

GCE in Applied Business

OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Business H026

OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Business (Double Award) H226

OCR Advanced GCE in Applied Business H426

OCR Advanced GCE in Applied Business (Double Award) H626

July 2009

Contents

1	About these Qualifications	5
1.1	The AS GCE	5
1.2	The Advanced GCE	5
1.3	Qualification Titles and Levels	6
1.4	Aims	6
1.5	Prior Learning/Attainment	7
2	Summary of Content	8
2.1	AS Units	8
2.2	A2 Units	13
3	Unit Content	18
3.1	AS Unit F240: <i>Creating a marketing proposal</i>	18
3.2	AS Unit F241: <i>Recruitment in the workplace</i>	23
3.3	AS Unit F242: <i>Understanding the business environment</i>	29
3.4	AS Unit F243: <i>The impact of customer service</i>	35
3.5	AS Unit F244: <i>ICT provision in a business</i>	40
3.6	AS Unit F245: <i>Running an enterprise activity</i>	44
3.7	AS Unit F246: <i>Financial providers and products</i>	49
3.8	AS Unit F247: <i>Understanding production in business</i>	55
3.9	A2 Unit F248: <i>Strategic decision-making</i>	62
3.10	A2 Unit F249: <i>A business plan for the entrepreneur</i>	66
3.11	A2 Unit F250: <i>Managerial and supervisory roles</i>	71
3.12	A2 Unit F251: <i>Launching a business on-line</i>	74
3.13	A2 Unit F252: <i>Promotion in action</i>	81
3.14	A2 Unit F253: <i>Constructing a financial strategy</i>	86
3.15	A2 Unit F254: <i>Launching a new product or service in Europe</i>	92
3.16	A2 Unit F255: <i>Training and development</i>	98
3.17	A2 Unit F256: <i>Business law</i>	103
3.18	A2 Unit F257: <i>Managing risk in the workplace</i>	108
4	Schemes of Assessment	113
4.1	AS GCE Scheme of Assessment	113
4.2	AS GCE (Double Award) Scheme of Assessment	113
4.3	Advanced GCE Scheme of Assessment	115
4.4	Advanced GCE Scheme of Assessment (Double Award)	116
4.5	External Assessment	117
4.6	Portfolio Assessment	117
4.7	Unit Order	117
4.8	Unit Options (at AS/A2)	118
4.9	Synoptic Assessment (A Level GCE)	118
4.10	Assessment Availability	119

Contents

4.11	Assessment Objectives	119
4.12	AO weightings	120
4.13	Quality of Written Communication	122

5 Technical Information 123

5.1	Making Unit Entries	123
5.2	Making Qualification Entries	125
5.3	Issue of Results	126
5.4	Grading	126
5.5	Enquiries about Results	128
5.6	Shelf-Life of Units	128
5.7	Unit and Qualification Re-sits	128
5.8	Guided Learning Hours	128
5.9	Code of Practice/Subject Criteria/Common Criteria Requirements	129
5.10	Disability Discrimination Act information relating to this specification	129
5.11	Arrangements for Candidates with Particular Requirements	130
5.11	Classification Code	130

6 Coursework Administration/Regulations 131

6.1	Supervision and Authentication	131
6.2	Avoiding Plagiarism	132
6.3	Submitting marks to OCR	132
6.4	The Assessment Evidence Grids	132
6.5	Standardisation and Moderation	133
6.6	Centre accreditation	134
6.7	Minimum Coursework Required	134
6.8	Instructions for Marking	135
6.9	Administering Portfolio Assessment and Moderation	136
6.10	OCR Repository	136

7 Other Specification Issues 138

7.1	Overlap with other Qualifications	138
7.2	Progression from these Qualifications	138
7.3	Key Skills Mapping	139
7.4	Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Economic and Cultural Issues	141
7.5	Sustainable Development, Health and Safety Considerations and European Developments	141
7.6	Avoidance of Bias	142
7.7	Language	142
7.8	Status in Wales and Northern Ireland	142
7.9	Citizenship	142

Appendix A: Performance Descriptions 143

Contents

Appendix B: Coursework Assessment Evidence Grids	146
Unit F240 - Assessment Evidence Grid	146
Unit F241 - Assessment Evidence Grid	148
Unit F244 - Assessment Evidence Grid	150
Unit F245 - Assessment Evidence Grid	152
Unit F246 - Assessment Evidence Grid	154
Unit F247 - Assessment Evidence Grid	156
Unit F249 - Assessment Evidence Grid	158
Unit F250 - Assessment Evidence Grid	160
Unit F251 - Assessment Evidence Grid	162
Unit F252 - Assessment Evidence Grid	164
Unit F253 - Assessment Evidence Grid	166
Unit F254 - Assessment Evidence Grid	168
Unit F255 - Assessment Evidence Grid	170
Appendix C: Guidance for the Production of Electronic Coursework Portfolio	172
Appendix D: Witness Statements	175
Appendix E: Glossary of 'Trigger' Words for External Examinations	180

1 About these Qualifications

This booklet contains OCR's Advanced Subsidiary GCE, Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award), Advanced GCE and Advanced GCE (Double Award) specifications in Applied Business for teaching from September 2009.

The specifications build upon the broad educational framework supplied by the Qualification and Subject Criteria (QCA, DCELLS and CCEA, 2002) and employ an investigative and problem-solving approach to the study of the subject. In addition to providing a suitable route for progression for candidates completing GCSE Applied Business, the course of study prescribed by these specifications can also reasonably be undertaken by candidates beginning their formal education in the subject at post-16 level. Progression through the Advanced Subsidiary GCE and Advanced GCE, through either a single or double award, may provide a suitable foundation for study of the subject, or related subjects, in further and higher education.

Key Skills are integral to the specifications and *the main* opportunities to provide evidence for the separate Key Skills qualification are indicated.

1.1 The AS GCE

The Advanced Subsidiary (Single and Double Award) GCEs are both a 'stand-alone' qualification and also the first half of the corresponding Advanced (Single and Double Award) GCEs. The AS GCE is assessed at a standard appropriate for candidates who have completed the first year of study (both in terms of teaching time and content) of the corresponding two-year Advanced GCE course, i.e. between GCSE and Advanced GCE.

The AS GCE is made up of **three** mandatory units which form 50% of the corresponding six-unit Advanced GCE.

The AS GCE (Double Award) is made up of **four** mandatory units and **two** optional units which form 50% of the corresponding **twelve**-unit Advanced GCE (Double Award).

The skills, knowledge and understanding required for the first half of an Advanced GCE course are contained in the 'Advanced Subsidiary' (AS) units. The level of demand of the AS examination is that expected of candidates half-way through a full Advanced GCE course of study.

1.2 The Advanced GCE

The Advanced GCE is made up of **three** mandatory units at AS and **three** further units at A2 (two mandatory and one optional).

The Advanced GCE (Double Award) is made up of **six** units at AS (four mandatory and two optional) and **six** further units at A2 (two mandatory and four optional).

The skills, knowledge and understanding required for the second half of an advanced GCE course are contained in the 'A2' units. The level of performance expected, therefore, reflects the more demanding Advanced GCE material, including the higher-level concepts and a requirement to draw together knowledge and skills from across the course. The precise pattern across AS and A2 reflects the nature of individual subjects.

The combination of candidates' attainments on the relatively less demanding AS units and relatively more demanding A2 units lead to an award at Advanced GCE standard.

1.3 Qualification Titles and Levels

These qualifications are shown on a certificate as:

- OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Business
- OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award) in Applied Business
- OCR Advanced GCE in Applied Business
- OCR Advanced GCE (Double Award) in Applied Business.

All qualifications are Level 3 in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

1.4 Aims

All specifications in Applied Business aim to provide candidates with a broad introduction to the business sector and are to encourage candidates to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in realistic business contexts, such as discovering the problems and opportunities faced by local businesses and/or organising an enterprise activity. They are to provide opportunities for candidates to develop sufficient depth of understanding to inform their choices between further study or training.

Candidates are to be encouraged to acquire the following range of skills through the study of realistic business contexts:

practical skills: personal organisation and time management; ICT skills;

presentational skills: producing a business report; making an oral or multimedia presentation;

personal skills: initiative; creativity; perseverance; willingness to learn and progress;

interpersonal skills: working in teams; discussing problems or issues; leading a team;

cognitive skills: investigative and research skills; problem solving; decision making; using theory to analyse a real organisation; planning a project.

