignments which have been plagiarised may lead to the candidate's disqualification and a ban on re-entry of up to three years.

Tutors and candidates are **strongly encouraged** to carefully read the information on plagiarism contained in the *Delta Handbook* (p. 74) and the additional guidelines on plagiarism which can be found at:

<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/347250-plagiarism-a-guide-for-delta-module-three.pdf>

1.5. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This section contains a list of questions which are frequently asked by centres and/or to centres/tutors by candidates. Answers to each question are italicised below each question.

PART 1

1. How many issues should I mention?

Between four and six, although some issues may require more coverage than others. It may be the case that some issues are large, in which case fewer may be explored. Try to ensure you choose 'key' issues for your chosen specialism, and not too general ones.

2. Should I make implications a separate section at the end, or weave them into the discussion of issues?

Both approaches are possible and equally valid.

3. Is it possible to combine specialisms?

No, there needs to be one main specialism permeating the whole assignment which is discussed in detail in Part 1. However, the teaching context may be such that your 1to1 learner is studying BE for example, in which case 1to1 can be the chosen specialism, but you can briefly refer to BE in Parts 2 and 3 in terms of the learning context and course content and approach.

4. Is it possible to narrow from a general specialism to an aspect of it e.g. EAP to EAP writing?

It is not necessary to narrow down the specialism, so EAP is fine, for example, but in a situation where your chosen learners are taking an EAP writing course, for example, you can focus on EAP writing. However, this means that in Part 1 you need to discuss mainly EAP with just one part of this section focused on writing within EAP. It should not turn into a whole section discussing writing.

5. What is the significance of the 5-year age range for YLs – how does this impact the discussion in Part 1?

Part of the discussion in Part 1 will inevitably be general to teaching YLs, but specific issues related to the chosen age range need to be discussed.

6. Does an 'issue' mean 'a problem'? Or is it the same as a feature of the specialism?

Not necessarily a problem, but features that need to be considered when designing a course, teaching and assessing learners. For example, in EAP an issue might be to consider which level to start teaching EAP; another might be whether to teach English for General Academic Purposes or English for Specific Academic Purposes.

7. Do 'implications for course design' mean implications for my course design or courses in general in my specialism?

This should refer to general implications. Try not to start referring to your own context until Part 2.

8. Are implications for course design to be focused on the teacher or the planner?

This can be both.

9. Some specialisms seem to overlap. I want to write about MON courses in a NESE. Should I write about both in Part 1?

As discussed above, you need to discuss one main specialism for your assignment. If you choose MON it is inevitable that you will mention NESE, but this should not be the main focus in Part 1.

10. In the YL specialism, we have to give a 5-year age range - e.g. 8 to 13. Why is this? There are big differences between 8-year-olds and 13-year-olds.

This allows you to officially respond to your reading and refer to your own experience regarding specific ages.

11. My learners are 4 years old. What is the youngest age group for my course I can choose for the YL specialism?

There is no lower limit specified but it is important for the tutor to consult Cambridge English if the learners have not yet started formal education. This is to ensure that the candidate will be able to fulfil the required assessment criteria for a pass grade.

12. With the Special Needs specialism, do I have to choose just one of the suggested areas within that for Part 1 e.g. dyslexia?

The focus should initially be teaching English to learners with SRs as the principles involved in understanding a certain SR, and adapting the teaching environment to suit the learner's needs, will be the same across a range of SRs. When the general principles have been explored candidates should then narrow down to focus on the specific needs of dyslexic learners and show how these needs can be met by adapting materials, teaching approach etc. This will allow them to state specific practical implications for needs analysis, course design and assessment of dyslexic learners; these will be returned to in parts 2–4, forming an important part of rationale for decisions made.

PART 2

1. My learners will be leaving before I get to the end of the assignment. Will this be a problem?

No, although it will be necessary to design and run the NA and DT before the students leave. It may also be the case that follow-up questions occur when writing Part 3, so this should be taken into consideration too.

2. Can I use the students' placement test instead of running a DT?

No. Placement tests are not sufficiently tailored to the target needs of the students in question, as they are designed to be used with all students at all levels.

3. When is it permissible to have a single learner – in which specialisms?

There are no specific requirements regarding which specialism can be taught within a one-to-one context: we accept that one-to-one teaching has become common and that this may represent the natural teaching context for a particular candidate. If this is the case, a single learner may be permissible. Past submissions have included one learner who is going to be learning EX, BE, ESP, and EAP. However, other specialisms such as YL, LS, and SR may also be possible. Candidates should be aware that some specialisms will obviously not lend themselves to a one-to-one context (e.g. MON, MUL).

