

Centre Number						Candidate Number				
Surname										
Other Names										
Candidate Signature										

For Examiner's Use	
Examiner's Initials	
Question	Mark
1	
2	
3	
TOTAL	



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
January 2012

Applied Business

BS04

Unit 4 Meeting Customer Needs

Wednesday 18 January 2012 9.00 am to 10.00 am

You will need no other materials.

Time allowed

- 1 hour

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes at the top of this page.
- Answer **all** questions.
- You must answer the questions in the spaces provided. Do not write outside the box around each page or on blank pages.
- Do all rough work in this book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- Questions 2(b) and 3(c) should be answered in continuous prose.
In these questions you will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.



J A N 1 2 B S O 4 0 1

Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

1 Read **Item A** and then answer the questions that follow.

Item A

Taylor Wimpey plc

Taylor Wimpey plc is one of the UK's largest house builders. It operates four brands: *George Wimpey*, *Bryant Homes*, *Laing Homes* and *Taylor Wimpey*. In 2009, the company recorded a loss of £641 million, despite receiving sales revenues of £2596 million.

The products sold by *Taylor Wimpey plc* are complex. It builds a diverse range of homes from small studio flats aimed at single people on lower incomes to "grand five bedroom houses" suitable for large families earning higher incomes, to retirement homes designed for the elderly. The company sells houses for prices approaching £1 million near to London and small terraced houses in northern England for £120 000.

The company's website shows extensive details of all properties that are completed or being built throughout the UK, as well as overseas. The website allows the company to investigate customers' views and:

- invites customers to indicate when they may be interested in purchasing a new home
- provides information on different features available with new homes – for example, different layouts of rooms and a choice of fittings for kitchens and bathrooms
- includes buyer guides to provide information to customers on legal and other issues involved in buying a home.

Customers can register their interest in buying a new home through the website by providing the information requested below.

Figure 1: Extract from the Taylor Wimpey plc website

The following details would be helpful to us so that we can provide you with the most suitable information in your search for a new home.

House Type

Apartment Bungalow Semi detached Detached Any

Minimum number of bedrooms Do you have a home to sell?

First-time buyer? Price range

Select your county

Bedfordshire
Berkshire
Bridgend
Buckinghamshire

Source: adapted from www.taylorwimpey.co.uk



1 (a) Using **Item A**, describe **two** ways in which *Taylor Wimpey plc* segments its market.

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1 (b) Explain why *Taylor Wimpey plc* provides its customers with a large amount of information. Use **Item A** to support your answer.

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1 (c) Using **Item A**, analyse the methods that *Taylor Wimpey plc* might use to research its customers' needs.

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2 Read **Item B** and then answer the questions that follow.

Item B

Change and decisions at Taylor Wimpey plc

The population of the UK is growing quickly and is forecast to undergo a number of significant changes.

- The population is ageing In 2008 16% of the UK's population was over 65. By 2031 this will have increased to 22%.
- The population is growing Between 2008 and 2031 the population of the UK is expected to grow by 15%.

This will affect *Taylor Wimpey plc* as people are living in smaller households. For example, the number of one-person households in the UK will rise from 6.9 million in 2009, to nearly 11 million in 2031. The company's houses, therefore, need to make effective use of space to provide flexible accommodation. The most rapid growth in the number of households is forecast to be in London and the south east of England.

Due to the complexity of the housing market, *Taylor Wimpey plc* offers additional benefits and services to its customers. This includes:

- offering low cost loans to help customers buy homes
- comprehensive after-sales service by on-site specialists to carry out any repairs or alterations
- a ten-year guarantee on each of its new properties
- a 24-hour emergency care line for two years as part of the guarantee.

Taylor Wimpey plc also offers customers the opportunity to personalise their new homes. Available optional extras include:

- flooring, carpets, lights, switches, kitchen units and worktops
- fireplaces and surrounds
- wardrobes, showers, patios, fencing, conservatories.

Sources: adapted from www.taylorwimpey.co.uk
and IGD – www.igd.com



2 (a) Use **Item B** to analyse how the forecast changes in the size and structure of the UK's population might affect *Taylor Wimpey plc's* future building plans.

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3 Read **Item C** and then answer the questions that follow.

Item C

Darrold Ltd

Darrold Ltd was established by Tom Darrold 20 years ago and now employs 245 employees. The company specialises in producing wooden doors and windows which it only sells to other businesses. It has a reputation for excellent customer service, including advice on installing and maintaining its products, which has helped it to thrive in a highly competitive market. The company operates two divisions: *Darrold Windows* and *Darrold Carpenters*. *Darrold Windows* supplies *Darrold Carpenters*, as an internal customer, with double glazing units to fit into its doors and windows.

Darrold Ltd supplies two major groups of external customers:

- large businesses, such as *Taylor Wimpey plc*, that place orders for large quantities of identical doors and windows
- smaller companies that place orders for smaller quantities of windows, often with individual designs.

The company prides itself on collecting data on its customers' needs and has done so each year since 1994. It has an extensive database containing a large amount of information. Its system of collecting data is organised as follows:

- the company collects data from customers in all regions of the UK
- it targets its larger and smaller customers by using interviews and questionnaires
- it ensures that it collects data from long-established and new customers alike.

Some customers, who are building homes in cities, have started to request different designs, including larger windows, more secure doors and triple glazing. The company has come under pressure to invest in research and development to produce new products to meet the changing needs of external customers.

Tom believes in providing a high standard of customer service. He holds the view that this is the best way for *Darrold Ltd* to meet the needs of its external customers, and this has been his approach for many years. Some of Tom's senior managers do not agree with him and argue that producing a range of products that meets the needs of all the company's customers should be a higher priority.



3 (a) Use **Item C** to explain the difference between internal and external customers.

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3 (b) Explain **how** *Darrold Ltd* might analyse the data it collects on its customers to help it to understand changes in customer needs.

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END OF QUESTIONS



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