All specifications are to encourage candidates to develop knowledge and understanding of:

the practices and techniques used within marketing, finance, operations management, human resource management and the links between them;

the processes, attractions and risks of setting up an enterprise;
the relationship between the business and the changing external environment;
social and ethical issues in business.

All specifications are also to encourage candidates to:

contribute to the development of the skills required for success as an entrepreneur, manager or employee;
apply numerical and written business techniques to a variety of business contexts;
explore business problems and learn to identify possible solutions.

In addition, the Advanced (Single and Double Award) GCE specifications in Applied Business are to develop candidates' understanding of business by making connections between areas of knowledge, skills and understanding.

1.5 Prior Learning/Attainment

Candidates entering this course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to Level 2 in the National Qualifications Framework, or Levels 7/8 of the National Curriculum. Skills in Numeracy/Mathematics, Literacy/English and Information and Communication Technology will be particularly relevant. However, there is no prior knowledge required for these specifications.

Prior learning, skills and aptitudes particularly relevant include those learnt in:

GCSE Business Studies
GCSE in Applied Business
OCR Level 1 Nationals in Business and ICT
OCR Level 2 Nationals in Business.

2 Summary of Content

2.1 AS Units

Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*

- Marketing objectives
- Functional areas of a business and their supporting role
- Market research
- The marketing mix
- Presentational skills
- How to judge potential success.

Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace*

- Job roles
- The recruitment process
- The selection process
- The induction process
- Employee motivation
- The legal dimension
- Research
- How to judge effectiveness.

Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*

-
- Business ownership
 - Sources of finance
 - Budgeting and budgetary control
 - Break-even analysis
 - Cash-flow forecasts
 - Importance of accurate record-keeping and technology
 - Analysis of the current market position
 - Economic conditions and market conditions
 - Ethical, legal, social, political and environmental factors
 - Stakeholders.
-

Unit F243: *The impact of customer service*

- Definition of a customer
- Definition of customer service and its importance to any business
- Customer needs and their potential power
- How organisations gather information on customer needs and the issues surrounding the storing of this information
- Impact that legal and ethical issues can have on the provision of customer service
- Implications for maintaining a high level of customer service on staff and senior management
- Assessing the quality and effectiveness of customer service.

Unit F244: *ICT provision in a business*

- How ICT is used by businesses
- The forms ICT provision can take
- Benefits/drawbacks of introducing ICT provision
- Contingency planning
- Research
- Presentational skills
- How to judge viability.

Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*

- Setting aims and objectives
- Building and developing an effective team
- Time management
- Required resources
- The need for regular meetings
- Possible constraints
- Research and analysis
- Potential effects of future changes to the enterprise activity.

Unit F246: *Financial providers and products*

-
- Customers of financial services
 - Financial-service providers and products
 - Research into the financial-services market
 - Constraints affecting the provision of financial services
 - Potential effects of future changes to customer circumstances.
-

- The role of the production department
 - Operational efficiency
 - Organising production
 - Ensuring quality
 - Stock control
 - Health and safety
 - Research into production
 - Potential production improvements.
-

2.2 A2 Units

Unit F248: *Strategic decision-making*

- Business goals
- Production planning
- Financial planning
- Human-resource planning
- Marketing planning
- Contingency planning.

Unit F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*

- Reasons for constructing a business plan
- Information within a business plan
- Appropriate research for a business plan
- Business plan templates
- Constraints that impact on implementation.

Unit F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles*

- The business context within which the report will take shape
- Planning how to gather information for the report
- Researching the business context and analysing the information that is collected
- Producing a report
- Evaluating the factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs her/his role.

Unit F251: *Launching a business on-line*

-
- Devising a strategy
 - The environment within which the strategy will take shape
 - Planning the strategy
 - Research of the strategy and analysis of the information that is collected
 - Production of the front-end of the website
 - Evaluation of the manageability of the back-end of the website.
-

Unit F252: *Promotion in action*

- Devising a strategy
- The environment within which the strategy will take shape
- Planning the strategy
- Research of the strategy and analysing the information that is collected
- Producing a plan of action
- Internal and external influences on promotional activity.

Unit F253: *Constructing a financial strategy*

- Devising a strategy
- The business context within which the strategy will take shape
- Planning the strategy
- Strategic research
- Analysis to inform the strategy
- Evaluation and recommendations.

Unit F254: *Launching a new product or service in Europe*

- Devising a strategy
- The business context within which the strategy will take shape
- Planning the strategy
- Researching the strategy and analysing the information that is collected
- Producing a plan of action
- Evaluating the strategy.

Unit F255: *Training and development*

-
- Devising a strategy
 - The business context within which the strategy will take shape
 - Planning the strategy
 - Researching the strategy and analysing the information that is collected
 - Production of a plan of action
 - Evaluating effectiveness.
-

Unit F256: *Business law*

- Sources of law
- Law of contract
- Business formation
- Business dissolution
- Employment protection
- Health and safety legislation
- Consumer protection legislation
- Intellectual property rights.

Unit F257: *Managing risk in the workplace*

- Understanding risk in the workplace
 - Types of risk present in the workplace
 - Dealing with risk in the workplace
 - How risk can be minimised effectively in the workplace
 - Consequences to a business of NOT managing risk effectively
 - Benefits to a business of effective risk management.
-

3 Unit Content

3.1 AS Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*

The role of marketing in today's business world is immense and is crucial to the very survival of a business. In today's consumer driven society, the success of a business depends very much on producing goods and services that match the needs and wants of consumers.

In this unit, candidates will explore the marketing process through an investigation into a medium- to large-sized business. Candidates will produce a marketing proposal to launch a *new* product or service of their choice within the context of their chosen business. This proposal will be presented to an *informed* audience in the form of an oral or multimedia presentation.

The centrepiece of the oral or multimedia presentation will be the candidate's proposal of a *marketing mix* for their *new* product or service. This will be informed by their research into their chosen product or service in the appropriate business context and their subsequent analysis of the gathered data.

Finally, candidates will show evidence of reasoned judgments as they discuss the likely success of their marketing proposal for their *new* product or service within their chosen business context.

This unit will give candidates knowledge and understanding that they will draw upon if they study F245: *Running an enterprise activity*, F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur* and F252: *Promotion in action*. The relevant business skills that candidates acquire in this unit, such as delivering an oral or multimedia presentation and carrying out effective market research, will be enhanced and developed as they progress through the AS and A2 unit specifications.

Marketing objectives

Candidates need to explain the purpose of marketing objectives and understand the underpinning objectives that drive marketing activity. These objectives include:

- discovering the particular needs of a consumer to ensure a quality product/service is produced;
- understanding and keeping ahead of competition;
- the need to be innovative and enterprising when identifying opportunities in the marketplace;
- communicating effectively with consumers to satisfy their expectations;
- dealing with internal/external constraints that may hamper marketing activities.

Functional areas of a business and their supporting role

Candidates need to understand that medium- to large-sized businesses, carrying out complex business activities, are often sub-divided into a number of functional areas. These include:

-
- marketing;
 - finance;
 - customer service;
 - operations/production;
 - research and development;
 - quality assurance department;
 - human resources;
 - administration/ICT.

Candidates need to understand how these functional areas can play a role in supporting marketing activity. Examples include:

- *finance* allocating budgets to support *promotional* activity;
- *research and development* designing new products that can be introduced to potential consumers;
- *production* producing a high level of output to match *marketing's* push for a high level of sales.

Market research

To be able to produce a realistic marketing proposal for their new product or service, candidates need to know and understand the vital role market research can play in business decision-making. Market research can help to:

- define a market;
- identify how to position a particular product or service in a market, e.g. whether to devise products with mass appeal and promote them to all types of consumers (mass marketing) or whether to tailor a product to a particular type of consumer (niche marketing);
- investigate consumer attitudes;
- monitor usage;
- forecast needs.

Planning market research

To ensure that relevant and appropriate information is collected to inform their marketing proposal, candidates need to understand the importance of:

- setting objectives for the market research;

-
- identifying who are the potential consumers and their requirements;
 - identifying possible sources of information, both primary and secondary;
 - deciding which method of research to use to collect information;
 - estimating and setting a timescale for the completion of the market research.