Candidates should be aware that choosing a one-to-one context should not be done for the purpose of collecting less data. With just one learner it is expected that you collect NA/DT data to a much greater depth than you would for a whole class. Where there is uncertainty about whether a one-to-one context is permissible it is always best for your course tutor to check with Cambridge English before proceeding.

It is important to note that candidates who choose to proceed with a single learner must be clear what their chosen specialism is: BE, EX etc. Part 1 should focus on the specialism and *not* confuse this with one-to-one teaching. If the candidate wishes to explore the particulars of teaching individual learners, then 1to1 is the specialism to select.

The most common reason for failing to achieve a pass grade when selecting one learner is when candidates confuse the focus of their assignment, trying to specialise in **both** their chosen specialism (e.g. BE) **and** one-to-one teaching. This leads to a confused and superficial treatment of two specialisms in Part 1 and should be avoided. When a candidate chooses to design (for

example) a BE course for a single learner, Part 1 should explore the specialism of BE and Part 2 should investigate the specific needs of the learner through the NA and DT.

4. Can I narrow my focus from the outset of Part 2 e.g. focus the NA/DT on EX writing rather than all EX skills/papers? Where is this justified?

If the NA results clearly show that learners want/need to focus mainly on writing then you can narrow your DT to focus just on writing, but it would need to establish clearly which aspects of writing the learners are currently strong/weak in. Alternatively, if the teaching context is such that only one skill will be focused on, for example if you are going to be teaching an EAP writing course, then the NA can focus just on that skill. However, even if the DT focuses on writing, you may identify some language development needed to support learners' writing, such as vocabulary, linkers, etc.

5. What is the difference between analysis appended in appendix 2, key findings and course priorities?

Appendix 2 contains the raw data. In the appendix in the main document you include a summary of the collated data, for example, charts showing a comparison between learners across different skills. The main findings, main strengths and weaknesses from the DT are discussed in the main body in Part 2. Together with the NA results, you need to prioritise the main areas which your course is going to focus on, and from which the subsequent course objectives will derive in Part 3.

6. There is so much to write about in Part 2. What advice is there on how to manage the low word count for this section? Can I just refer to appended collated data in Part 2 rather than write out again the key findings in my essay body?

It is all about prioritising and linking/signposting to the appended data and collated data. You can refer the reader to the collated data in the appendix, but you will still need to summarise the key findings.

7. There has been a lot of controversy over learning styles. Do we still have to write about it?

Not unless it is something you consider important in your NA.

8. What is the difference between course priorities in Part 2 and course objectives in Part 3?

The course objectives need to be worded as objectives (see the literature) and need to be clearly derived from the learning priorities. So, having established at the end of Part 2 what learners need, then the course objectives in Part 3 will verbalise how this is to be achieved through your course.

PART 3

1. How are the objectives I set in Part 3 different from the priorities in Part 2?

Part 3 objectives should be narrower than the Part 2 priorities. For instance, the NA and DT might identify that the students need to work on 'talking about the past more accurately' which might translate into objectives relating to past simple and past continuous.

2. Do I need to append all the materials I plan to use in my course?

No. There is no need to append copies of materials which are widely available, as the reader will be able to access these. Any teacher-designed materials, however, should be appended, as the reader will not be able to access these. A representative sample should be included.

3. How much detail should I go into in my course plan?

The plan needs to be sufficiently detailed to allow another teacher to deliver the programme in exactly the way you envisage it yourself. A good indicator is to ask a colleague to talk you through the plan, indicating what happens in each lesson, what the homework will consist of and when and how assessment will take place. If the colleague can do so, the plan is sufficiently detailed.

4. Do objectives need to be itemised in the main body of Part 3? How many objectives should I have?

Yes, it is useful to list (and possibly number) them. Remembering that you have a 20-hour course you should not have too many objectives, probably five to eight would be suitable depending on how specific and detailed they are.

