

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2011

GCE

GCE Applied Business (6922)
Paper 01 Investigating Enterprise

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General Comments

This is a practical unit and the Enterprise must actually run for a period of time and candidates need to provide evidence for all stages of the Enterprise, from the planning stage through to the winding up of the business. Group size can be an issue as very large groups do not give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their contribution to the Enterprise in any significant manner.

Areas of the Specification

This unit had one of the smallest entries. This is probably due to the need to run an enterprise over time that requires substantial work commitment outside lesson time.

(a) The majority of the centres used Young Enterprise as a vehicle for this unit. Those candidates that kept detailed records in diaries/journals were the centres that did best on this unit. It is vital that these diaries/journals are included within the portfolios as much of the evidence for candidate involvement comes from the diaries. Diaries also show timelines and make activities clear. They support the other three strands.

There is still evidence that some candidates find it difficult to discuss what they did and tended to use the collective person, i.e. "we" instead of "I". It is important that candidates use their diaries/journals to identify and evaluate their own performance during the life of the enterprise.

The centre has to ensure that the product/service of the company involves sufficient activity to enable all candidates to have an active input to enable them to move out of mark band 1. A number of centres set up companies to run events or trips, these were often events/trips that had happened in previous years, which were annual events/trips or were too small. The candidates in these centres experienced difficulty in providing evidence of primary research and evidence for other strands. A substantive business activity is required.

Candidates are required to undertake a self evaluation in this strand. These were often unsubstantiated or, in many cases, were simply a description of what they did and did not evaluate performance.

(b) Some candidates produced excellent work for this strand with clear descriptions of roles and responsibilities as well as supportive evaluations of team members in these roles. Other candidates failed to produce either the descriptions or evaluations. There was little detail or underlying theory presented in the work from a number of candidates making it difficult to move out of mark band 1.

The Centre should also note the change in the assessment criteria for strand B that includes QWC. It is recommended that the centre assessor makes comment on the candidate mark record sheet with regard to the mark band level awarded for this component in future submissions. For example: 6 + 2, 6 being the content mark and 2 being the QWC mark.

(c) The witness statements for the presentation were often brief and needed much greater detail. Where clear and detailed witness statements showing substantive

contribution were present, centres could move candidates into mark band 3. This does, however, need supporting evidence from candidates showing originality of thought and outstanding contribution to the group report and presentation. In most portfolios, where there is a strong witness statement identifying strong and sustained contribution to the running of the company, the group activity and the group presentation by the candidate, there was usually sufficient candidate evidence to support the allocation of higher marks. However, some centres are still submitting strong witness statements and awarding high marks without the supporting evidence in the candidates' portfolios.

Where role or contribution was minor it was extremely difficult for candidates to move outside mark band 1. Candidates also should include their own PowerPoint printouts, cue cards, etc. The centre must also ensure that a full copy of the group presentation is sent for moderation to enable individual input to be gauged. The centres should not restrict themselves to the one side of the exemplar witness statement proforma found in the qualification guidance and on the Edexcel website. This is only a guide and centres must ensure that they make full and clear statements about candidate input into the company and the presentation. Where the activity/event was too small, candidates could not generate sufficient evidence. Where a company report is produced as well as the individual portfolios, this must be sent with the sample.

(d) Candidates are expected to show evidence of the winding up process of the business. This should include the financial outcomes of the company, for example, a profit and loss account. By including this information candidates are able to provide effective evaluations regarding the outcome of the enterprise. This did not always happen. Some centres did not direct candidates to cover this strand as a separate task and relied upon descriptions of activities and the personal evaluations and the evaluations of the other team members to be the evaluation of the company. Evaluation was often limited to making a profit.

Comments on Administrative Procedures

Portfolios were largely received on time. Administration was generally good. Statements of authentication were present in most of the samples moderated for this series.

Assessment was generally consistent with some evidence of leniency, especially in the work of weaker candidates.

More centres have submitted work suitably presented enabling easy access for moderation. However, some centres are still sending work in tightly packed, flimsy plastic wallets that often tear when trying to access the work for moderation.

Annotation of Portfolio Work

Annotation of the work still varies from indicating fully where the criteria has been met, to being very limited with little more than the final mark given. Annotation is best indicated via the Mark Band achieved and the area of specification met, e.g. MB1a indicates strand (a) has met Mark Band 1, rather than trying to annotate via the Assessment Objectives (AO's) as these are spread throughout the unit's strands.

Where there is more than one assessor, it is vital that there is evidence of standardisation and the work is internally verified.

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