Research into a market

Candidates need to use *primary* research techniques when gathering market research data. These techniques include:

- observation;
- experiments;
- surveys;
- questionnaires;
- focus groups.

Candidates also need to collect *secondary* market-research data to inform their marketing proposal. This data may come in the form of:

- marketing databases, such as *Keynote* and *Mintel*;
- information already available in a business, such as sales figures, sales reports;
- information external to a business, such as government statistics, information from competitors.

Interpretation of market research information

Candidates need to link their marketing proposal directly to findings from their market research. Therefore, candidates need to understand how to interpret and analyse the collected data to draw out key information that can inform their marketing proposal.

Analytical techniques that candidates can draw upon include:

- the use of basic statistical analysis – familiarity with the use of:
 - mean;
 - median;
 - mode;
 - percentages;
 - forecasting;
- the use of marketing tools – familiarity with the use of:

– PEST (Political, Economical, Social and Technological) and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) for generating information on the wider business environment and drawing together the research findings to inform the marketing proposal.

The marketing mix

Candidates need to understand the combination of variables that has to be taken into account when formulating a marketing proposal for their new product or service:

- product/packaging – ensuring the product fulfils the function for which it was intended and is aesthetically pleasing;
- price – supplying a product at a price that consumers will pay;
- promotion – making sure that the consumer knows that a product exists;
- place – ensuring that consumers will have easy access to the products through an efficient distribution system.

Presentational skills

Candidates will be required to present their marketing proposal to an informed audience. Therefore, it is important that candidates understand how to deliver an effective presentation which includes considerations of:

- the use of appropriate business terminology;
 - the application of knowledge and understanding to the chosen marketing proposal;
 - the use of visual aids and other techniques to engage their audience;
 - the structure of the material so that their presentation may be followed easily;
 - clarity of expression and confidence with the stimulus material that is being used.
-

How to judge potential success

When judging the likely success of their marketing proposal, candidates need to consider their proposal in the context of:

- whether the marketing objectives are likely to be fulfilled;
 - whether the needs of potential consumers are likely to be met;
 - whether the proposal is sustainable over time, both in terms of its potential market position and actions of possible rival competitors;
 - how the new marketing proposal fits with the business's current product-portfolio;
 - the likely impact of the proposal on other functional areas of the business.
-

3.2 AS Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace*

Whether candidates eventually start working for a business, or become self-employed, this unit will provide a valuable insight into how businesses recruit, select, retain and manage one of their key resources – people. This unit has been designed with a very practical, vocationally-based emphasis in mind that will allow candidates to investigate, undertake and understand some of the primary roles and functions inherent in the work of a human-resource department in a medium- to large-sized company.

In this unit, candidates will explain how they set about recruiting and selecting an individual for a particular job role, as well as producing an induction and motivational programme for their chosen job role and successful applicant. Candidates will also, at certain points in this unit, be expected to assist class peers in meeting the evidence requirements for this unit by taking on the role of a prospective employee, applying for positions and participating in their recruitment and selection processes for advertised positions.

Candidates' evidence will be informed by their research into current human-resource practices, used by a range of different businesses, and their subsequent analysis of their gathered data.

Finally, candidates will make reasoned judgements as they discuss the effectiveness of their chosen approaches to both the recruitment and selection processes and the induction and motivational programmes created for their chosen job role and successful applicant.

This unit will provide knowledge and understanding that candidates will draw upon if they study F245: *Running an enterprise activity*, F248: *Strategic decision-making*, F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*, F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles*, F255: *Training and development* and F256: *Business law*. The relevant business skills that candidates acquire in this unit, such as presentational and interpersonal skills, will be enhanced and developed as they progress through the AS and A2 unit specifications.

Job roles

To begin with, candidates need to provide a focus for their report and, therefore, need to know and understand the various job roles that can exist in a medium- to large-sized business. These include:

- manager;
- supervisor;
- IT operative;
- administrator;
- customer-service operative.

Having chosen a job role to provide a suitable context for this unit, candidates need to then know and understand the recruitment process.

The recruitment process

When a business is looking to recruit a new employee, it needs to be able to define key roles and responsibilities that will be expected in the new post. Candidates need to understand the ways in which businesses set about this task by creating the following recruitment documents:

- person specification;
- job description;
- job advertisement;
- application form.

Candidates need to produce this documentation for the job role they have chosen for their report.

To make their recruitment documentation relevant to the job role chosen for their report, candidates need to understand the qualities that employers look for in employees when advertising jobs; examples include:

- necessary qualifications;
- previous experience and expertise;
- team-working ability;
- ability to use new technology.

Candidates need to ensure that their class peers also have the opportunity to fulfil the evidence requirements for this unit and, for this reason, *candidates* need to apply for the job role as advertised by *their class peers*. Therefore, candidates need to understand how to produce the following recruitment documentation:

- application form;
- letter of application;
- Curriculum Vitae.

Please note: candidates will be assessed *both* on their ability to produce relevant and appropriate recruitment documentation specific to their chosen job role *and* recruitment documentation relevant to the post(s) advertised by their group peers.

The selection process

As soon as applications for a particular job role are received, then a business must select the best individual available. Candidates need to understand that a selection process can be broken down into the following stages:

- short-listing candidates (candidates will **not** be expected to carry out this part of the selection process as it is recommended that group sizes should be a maximum of **four** candidates);

-
- writing letters inviting candidates to interview;
 - preparing interview documentation, such as equal-opportunities forms, interview questions, selection criteria and interview assessment forms;
 - tasks for interviewees to undertake;
 - carrying out an interview process;
 - post-interview taking up references and other security checks;
 - informing successful/unsuccessful applicants;
 - gaining the successful applicant's formal acceptance.

Candidates need to carry out their own selection process with other group members acting as prospective interviewees. Ultimately, candidates need to choose the most appropriate applicant for their chosen job role.

To enable their class peers to also fulfil the evidence requirements for this unit, candidates need to participate in the selection process from the perspective of an interviewee for them.

Please note: candidates will be assessed *only* on the selection process that they put in place in relation to their chosen job role. Candidates also need to participate in other group members' selection processes, but this will **not** form part of their assessment.

The induction process

The work of the human-resource department does not finish once the successful applicant has been selected and offered the post. Candidates need to understand the features of a typical induction programme. These features include:

- an awareness of the workings and objectives of a business;
- an awareness of health and safety issues;
- requirements when absent, ill or late;
- introductions to management and workmates;
- identification of any immediate training needs.

Candidates need to produce a possible induction programme to meet the needs of their chosen job role and successful applicant.

Employee motivation

A business needs to motivate its workforce if it is to retain them and remain competitive. Candidates need to understand some of the methods that are commonly employed. These include:

- financial incentives such as:

-
- wages, salaries and bonuses;
 - profit sharing;
 - share options;

 - non-financial incentives such as:
 - goal setting;
 - perks and status symbols;
 - appraisal;
 - meeting training needs.

Candidates need to produce an appropriate motivational package for their chosen job-role and successful applicant.

The legal dimension

Businesses need to understand the legal framework within which human-resource activity takes place. Candidates need to understand the main features of human-resource legislation; examples include:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (or as amended);
- Race Relations Act 1976 (or as amended);
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995/2004 (or as amended);
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 (or as amended).

Candidates need to take into consideration how this legislation impacts on the recruitment and selection process.

Research

To be able to produce a realistic and appropriate report, candidates need to carry out, at the appropriate time, both:

- primary research:
 - face-to-face discussions carried out with a speaker from a human-resource department;
 - questionnaires, surveys carried out on a human-resource department of a local business;
 - the interview process – interviewing group members who have applied for the job role that has been assigned to the group;
- secondary research:
 - analysis of information already available in businesses, such as human-resource documentation and templates.

How to judge effectiveness

When judging the effectiveness of their chosen approaches to their recruitment and selection processes, and the induction and motivational programmes created for their chosen job role and successful applicant, candidates need to consider these issues in the context of whether:

- the human-resource documentation was fit for purpose and was likely to produce the end result candidates were looking for;
- procedures fitted the legal framework within which human-resource activity is expected to take place;
- research was wide-ranging enough to inform the development and construction of their reports;
- there are any aspects of their chosen approaches that they would change, should the activity be repeated;
- there are any aspects of their chosen approaches that they would change, should a different job role be chosen.