5. How many samples of course material should be appended?
A few samples – two to three would be enough – there is no need for too many unless you have created a lot of bespoke materials in which case you would need to show more samples.
6. Some of the sample lesson plans I've seen from past Principal Examiner reports are not very detailed. Is it enough to just put in the name of the lesson and lesson aim, e.g. Reading 3: helping learners with skimming and scanning?
Yes, we are not looking for detailed lesson plans for each of the 20 hours. It is important to see how each lesson is linked to the others and to the overall course objectives (hence the need to show the whole course in a chart), so for each lesson we need to see what the focus is and some brief detail about what will be done.
7. Do all objectives have to be language or skill focused? Can I include learner training objectives?
All are possible, depending on what your learners' needs and learning priorities are.
8. If I choose DL as my specialism, does my course plan have to include the face-to-face content as well as the online content?
Yes, it should include both.

PART 4

1. Do I need to test my students summatively?
Part 4 should indicate how the students are to be tested both formatively and summatively.
2. Should I include an appended assessment overview table?
It is not mandatory but it is a good idea. Make sure you signpost it in the main body.
3. How many sample assessment tools should I append? Does there need to be appended documentation for informal tools, e.g., tutorial forms, homework records?
It is a good idea to append one or two samples of your tools, particularly any that are hard to explain, but you do not need to append samples of all your documentation. As the term implies, these are 'samples'.
4. Do all key terms – content validity etc. – need to be explicitly defined?
Yes, they need to be mentioned, defined, referenced and also linked to the actual assessment procedures you choose for your course.
5. Should I link tools used to course objectives assessed? How can I do this?
Yes, they need to be linked. If you have an overview chart (see Part 3, Question 6 above) you can number-reference the course objective, otherwise you need to state which course objective(s) are being assessed when you describe each assessment tool.
6. Do I have to give details in Part 4 about all my formative and summative assessments?
Yes, you need to state clearly what you will do in the 20-hour course in terms of formative and summative assessment.
7. Is it necessary to append a copy of all my formative and summative assessments?
No, but you should give some samples (see above).
8. Do I have to append a full copy of a published exam like FCE if I use that for one of my tests? Can I just put in a link to this kind of material?
It would be good to show some sample parts. Do remember, though, that you are expected to design your own procedures and not rely entirely on published tests. Even if you do rely heavily on published exams because of the nature of your course, you would still need to show how the published tests are to be assessed with your course objectives in mind.

OVERALL

1. Is it possible to change earlier sections as I write later ones?

Yes, the writing of the assignment should be iterative and recursive. It often happens that later sections precipitate modifications in earlier sections.

2. Can I refer to internet sources as part of my reading?

Yes. Many practical suggestions can be found in internet sources. However, there should not be reference solely to internet sources: key writers should also be surveyed (although these could be consulted electronically). All internet sources need to be credible, and appropriately referenced.

3. I will be teaching the EAP course to my group. How much information should I give about the longer course at my school of which my EAP course will be part?

This should only be mentioned briefly.

4. Can I use some of the word count from Part 5 for more important sections?

Yes, you can, but it is still useful to have a good conclusion to the assignment. This section is also a good guide for you to ensure that you have linked all parts together.

5. In my country, I can't access some older texts on the recommended booklists. Do I have to read the original sources for key theories/principles?

It is important to access some 'key' sources for each of the four main parts of the assignment. The same applies to other modules of Delta.

6. Am I penalised if I put some material in the wrong document?

This comes under 'presentation and organisation' of the assignment and is assessed.

2. REPORT ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING MANAGEMENT (ELTM) OPTION

2.1 Introduction

This Delta Module Three ELTM Principal Examiner Report is based on Extended Assignments submitted in December 2016 and June 2017 which focused on ELTM. It highlights areas which were considered by examiners to be particularly strong or weak and provides specific comments in order to help centres and future candidates.

2.2 Examiners' comments

2.2.1 Overall comments on the work of candidates

The number of ELTM assignments submitted ranged between 20 and 30 per marking session. Most candidates again chose to focus on Academic Management. The breakdown of assignments submitted over the past two sessions is as follows:

- Academic Management 62%
- Human Resource Management (HRM) 19%
- Marketing 16%
- Customer Service 3%

Many assignments were well done, and stronger candidates continued to make good use of guidance from their centres and the *Delta Handbook for tutors and candidates*, followed the assignment guidelines well, adhered to the word limit and made effective use of appendices to support their assignments.

Nevertheless, there were again some candidates who seemed to have limited experience and understanding of ELTM issues, and who consequently found it challenging to produce a satisfactory assignment. There were still unfortunately some candidates who seemed to have not fully grasped the requirements for this assignment.

