Additional study question 2 (consolidation): Answer notes

## Question

A graphic design company with a small UK head office has an almost entirely remote workforce made up of designers from across Europe.

The majority of the workforce has recently moved from office-based roles to remote working from home. They communicate with head office and each other via telephone, email, instant messaging and video conferencing.  
  
Discuss the impact of this change on employee behaviour, and how the company can ensure the wellbeing of the workforce during this change.

Your response must include reasoned judgements and conclusions.

[12 marks, plus 3 marks QWC]

## Command verb

* Discuss. Present key points about different ideas or strengths and weaknesses of an idea. There should be some element of balance, although not necessarily equal weighting.
* Include reasoned judgements and evidence to develop a supported conclusion.

# Impact on behaviour

**Remote working**

Employees can benefit from the independence of home working:

* managing their own hours
* being more involved in family life
* managing childcare
* being responsible for their own organisation and motivation, without the likely disturbances of being in the office.

However, employees can find remote working difficult:

* there’s a blurring of working hours
* they may have to rely on home technology
* there’s a lack of real-person contact
* there are limited opportunities to share problems or concerns
* there can be a feeling of being totally responsible for tasks.

**Behaviour changes**

* There can be increased stress levels due to lack of movement away from a   
  home office.
* Day stress can bleed into evenings and weekends.
* Sleep patterns can become disturbed.
* There is a potential for health problems due to a lack of exercise.
* There can be increased tensions in the household, which could lead to arguments.

# Wellbeing strategies

* **Code of conduct**: ensure that rules are clear for all remote workers to reduce any concerns or confusion.
* **Situational awareness**: the employers and managers need to become familiar with the normal behaviour of all employees when they start work, as well as their normal social habits and hobbies. This will allow changes in behaviour to be spotted early on.
* **Promoting co**-**worker awareness**:
  + employees also need to become familiar with each other and the normal behaviour of their colleagues, promote online chats about wellbeing, and support each other even when not meeting face-to-face.
  + ensure that co-workers are aware of any cultural differences between them around the world.
* **Working hours**: there is a need to respect the different time zones of remote workers.
* **Community**:employers should promote common break times, such as sharing a coffee break online, and organise social events.
* **Support training and awareness**: introduce strategies for employees to ask for support when they need it, and have the confidence to ask each other if they need help. This includes safety checks on equipment used at home.

# Mark scheme guidelines (generic)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Band | Mark | Descriptor |
| 4 | 10-12 | AO3 Analyse and evaluate the question scenario in a comprehensive, effective and relevant way that shows detailed understanding.  AO2 Apply detailed knowledge and understanding of the question scenario in different situations and contexts.  AO1 Demonstrate a wide range of knowledge and understanding to the question scenario.  The answer demonstrates comprehensive breadth and/or depth of understanding. |
| 3 | 7-9 | AO3 Analyse and evaluate the impact of the question scenario in a way that is mostly effective and mostly relevant.  AO2 Apply mostly relevant knowledge and some understanding of the question scenario in different situations and contexts.  AO1 Demonstrate mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the question scenario.  The answer demonstrates reasonable breadth and/or depth of understanding, with occasional inaccuracies and/or omissions. |
| 2 | 4-6 | AO3 Analyse and evaluate the question scenario in a way that is some parts effective with some relevance.  AO2 Apply some, but limited knowledge and understanding of the question scenario in different situations and contexts.  AO1 Demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the question scenario in a limited way.  The answer is basic and shows limited breadth and/or depth of understanding, with inaccuracies and omissions. |
| 1 | 1-3 | AO3 Analyse and evaluate the question scenario in a way that is minimal with very limited relevance.  AO2 Apply general knowledge and awareness of digital working on workplace culture and how to support workers in different situations and contexts.  AO1 Demonstrate minimal awareness of the question scenario in a minimal way.  The answer has isolated points, showing very minimal breadth and/or depth of understanding, with significant inaccuracies and omissions. |
|  | 0 | No creditworthy material |

# QWC Mark scheme guidelines (generic)

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| --- | --- |
| Mark | Descriptor |
| 3 | The answer is clearly expressed and well-structured. The rules of grammar are used with effective control of meaning overall. A wide range of appropriate technical terms is used effectively. |
| 2 | The answer is generally clearly expressed and sufficiently structured. The rules of grammar are used with general control of meaning overall. A good range of appropriate technical terms is used effectively. |
| 1 | The answer lacks some clarity and is generally poorly structured. The rules of grammar are used with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder the overall meaning. A limited range of appropriate technical terms is used effectively. |
| 0 | There is no answer written or none of the material presented is creditworthy.  Or  The answer does not reach the threshold performance level. The answer is fragmented and unstructured. The errors in grammar severely hinder the overall meaning. |