3.3 AS Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*

The structure and focus of this unit are designed to enable candidates to investigate the business environment, and analyse its impact on the decision-making process, by considering the **external** and **internal** factors that come to the fore when any kind of business decision is made.

The *internal* element of this unit requires an understanding of the internal factors involved in any decision-making process in business. Candidates will focus primarily on the financial elements within an organisation, but will also be expected to consider other internal factors that may affect the decision-making process, such as the type of business ownership, internal stakeholders and the impact of technology on business decision-making. It is important that candidates understand the financial methods as described in this unit specification and are able to calculate financial results using these methods.

The *external* element of this unit requires an understanding of a selection of economic, social, legal, environmental, political, and technological issues and of external stakeholders which make up the macro-environment in which any business operates. An important aspect of any study of these external themes is that they need to be both understood in theory and also in the context of the business within the case study pre-released before each examination.

This unit will provide knowledge and understanding that candidates will draw upon when working on F248: *Strategic decision-making*, F254: *Launching a new product or service in Europe*, F256: *Business Law* and F257: *Health and Safety in the workplace*. The relevant business skills that are acquired in this unit, such as personal and cognitive skills, will be enhanced and developed as candidates progress through the AS and A2 unit specifications.

Business ownership

Candidates need to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of business ownership, including:

- sole trader;
- partnership;
- private limited company;
- public limited company;
- co-operative;
- not-for-profit or charity;
- franchise.

Candidates need to understand that the type of ownership itself brings with it potential opportunities/constraints to business practice.

Candidates also need to understand how that type of ownership affects business decisions and

objectives.

Sources of finance

Candidates need to understand the options available for different types of businesses when selecting appropriate sources of finance to fund their business decisions. Candidates need to know the differences between the different possible sources, and the advantages and disadvantages of each in different situations. In particular, candidates need to know about:

- internal vs. external sources of finance, with examples of each;
- short-term vs. long-term sources of finance, with examples of each.

Candidates also need to understand how type of ownership affects business decisions regarding raising finance.

Budgeting and budgetary control

Candidates need to construct simple budgets from given figures and interpret them. It is important that candidates understand the types of budgeting available, i.e. historic and zero-based budgeting, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Budgeting needs to be understood in different contexts for different types of businesses, and budgetary control and the use of variance analysis need to be understood in their application and purpose.

Candidates also need to understand how budgetary control helps businesses to co-ordinate their future marketing, production and human-resource activities.

Break-even analysis

Candidates need to classify business costs into *fixed* and *variable*. Candidates also need to know the formula for *break even*. Candidates need to draw a break-even chart, although they will not be required to do so in its entirety under exam conditions. Candidates will be required to perform simple break-even calculations and comment on how a business could alter its break-even point. Candidates need to know the limitations of break-even calculations and how they are used in business decision-making, e.g. location, capital purchases, etc. Elements of break-even analysis need to be linked to changes in the external environment, e.g. interest rates. Therefore, candidates need to learn about the importance of forecasting in working out a business break-even point.

Cash-flow forecasts

Candidates need to be able to both *calculate* and *interpret* figures within a cash-flow statement or forecast. As with break-even analysis, candidates will not be asked to calculate a full cash-flow account under examination conditions, although they may be asked to calculate a selection of figures. It is important that candidates understand the mechanics of cash flow and also the causes of cash-flow problems and methods and strategies for their resolution.

In addition, candidates need to learn and understand the importance and role cash-flow forecasting has in helping businesses to alter and improve their future marketing, production, finance and human-resource activities.

Importance of accurate record-keeping and technology

Candidates need to know why it is important to keep accurate financial records and to understand the consequences to a business if it fails to do so. The reasons for this are:

- to monitor business performance;
- to aid decision making;
- to aid credit control;
- to illustrate the financial position of the organisation to its various stakeholders;
- to meet legal requirements.

Candidates need to have a clear understanding of the advancement of modern technology within the financial business environment; this needs to include some reference to accounts packages (understanding of specific packages is **not** required), spreadsheets, databases and order tracking. Candidates need to know how ICT can be used within a business, and the advantages and disadvantages of its use.

These include:

- initial cost of project vs. reduced costs in long term;
- ongoing hardware and software upgrading costs;
- reduced waste;
- increased productivity;
- staff training;
- staff concerns – possible redundancies;
- speed, accuracy;
- greater flexibility in working arrangements;
- improved presentation of documents;
- ability to communicate between external and internal contacts more effectively;
- change in culture.

Candidates also need to appreciate the effect of modern technology on business efficiency and competitive advantages. This includes:

- effect on staff performance and productivity;

-
- effect on average direct and indirect cost;
 - effect on quality and branding.

Analysis of the current market position

Candidates need to identify, explore and understand the importance of SWOT analysis in helping businesses achieve their marketing objectives. Candidates also need to understand the importance of marketing tools and their role in making the right marketing decision.

Candidates need to conduct simple investigations into the organisation and the market in which it trades, as described in any OCR examination case-study, in terms of:

- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis;
- PEST (Political, Economical, Social and Technological) analysis;
- SLEPT (Social Legal Economical Political Technological) analysis.

Economic conditions and market conditions

Candidates need to understand what external influences there are on businesses and how these can affect the decisions they make concerning their own future development. These cover the basic principles of:

- economic indicators, e.g. inflation, unemployment, exchange rates and interest rates;
- changes in the competitive structure of the market, e.g. increased- or reduced-competition;
- unpredictable external influences on the market, e.g. the influence of September 11th 2001.

Candidates need to identify, analyse and explain how this range of factors combine to affect businesses' strategic plans and decisions for the future.

Ethical, legal, social, political and environmental factors

Candidates need to have an understanding that, in order to stay competitive, businesses need to be seen to be raising their awareness of non-financial considerations. Candidates need an understanding of:

- the difference between *laws* and *ethics* and how they may both affect different business-decisions;
- the differences between legal and ethical responsibility;
- the impact of changing social trends on companies and their business focus;
- the importance of environmental responsibility in the strategic and everyday conduct of business.

Candidates need to know about the cost-benefit approach to these aspects of the external environment as an approach adopted by many businesses. Whilst addressing these issues will mean the business incurs additional costs, there will be benefits to the business in the marketing of

its image.

Stakeholders

Candidates need to understand that there are a number of different groups of individuals who may have a stake in the decision-making process of a business. These groups include:

- owners;
- local community;
- suppliers;
- pressure groups;
- customers.

Candidates need to understand how these different groups can impact on the decision-making process.

3.4 AS Unit F243: *The impact of customer service*

In a highly competitive business environment, there are many businesses that provide similar products or services and it is often the quality of customer service that distinguishes one from another. Customers have come to expect the highest standards and it is important that all staff are aware of the part they play in helping the organisation to keep existing customers and attract new ones. This is critical to commercial success.

This unit will focus on the importance of good customer service in businesses. Candidates will learn the definition and characteristics of a customer, and the policies a business needs to have in place to create and maintain good customer relations. Candidates will then look at the ways businesses can obtain feedback on the service they provide to customers and how this information may be used to make improvements.

This unit allows candidates to build on the knowledge and understanding gained through Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*. It will also provide candidates with knowledge and understanding which they can draw upon when working on F248: *Strategic decision-making*, F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*, F251: *Launching a business on-line* and F252: *Promotion in action*. The relevant business skills that candidates acquire in this unit, such as personal and cognitive skills, will be enhanced as they work through the AS and A2 unit specifications.

Definition of a customer

Candidates need to understand that a customer can be described as anyone who is in receipt of a product or service. Although it is often considered that a customer will pay for the product or service received, this is not always the case. Therefore, it is important that candidates understand that a customer may be internal to or external to a business:

- *internal* customers may include a colleague for whom candidates are producing work or another department for which they provide a service;
- *external* customers may include members of the general public or other businesses.

Candidates also need to understand that, to provide a high standard of customer service, businesses need to be both flexible and adaptable in their approach to the different types of customers they deal with on a daily basis. Candidates need to identify and describe different types of customers, including:

- individuals;
- groups;
- businesses;
- on-line customers;
- people of different ages;

-
- non-English speakers;
 - people with special needs.

Definition of customer service and its importance to any business

The provision of a high standard of customer service is an important ingredient in the overall performance of a business. Without effective customer service, many businesses would not be able to maintain a satisfactory level of sales, nor be able to maintain a competitive edge in the modern business environment. Candidates need to be aware that customer service involves:

- presenting an image of the business;
- providing information;
- giving advice;
- taking and relaying messages;
- keeping records;
- providing assistance;
- dealing with problems;
- handling complaints;
- providing after-sales service.