The following comments made by examiners reflect specific strengths and weaknesses related to the five assessment categories. Many of the main strengths and weaknesses are similar to those identified from previous years, but these are nevertheless reiterated here due to their importance in terms of guidance for centres and candidates.

2.2.2 Specific strengths

There were again some very good assignments which:

- reviewed and critiqued the relevant literature on ELTM in general, and the chosen area (HRM, Academic Management, etc.) in particular, and also identified key issues and their practical implications
- evidenced extensive relevant reading, and were able to use their reading to support decisions taken in Parts 2, 3 and 4 of the assignment
- used a range of tools to analyse the educational context of their chosen language teaching organisation (LTO) and to identify and prioritise areas for improvement
- presented clearly tailor-made, innovative and well considered change proposals which were clearly linked to the findings from the analysis
- explained clearly and in detail how their proposed change(s) would be implemented in different stages over time
- were well written and clearly organised with clear signposting to the appendices.

Grasp of topic

Some specific strengths were as follows:

- demonstrating a sound understanding of ELTM issues with reference to key sources
- demonstrating good awareness of the chosen area within ELTM (Academic Management, Human Resource Management, Customer Service or Marketing)

- identifying key issues within ELTM and the chosen areas, and outlining their practical implications
- having a clear management perspective on issues discussed.

Situation analysis

Some specific strengths were as follows:

- good understanding of principles of customer analysis and stakeholder analysis with reference to the literature which clearly informed the choice of instruments used
- good use of summary charts to collate the situation analysis data which were then well referenced to the appended main results
- clear conclusions drawn from the analysis and prioritisation of areas for improvement which enabled the reader to follow the links from the data to the conclusions
- prioritising one or more areas from the weaknesses identified to address through the change proposal.

Proposal

Some specific strengths were as follows:

- good understanding of principles of strategic management and school improvement with reference to the literature which clearly informed the change proposal
- comprehensive proposal for change, with sufficient detail to show what was intended and why
- clear justification for the proposal in terms of its impact on the LTO
- insightful and realistic discussion of the benefits of the proposal to the various stakeholders.

Implementation

Some specific strengths were as follows:

- good understanding of principles of change management and decision-making with reference to the literature which clearly informed the implementation plan
- clear justification for the decisions taken in the implementation plan in relation to the change management literature as well as the results of the situation analysis
- good discussion of issues such as resistance, and of practical ways to overcome them
- recognition that the change proposal will not automatically be accepted by all parties.

Presentation and organisation

Some specific strengths were as follows:

- good academic writing with consistent use of referencing in the body and bibliography, and good proofreading
- making good use of the headings and subheadings suggested in the *Delta Handbook* to organise the assignment
- taking care to present the assignment effectively using tables, charts and other visuals to support arguments and/or present data
- making explicit links between the different sections of the assignment to present a coherent, logical and consistent argument throughout.

2.2.3 Specific weaknesses

A worrying trend occurring in the past two sessions relates to candidates' choice of focus for their assignment, and this has become the main reason preventing candidates from obtaining a pass grade:

- deciding the focus before conducting the situation/customer analysis
- having too narrow a focus.

This may be due in some cases to poor guidance from centres/tutors, or in other cases to candidates failing to satisfactorily grasp the requirements as outlined in the *Delta Handbook*. This trend is continuing despite it having been clearly highlighted in the previous Examination Report in 2016.

In the first case, weaker candidates chose a focus, such as 'classroom observations', and discussed this in detail in Part 1 instead of focusing on ELTM and a specific area, such as Academic Management. They then conducted their analysis in Part 2 solely on their chosen focus. Instead, the focus should be one of a number of priorities which emerge from the situation analysis/customer analysis (SA/CA). The starting

point, then, for such change proposals became the initially chosen focus rather than priorities emerging from the actual SA/CA data.

In the second case, the focus itself was too narrow, for example, 'introducing/designing a new course at the LTO'. Such candidates tended then to spend too much of Parts 3 and 4 discussing the academic content/curriculum of the course rather than focusing on how the proposed change would improve the LTO strategically and on how the proposed change itself would be implemented.

Candidates undertaking the ELTM specialism should be aware that the change proposal they suggest should be clearly justified in their situation/customer analysis. They should avoid simply describing a 'pet project' or a change which they have seen implemented at another LTO, but which may not answer the needs of the LTO they describe.