Candidates need to be aware that a high standard of customer service is important for a business in order to achieve objectives, such as increasing level of sales, gaining a competitive advantage, maintaining customer loyalty, encouraging a motivated and efficient workforce, and enhancing the business's overall image. Candidates also need to know the implications for the business of failing to meet the needs of the customer.

Customer needs and their potential power

In order to provide a high standard of customer service, candidates need to understand the needs of customers and how to contribute to the satisfaction of these needs through excellent customer-service provision. Candidates need to know about specific customer needs, including:

- safety and security;
- clear and accurate information;
- impartiality and objectivity;
- special needs;

-
- expecting consumers' rights to be upheld.

Candidates need to be aware that businesses cannot underestimate the power of the customer. Candidates need to understand that customer power has had a positive effect on businesses, resulting in, for example:

- recycling policies;
- provision of organic foods;
- better labelling.

Candidates also need to know about the negative impact on businesses, where, for example, goods have been withdrawn from sale – the ban by some supermarkets on French goods during the beef crisis being **one** case in point.

Finally, candidates need to understand that customer power can be enhanced further through specialist agencies, such as the *Consumer Association*, and through consumer programmes such as *Watchdog*.

How organisations gather information on customer needs and the issues surrounding the storing of this information

Businesses are always looking to improve their customer-care provision as they pursue the policy of continuous improvement. Therefore, regular feedback is vital to ensure that businesses are meeting the needs of their customers and, ultimately, maintaining their competitive edge. Techniques used to assess customer satisfaction include:

- mystery shoppers;
- informal comments – from customers, staff, management and non-users;
- suggestion boxes;
- questionnaires;
- freephone numbers;
- focus groups;
- general observation.

Candidates need to be aware that businesses often build up an information database to keep information on their customers. Candidates need to understand the implication of storing data in terms of:

- accuracy;
- safety;
- quality;

-
- ethics.

Impact that legal and ethical issues can have on the provision of customer services

Candidates need to be aware that businesses must meet a series of legal requirements when providing a level of customer service, as well as having their own internal policies and procedures. Examples of this provision may include:

- internal policies such as Charters and Codes of Practice;
- legislation:
 - Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1979/94 (or as amended);
 - Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982 (or as amended);
 - Trades Descriptions Act 1968 (or as amended);
 - Consumer Protection Act 1987 (or as amended);
 - Consumer Credit Act 1974 (or as amended);
 - Weights and Measures Act 1985 (or as amended);
 - Data Protection Act 1984/98 (or as amended);
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995/2004 (or as amended);
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (or as amended).

Candidates will **not** be expected to know these laws in detail but need to know how they can impact on the provision of customer service. Candidates need to demonstrate an awareness of the consequences of non-compliance with these principles in terms of:

- legal action;
- competition-commission investigations;
- impact on corporate image and the corresponding impact on sales and profitability.

Candidates also need to be aware that *customers themselves* have an *ethical* duty to maintain a high level of customer service. For example, what happens if a customer buys a potentially-dangerous product from a shop – do they take it back to the shop and alert them to the potential hazard? If not, what happens if that business continues to sell the dangerous product and someone is injured as a result?

Implications for maintaining a high level of customer service on staff and senior management

The provision of a high level of customer service will bring different priorities from the workforce and staff at senior-management level. The senior management will be looking at the provision of customer service in planning terms, whilst middle and lower management may see it tied explicitly into the training and development of the workforce. Candidates need to be aware that different businesses will have different ways of addressing customer service – they may have a dedicated department or may leave it up to individual managers to deal with customer service within their own section. Candidates need to know how each member of staff contributes to the customer-service target.

Assessing the quality and effectiveness of customer service

Many business organisations continually assess and monitor the quality of customer service they provide. They do this to ensure that their service is meeting the needs of customers and, if not, they identify changes that can be made. Candidates need to understand the criteria by which a

particular business will assess their standard of customer service, which include:

- price/value for money;
- customer retention;
- reliability;
- staffing levels;
- cleanliness/hygiene;
- provision for individual and special needs.

Once these have been assessed, improvements can be made. Possible techniques to improve customer service include:

- setting customer-service standards which the business as a whole guarantees to meet, via a code of practice;
- the use of different training techniques to address weaknesses in staff's customer service;
- the adoption of pricing strategies;
- customer-retention schemes, such as loyalty cards;
- further provision for individual and special needs, such as wheelchair access and access for guide dogs.

Candidates need to evaluate the extent to which these techniques are being used in the customer-service functional area and to suggest improvements, particularly in relation to the business's mission statement and/or customer-service policy.

3.5 AS Unit F244: *ICT provision in a business*

ICT in business is about processing, storing, displaying and communicating information. This unit will give candidates an insight into the impact that ICT can have on a business and its implication for both business and the people responsible for using ICT.

In this unit, candidates will explore ICT provision in a business through an investigation into *either* a business that is about to start up and so needs its ICT provision to be introduced, *or* a business that is looking to improve and update its current, limited ICT provision. Candidates need to produce an ICT proposal showing how they would introduce, or update, the ICT provision in their chosen business. This proposal will be presented to an *informed* audience (can include fellow candidates, the teacher, or a speaker from a local business where there is established ICT provision) in the form of an oral or multimedia presentation.

The material that will be included in the candidate's ICT proposal will be derived from their research into their chosen business and subsequent analysis of the gathered data.

Finally, candidates will show evidence of reasoned judgements as they discuss the viability of their ICT proposal for their chosen business.

This unit will build on the knowledge and understanding already acquired in Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*, Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace* and Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*. It will provide candidates with additional knowledge and understanding if they study F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur* and F251: *Launching a business on-line*. The relevant business skills that candidates acquire in this unit, such as cognitive and practical skills, will be enhanced and developed as they progress through the AS and A2 unit specifications.

How ICT is used by businesses

ICT is used by businesses in a number of different ways. Candidates need to understand the main ways in which ICT can be introduced into business practice. Examples include:

- communicating between individuals, departments and customers, both internal and external to the business;
- storing and retrieving information;
- providing access to international markets by establishing a presence on the Internet;
- ensuring access to market information by researching via the Internet.

Candidates need to show, through their proposal, how ICT could be deployed within their chosen business context.

A **key focus** of the candidate's proposal needs to be how their chosen business's different departments would benefit from some sort of ICT provision. Having already learnt about departments in Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*, candidates need to understand how ICT

could be used by these different departments on a day-to-day basis. Examples include:

- *finance* using spreadsheets to monitor levels of sales and expenditure;
- *marketing* using artistic packages to promote a particular product or service;
- *human resources* using databases to keep records of the workforce.

The forms ICT provision can take

A business's ICT provision can be made up from a number of different sources:

- hardware, e.g. computer terminals and laptops;
- software, e.g. spreadsheets, accounting packages and databases for administrative purposes;
- networking resources, e.g. e-mails and the Internet.

When producing the ICT proposal, candidates need to consider the types of ICT provision that are required to meet the specific requirements of their chosen business. Candidates may decide that full provision will not be possible, given the cost implications, and therefore need to understand that certain types of ICT provision will have to be introduced to the business over a longer time-frame.

Benefits/drawbacks of introducing ICT provision

There are many reasons why businesses might look to introduce ICT proposals into daily working practices. These include:

- increased productivity;
- reduced waste;
- improved speed and quality of communications;
- improved decision-making;
- potential for working from home.

Candidates need to consider the benefits that ICT provision could bring to their chosen business when producing their ICT proposal.

Introducing ICT can, however, bring with it a number of drawbacks. These drawbacks include:

- high cost of introduction;
- loss of efficiency during the introduction phase;
- alienation of staff who are 'computer phobic';
- hardware and software upgrading-costs;

-
- staff-training expenses.

Again, candidates need to consider the drawbacks that ICT provision could bring when producing their ICT proposal.

Contingency planning

All businesses are advised to carry out some form of contingency planning when attempting to introduce ICT provision into their business. This planning needs to consider issues such as:

- having a period when parallel systems are used;
- providing effective support and training systems in crossover period;
- *not* introducing blanket coverage to begin with – staggered introduction of ICT to avoid as much disruption as possible.

Candidates need to include, in their proposal, actions that their chosen business needs to take to minimise the negative impact of introducing ICT, through some form of contingency planning.

Research

To produce a realistic and appropriate proposal, candidates need to ensure that their research takes into account as many different perspectives as possible. For the proposal, candidates need to gather information on the **needs of**:

- the business;
- the individual function areas;
- individual employees.

Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - face-to-face discussions carried out with a speaker who has an expertise in this area;
 - questionnaires, surveys carried out with staff at a number of levels within the chosen business to ascertain their needs as identified above;
- secondary research:
 - information gathered from existing companies who already have established ICT provision.

Candidates need to use this research, and subsequent analysis, to assist them in producing their ICT proposal.

Presentational skills

Candidates need to present their ICT proposal to their teacher and peers. Therefore, it is important that candidates understand how to deliver an effective presentation which will include considerations of:

-
- the use of appropriate business terminology;
 - the application of knowledge and understanding to the chosen ICT proposal;
 - the use of visual aids, and other techniques, to engage the audience;
 - the structuring of the material so that the presentation may be followed easily;
 - clarity of expression and confidence with the stimulus material that is being used.

How to judge viability

When judging the viability of their ICT proposal, candidates need to consider their proposal in the context of:

- whether the negative impact of introducing their ICT provision will be outweighed by the positive gains to be made by the business;
 - what the implications are for the employees working in the business and whether they will be willing to embrace the suggested changes;
 - whether the proposal will improve communication between different departments of their business, or in fact slow things down, especially in the early stages;
 - whether the proposal is financially and operationally sound.
-

3.6 AS Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*

In this unit, candidates will help to organise and run, as part of a team, a profit-making enterprise of their choice. Candidates will produce a report on their chosen activity.

The report will show that candidates understand the considerations that need to be taken into account when planning any kind of enterprise activity. Candidates will then show how they and their team dealt with these considerations when planning and running their own enterprise activity.

The report also needs to contain evidence of candidates' research and analysis, as they investigate the success of their activity from a number of different perspectives. Stakeholder views, how the team interacted as a whole, and their individual contribution, must all be taken into consideration.

Finally, candidates will show evidence of reasoned judgments as they discuss changes that they would make to their enterprise activity to improve the performance of their group, and their own contribution, should the enterprise activity be run a second time.

This unit will build on the knowledge and understanding already acquired in Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*, Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace* and Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*. It will provide candidates with additional knowledge and understanding if they study F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles* and F252: *Promotion in action*. The relevant business skills that candidates acquire in this unit will be enhanced and developed as they progress through the AS and A2 unit specifications.

Setting aims and objectives

Candidates need to understand that any enterprise activity which is hoping to be a profit-making success needs to have, at its core, a primary aim. These aims may be supported by a mission statement and may cover a range of themes. Examples include:

- financial – to generate profit, to raise money;
- profile raising – to create awareness of an organisation or an individual;
- team working – provides a focus for the team to work effectively (links to AO4).

Business objectives are the 'stepping stones' which a business will use when working towards an overarching aim, e.g. the aim of a charity might be to raise money to assist people with special needs, whilst the objectives for the charity would outline the fundraising events that would take place.

Candidates need to identify the aims and objectives for their chosen enterprise activity.

Building and developing an effective team

People are the most essential part of the successful running of an event. Therefore, it is important, when building a team, that individuals' strengths and weaknesses are taken into consideration at the outset.

Candidates need to understand that most teams contain a number of roles that are played out by individuals during the course of a business activity. The main roles include:

- leader;
- facilitator;
- innovator;
- negotiator;
- activator.

Candidates need to understand that these roles should **not** be treated in isolation. Individuals, on a number of occasions, may have to take on different roles should circumstances dictate. Candidates also need to understand that it is **not** just *roles* that will be played out by individuals. A number of *responsibilities* also need assigning to them to ensure a successful enterprise activity takes place. Examples of these responsibilities include:

- planning;
- reporting;
- recording;
- promoting;
- selling;
- producing.

As a group, candidates need to hold a series of discussions to decide on a suitable combination of these roles and responsibilities for their particular profit-making enterprise activity. Candidates need to provide evidence of how and why these roles were assigned to the appropriate individuals.

Candidates need to understand that the team will develop through the course of the enterprise activity. Individuals will grow into their roles, with others moving potentially in the opposite direction. Candidates need to monitor this interaction between group members as part of their research and analysis. Candidates will use this analysis within their AO4 evidence.

Time management

Businesses need to plan their time carefully when running an event, so as to maximise available resources, both human and physical. Time-management techniques that a business may use are:

-
- timelines;
 - Gantt charts;
 - diary;
 - ICT packages.

Candidates need to explain how their own and their group's time was organised throughout the enterprise activity. These should be working planning documents which clearly illustrate the different stages and changes that the project went through. These documents will help candidates formulate their AO4 evidence.

Required resources

Candidates need to understand that, in order for a business to run any activity, it requires a range of resources. Examples include:

- human – building the team needed to meet the business objectives;
- time – a schedule as to where, and when, resources will be allocated;
- physical – the space to carry out the activity, equipment needed, raw materials to be used, packaging, display units and marketing materials;
- finance – the cost implications of running an event. Profit calculations are required in order to evidence AO4.

Candidates need to explain in detail the range of resources that were used in their enterprise activity.

The need for regular meetings

Candidates need to understand that, when planning a possible event, businesses may hold a series of meetings when stakeholders come together to discuss key issues. The need for regular meetings may be caused by a number of internal and external factors which may mean that a team has to adjust their initial plans should circumstances radically change. Candidates need to understand that the stages involved in successful meetings need to be:

- preparing for the meeting;
- running the meeting;
- implementing the decisions of the meeting.

Candidates need to understand that the documents required for a successful meeting are:

- memos – sent to participants asking for issues they wish to discuss during the meeting and what decisions they wish to make about them;
- agenda – with date, time, venue, participants, electing a chairperson and someone to take minutes, individual points possibly phrased as questions needing decisions with

time allocations and any other business (AOB);

- minutes – with details of discussions, decisions made, who is to implement decisions, when to be implemented.

Candidates need to include an audit of the meetings they had in their group when planning for, and implementing, their enterprise activity.

Possible constraints

Businesses find that all events are subject to a number of constraints, some of which are internal to, and some external to, the business. Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of constraints. These constraints include:

- finance, e.g. budgetary constraints;
- legal;
- time;
- skills;
- equipment;
- competition.

Candidates need to explain how they dealt with the constraints that impacted on their chosen enterprise activity.

Research and analysis

To be able to research and analyse whether their profit-making enterprise activity was a success, candidates need to take into account as many different perspectives as possible. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - surveys with the participants who took part in their enterprise activity;
 - questionnaires to other group members on how they felt the group interacted throughout the activity;
 - analysis of their own strengths and weaknesses of their own contribution to the group activity;
 - face to face discussion with a group member, getting them to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's contribution to the group activity;
 - analysis on their contribution to the activity;
 - discussions with other stakeholders, eg suppliers.
- secondary research:
 - drawing out basic concepts from theorists such as Tuckman and Belbin on team dynamics and team interaction (feeds into theory and application of *Building and developing an effective team*).

Candidates need to use this research and subsequent analysis to assist them in commenting on the success of their event, how the team interacted as a whole, and their own contribution to the

activity.

Potential effects of future changes to the enterprise activity

For a business, it is important that business activity is constantly monitored and appraised to ensure that, if the event was to run a second time, changes could be made to improve on past experiences. Candidates need to discuss their own enterprise activity and suggest suitable changes that they would make, should it be run a second time. Issues candidates may consider include:

- whether there was a clear aim provided at the onset, with objectives showing clearly how the group would work towards achieving this overall aim;
 - whether the enterprise was viable – should it have been reduced in scope to ensure that it could have been more easily managed;
 - whether a profit was made, and if not, what measures could be put into place to ensure this happened in the future;
 - whether the group interacted well – whether roles and responsibilities were clearly defined and whether everyone was working towards a common purpose.
-

3.7 AS Unit F246: *Financial providers and products*

Finance is required for a whole range of business activities. Setting up a start-up business, for example, will require cash injections from the owner(s) to purchase essential capital equipment and, possibly, premises. This finance can be acquired from a large variety of different sources, each source of finance bringing with it particular benefits and potential risks.