The weakest section of many assignments continued to be Part 2, with a substantial number of candidates failing to adequately discuss principles of customer and situation analysis, and failing to refer to a sufficient number of key sources. Another worrying trend in the past two sessions was for some weaker assignments to rely solely, or too heavily, on analysis derived from a previous study or data collected by an external body. In such cases candidates did not conduct their own SA/CA and use this as the basis for identifying priorities and designing their subsequent change proposal. This was penalised.

Other main areas of weaknesses were:

- lack of awareness of ELTM and general management issues, and lack of a management perspective when discussing the change proposal
- lack of theoretical underpinning for decisions taken in some or all sections
- failing to analyse the educational context of the chosen LTO adequately, and failing to identify overall strengths and weaknesses of the LTO
- not linking the change proposal to the needs identified
- not adequately justifying the implementation plan, and not considering potential resistance from stakeholders to the proposed change.

Grasp of topic

Some specific weaknesses were as follows:

- limited review of the literature with few key sources referred to and/or an over-reliance on a small number of sources
- focusing solely on the chosen area, such as HRM, without discussing ELTM in general or situating the chosen area within ELTM
- discussing a narrow topic, such as 'classroom observations', before having conducted the SA/CA, at the expense of discussing ELTM and the chosen area, such as HRM
- lack of organisation of ideas or development of argument within this section.

Situation analysis

Some specific weaknesses were as follows:

- lack of explicit discussion of principles of SA/CA with few key sources referred to
- using tools, however appropriate, without explaining why they had been chosen and without reference to key principles of customer analysis/stakeholder analysis
- lack of thorough analysis of the data collected, and lack of visual presentation of the findings to collate the findings into main strengths and weaknesses
- lack of in-text discussion of the findings with an over-reliance on data in the appendices.

Proposal

Some specific weaknesses were as follows:

- lack of explicit discussion of principles of strategic management and school improvement, with few key sources referred to
- briefly mentioning some key sources, but failing to show how an understanding of strategy informed the design of the change proposal
- failing to show how the change proposal was informed by the analysis and failing to convincingly show why this proposal was key to improving the LTO's performance
- lack of detail as to how the changes would impact different stakeholders.

Implementation

Some specific weaknesses were as follows:

- lack of explicit discussion of principles of change management and decision-making, with few key sources referred to
- briefly mentioning some sources, but failing to integrate the reading convincingly into the decisions taken
- lack of clarity as to how the results of the situation analysis informed the choice of the actual implementation plan
- failing to show enough detail in the implementation plan in terms of the different stages over time to implement the whole proposal.

Presentation and organisation

Some specific weaknesses were as follows:

- lack of proofreading
- failure to signal appendices in the main body of the assignment
- lack of logical development of argument within sections
- lack of explicit links between sections.

2.3 Advice to centres and candidates

Many ELTM candidates would clearly benefit from more help in writing this assignment. In particular, many candidates need better guidance on how to approach their specific area and narrow the focus of their change proposal.

Centres working with a group of candidates should avoid encouraging each candidate to identify a different topic area at the outset (for example, to ensure that no two candidates are working on the same area), but instead to stress that they should not be thinking about their change proposal until after they have collected and analysed their SA/CA data. This means ensuring that:

- Part 1 focuses on ELTM and one of the four specific areas (Academic Management, HRM, etc.) and **not** on a narrow topic such as 'classroom observations' or 'introducing a new course at the LTO'
- in Part 2 candidates analyse the whole LTO in order to identify main strengths and weaknesses, and **not** simply analyse, for example, the advantages and disadvantages of the existing observation system.

Candidates considering whether or not to choose the ELTM option would be advised to:

- consider whether they have sufficient knowledge or understanding of ELTM from their own experience or observations, and thus whether they might be better placed to choose another specialism for the Delta Module Three Extended Assignment
- ensure that they have access to an LTO in order to obtain the data required for the analysis section of the assignment
- read more widely about ELTM in general, customer/stakeholder analysis, strategic management/school improvement, change management and decision-making
- think through in detail how to design a proposal which strategically addresses some of the fundamental weaknesses identified in the analysis
- consider how the change would be implemented in detail in order to satisfactorily improve the LTO, again with reference to the weaknesses identified in the analysis section.

Centres should also ensure that they can provide full and appropriate support before advising a candidate to take the ELTM option.