This unit provides candidates with the opportunity to look into all the different kinds of financial providers that are currently available and all the different products that they offer.

As part of the stimulus material, OCR will provide a specific set of financial circumstances for an individual(s) who is running their own business, *either* a new business *or* one that is looking to change direction, e.g. expanding, diversifying, down-sizing. The candidate's individual(s) has a number of financial needs, both on a personal level and also in terms of their business, which candidates will investigate for this unit.

Candidates will research *possible* financial packages for their individual(s) from the financial provider for whom they are working, and from the wider financial-services industry. Candidates will then analyse these to decide which is the most appropriate package to meet the specific needs of their individual(s). Candidates will then produce a financial package for their individual(s) that includes material informed by their research and which meets their specific needs, both on a personal and business level.

This unit will build on the knowledge and understanding already acquired in Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*, Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace* and Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*. It will provide candidates with additional knowledge and understanding when they are working on F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur* and F253: *Constructing a financial strategy*. The relevant business skills that candidates acquire in this unit, such as cognitive and practical skills, will be enhanced and developed as they progress through the AS and A2 unit specifications.

Customers of financial services

Candidates need to understand that customers have different needs for financial services, both on a personal level and in relation to their business. These needs include:

- personal needs:
 - social;
 - physical;
 - security;
 - long-term and short-term;

- business needs:
 - start-up capital;
 - organic and external growth;
 - finance/day-to-day working capital;
 - overseas business;
 - financial requirements;
 - security needs;
 - access to funds;

-
- support services.

Candidates need to understand the specific needs of their customer, in the context of the given vocational scenario, before they go on to formulate an appropriate financial package to meet these specific needs.

Financial-service providers and products

Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the range of financial providers and their products that are available to customers, whether on a personal or business level. These include:

- providers:
 - banks;
 - building societies;
 - insurance companies and insurance brokers;
 - credit agencies;
 - finance houses;
 - factoring agents;
 - stockbrokers;
 - independent financial consultants;
 - retail outlets;
 - financial companies.
- products:
 - current and deposit accounts;
 - overdrafts;
 - loans and mortgages;
 - savings facilities;
 - credit facilities including credit cards;
 - insurance;
 - pensions and investments;
 - international facilities;
 - factoring;
 - banking facilities.

Sources of business finance include:

- short term:
 - overdrafts;
 - trade credit;
 - debt factoring;
- medium term:
 - hire purchase;
 - leasing;
- long term:
 - debentures;
 - grants;
 - long-term bank loans.

Candidates need to investigate a range of financial providers and products as the framework for their investigation. Candidates need to analyse their findings to draw conclusions about the most appropriate provider for each of the products they have recommended for their individual(s) at both

a personal and business level.

In terms of financial products, the previous list is by no means exhaustive. However, it provides candidates with some of the areas they need to investigate when formulating an appropriate financial package to meet the needs of their customer.

Research into the financial-services market

Before carrying out any research, candidates need to understand that the financial-services market they will be investigating has evolved considerably in recent years. Candidates need to understand the following recent changes and developments:

- competition;
- diversification;
- impact of technology;
- the development of Internet-centred organisations, products and services;
- legislation affecting methods of operation and monitoring of providers;
- nationalisation and amalgamation of financial institutions.

Understanding these changes and developments will allow candidates to target their research and consider a whole range of available products before they settle on the most appropriate financial package to meet the needs of their individual.

To be able to produce a realistic and appropriate financial package, candidates need to ensure that their research takes into account as many different perspectives as possible. This can be achieved through:

- primary research:
 - face to face discussion, interview with representative from financial provider(s);
 - questioning of parents, older sisters/brothers, other relatives and friends who may be able to comment on their own experiences in terms of financial provision;
 - surveys on the financial-services sector, e.g. different types of mortgages;
- secondary research:
 - leaflets, booklets collected from different types of financial providers;
 - information gathered on a range of financial providers and products through Internet research;
 - newspaper articles and relevant textbooks.

The purpose of the research will be to investigate a variety of financial providers and products in order to create the most appropriate financial packages available to meet the personal and business needs of the individual(s).

Constraints affecting the provision of financial services

Candidates need to understand how different financial-services products have different risks attached to them and how this will affect customers' decisions whether to purchase the financial-services product.

When analysing the gathered data, candidates need to compare financial-services providers and products in terms of their characteristics and their effect on the individual(s). Issues candidates may consider include:

-
- risk;
 - convenience;
 - security;
 - speed of service and payback;
 - flexibility of the finance;
 - availability of advice;
 - clarity and impartiality of information provided;
 - ease of use;
 - value for money;
 - status and size of business.

Candidates need to understand the legal constraints that affect the provision of financial services. Such constraints include:

- Financial Services Act 1986 or as amended;
- Trade Descriptions Acts 1968 and 1972 or as amended.

Candidates need to understand the ethical constraints that affect the provision of financial services. Such constraints include:

- codes of practice;
- professional associations or watchdogs such as the Ombudsman or the Financial Services Agency;
- the Bank of England.

Candidates need to understand these constraints when selecting an appropriate financial package to meet the requirements in the given vocational scenario.

Potential effects of future changes to customer circumstances

Candidates need to consider the effectiveness of the financial package they have created, given a future change in circumstance(s) for their individual(s), both on a personal and business level. These changes, given to the candidate as an addition to the case study, will cover such themes as:

- personal:
 - retirement;
 - change to individual's salary;
 - house move;

-
- business:
 - expansion through the opening of a sub-branch;
 - increased costs, such as setting up aspects of business on-line;
 - change in market conditions.

Candidates need to consider their financial package in light of this change in circumstance(s).

3.8 AS Unit F247: *Understanding production in business*

This unit is about exploring a *real* business, with the emphasis clearly focused on the activities carried out by a production department and the issues that are considered in the production process for a specific item.

Candidates will explore how an item of their choice is produced within an appropriate manufacturing business. Candidates will produce a written report containing visual images of how their chosen business produces a particular item within their chosen business context. This visual and written report will be informed from their research into their chosen business context and analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of production in its current form.

Finally, candidates will make reasoned judgments as they discuss possible improvements that they would make to how their chosen item is produced.

This unit will build on the knowledge and understanding already acquired in Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*, Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace* and Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*. It will provide candidates who study F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur* and F257: *Managing risk in the workplace* with additional knowledge and understanding. The relevant business skills that candidates acquire in this unit, such as presentational and cognitive skills, will be enhanced and developed as they progress through the A2 unit specifications.

The role of the production department

Candidates need to understand that the primary role of the production functional-area within a business is to transform inputs into outputs.

Candidates need to understand the ways in which production interacts with other functional areas to produce an item. Examples include:

- production/human resources:
 - how staffing levels match the scale of production;
 - which skills are needed to meet the operational needs of the business;
 - how the company motivates its workers to produce a quality product and to maximise productivity;
 - how workers' health and safety is ensured;
- production/finance:
 - the need to control production costs to enable the business to keep prices down and to make a profit;
 - the need to cost each aspect of the work in order to determine prices, wages and profit or loss;
- production/marketing:
 - the need to build in the requirements of the customer into every aspect of their work;
 - the need to ensure that the quality of the final product meets the expectations of the consumer;
 - the need to produce the product/service at the right price at the right time for the customer.

Candidates need to understand the role of the production department, and its interaction with other functional areas, in their chosen business context.

Operational efficiency

Candidates need to understand the factors that influence the scale of operation. These factors include:

- time taken for **one** item to be made on the production line;
- staffing levels on the production line over a period of time;
- output shown over a period of time, e.g. hour, day, week;
- maximum-capacity level of company over a period of time;
- actual-capacity level of company over a period of time;
- where, and how, *added value* is included during the production process.

Candidates need to be able to relate this information to their chosen context.

Candidates also need to be familiar with efficiency-based calculations, including those relating to:

- labour productivity;
- unit-labour cost;
- productivity;
- capacity.

Candidates need to carry out their own efficiency-based calculations related to their chosen context. If candidates are unable to obtain this information from their selected business they can use realistic estimations in order to demonstrate their understanding and use of the above calculations

Organising production

Candidates need to understand that businesses organise their production methods in a number of ways. Candidates need to understand some of the following methods of production:

- job;
- batch;
- flow;
- cell;
- lean.

Candidates need to understand that businesses may use several types of production methods

within a single facility and need to relate this understanding to their chosen context.

Ensuring quality

Candidates need to understand that businesses have different criteria to ensure quality. The criteria may be different from business to business and may include considerations of:

- fitness for purpose;
- excellence in its function, appearance and overall image;
- freedom from faults and errors;
- durability with limited necessity for repair or replacement;
- value for money – a reasonable price for the standard of product.

Candidates need to understand that businesses have a number of initiatives which they look to use to ensure quality is achieved at various points of the production process. These initiatives include:

- quality control;
- quality assurance;
- ISO 9000 (or as amended);
- TQM;
- benchmarking;
- Kaizen (continuous improvement).

Candidates need to relate their understanding of quality procedures to their chosen context.

Stock control

Candidates need to understand the system used for:

- ordering stock;
- lead time and point when stock needs to be ordered;
- how stock needs to be managed – stock rotation, 'just in time' (JIT).

Candidates then need to demonstrate an understanding of stock-control data or diagrams, looking into factors which cause high or low stock levels. Candidates need to consider high levels of stock compared with a JIT approach as a means of controlling stock and improving quality.

Candidates need to relate their understanding of stock-control issues to their chosen context.

Health and safety

Candidates need to understand that businesses have to adhere to a number of legal requirements

in their production process. Some of these requirements relate to reducing levels of pollution, but the main legislation attempts to protect workers involved in production and relates to health and safety issues.

When investigating their own business context, candidates need to consider the impact of legislation, such as 'The Health and Safety at Work Act' (1974 or as amended), on the production of their chosen item.

Research into production

To produce a realistic and appropriate report, candidates need to carry out different forms of research. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - face-to-face discussions carried out with a speaker from a Production department;
 - questionnaires, surveys carried out in a Production department and other functional areas of a local business;
- secondary research:
 - information gained from text books, the Internet and other relevant reading material.

Potential production improvements

When making informed judgements on possible improvements to the business's production process, candidates need to consider their chosen context in relation to:

- the organisation of production and whether there are alternative methods that could be considered;
 - the stock control system and whether JIT could be a more appropriate method;
 - the interaction between production and other functional areas, and whether this interaction could be improved in any way;
 - the adequate protection of the workforce, whether health and safety legislation is adhered to, and any possible improvements in this area.
-

3.9 A2 Unit F248: *Strategic decision-making*

The structure and focus of this unit is designed to allow candidates to demonstrate knowledge gained from many areas of the vocational course within a framework of business decision-making and corporate and strategic planning. This unit focuses upon various aspects of business planning including contingency planning to deal with unexpected events. It also focuses on the use of decision-making tools to inform business decisions.

It is imperative that candidates understand that the nature of this unit requires a sound understanding of *all aspects of the mandatory units* within the qualification being taken, and is therefore synoptic in its assessment.

Candidates need to apply their understanding of this unit within the context of the pre-release case study set.

Business goals

Candidates must recognise the importance of the need for direction for any organisation, and the role that it may play in the strategic decisions made.

Candidates need to understand that:

- a 'business aim' is the overall purpose and direction of an organisation;
- 'business objectives' are specific and measurable steps designed to achieve the overall aim of an organisation;
- a 'mission statement' communicates the purpose, culture, philosophy and focus of an organisation to its stakeholders.

Candidates need to show a critical awareness of the different views of stakeholders and the potential conflicts that may occur.

Production planning

Candidates need to use critical path analysis to aid business decision making.

Candidates will be expected to:

- interpret schedules from tables and Gantt charts;
- calculate production times;
- complete the EST (earliest start time) and LFT (latest finish time) for nodes on a critical path network;
- calculate the float-time for given activities;

-
- identify a critical path.

Candidates need to use critical path analysis within the context of the pre-release case study and be able to evaluate critically how useful it is as a decision-making tool.

Financial planning

It is important to understand that any financial planning is likely to generate only *quantitative* indicators for a business decision. Candidates also need to know about the *qualitative* indicators involved in any possible decision and be able to critically evaluate their impact.

Financial planning must not only focus on internal business issues such as cash-flow and profitability, but also take into account external factors, e.g. current economic conditions or a change in government policy in areas such as taxation and interest rates.

Financial planning tools required are:

- capital investment appraisal (Payback; ARR (accounting (average) rate of return) and NPV (net present value)**);
- break-even analysis including contribution and special-order decisions;
- decision-trees (completion and interpretation of).

** *Candidates will **not** be required to calculate discount factors.*

Candidates need to be able to use the above tools and be able to evaluate critically their usefulness within the context of the pre-release case study.

Human-resource planning

Candidates need to calculate and interpret key human-resource indicators such as:

- labour turnover;
- absenteeism;
- labour productivity;
- wastage levels.

The statistics generated by the above may form the basis for a number of analytical studies, within context, looking at the motivation of the workforce and the leadership of the business. Candidates will have already covered aspects of the theme of motivation in Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace*.

Candidates need to understand that when a business is considering a change in strategic direction it needs to look at its workforce and consider the implications of the change.

Candidates will be asked to use indicators to evaluate critically the possible causes, effects and solutions within the context of the pre-release case study.

Marketing planning

Candidates need to use knowledge gained in Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal* and also need to recognise the integration of the different parts of marketing to aid and support any

business decision and subsequent strategy.

Candidates need to understand and be able to apply the following:

- Ansoff's Matrix (market penetration, product development, market development and diversification);
- marketing strategy (marketing mix only - product, place, price, promotion**).

** Candidates will not be required to produce a complete marketing plan.

Candidates need to be able to use Ansoff's Matrix and evaluate critically its usefulness as a tool. Candidates will also have to produce an integrated marketing strategy for a given strategic change. Both of these will be framed within the context of the pre-release case study.

Contingency planning

Candidates need to evaluate the options available for a business if the strategic direction it pursues proves to be incorrect, or if the external environment changes to the point that a radical reassessment of strategy may be required. Candidates may be asked to look at the short-term/long-term picture which may result from a radical change in strategic direction and comment on the implications of this change across all planning aspects covered previously in this unit. Using a holistic approach, candidates then need to recommend and fully justify their strategic decision.

3.10 A2 Unit F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*

Central to the work of any business is its business plan. Without forward thinking and effective planning there is no way of judging whether or not the business is likely to succeed in meeting its objectives. Business planning is, without doubt, an entrepreneurial skill and can provide candidates with a firm basis for bringing their creative ideas into reality.

In this unit candidates will explore issues relating to business planning by constructing a business plan of their own for a new business enterprise of their choice. Candidates will need to understand why businesses create business plans, the different parts of a business plan and the constraints that can affect the successful implementation of a business plan.

Candidates' plans will be generated by their research into the business environment and their analysis of the gathered data.

Finally, candidates will evaluate critically how, and in what ways, external constraints may impact on the successful implementation of their business plan.

This unit draws together, and builds upon, many of the areas of knowledge and understanding that candidates developed during the course of the AS specification and is therefore synoptic in its assessment. The themes of marketing, finance, human resources, production, objective setting and external influences are all expanded as candidates develop their holistic understanding and strategic appreciation of business practice. Business skills will also be developed and enhanced further as candidates progress through the demands of this A2 unit specification.

Reasons for constructing a business plan

Reasons may include:

- giving businesses a clear picture of the various stages they need to go through in order to be successful;
- setting goals and objectives for the business, in both the short and long term;
- ensuring the monitoring and reviewing of progress is made more straightforward;
- persuading other stakeholders to, for example, finance a business, both as it is starting up and then as it is growing.

Candidates need to provide the reasoning behind their business plan for their chosen new enterprise.

Information within a business plan

Business plans need to contain vital preliminary information, followed by key information on marketing, human resources, finance and production.

Preliminary information

This needs to include:

- name;
- mission statement;
- location;
- physical size of business;
- type of business ownership;
- goals and objectives.

Marketing plan

Businesses need to make informed judgements about the likely sales-levels of products and services. Candidates need to know and understand how businesses analyse the market in which they operate. To do this, candidates will need to understand the:

- use of *primary* data in market research;
- use of *secondary* data in market research;
- factors affecting the demand for a particular product or service;
- methods of identifying and analysing competition;
- use of marketing models:
 - SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats);
 - PEST (Political, Economical, Social and Technological) ;
 - Ansoff matrix;
 - product life-cycle;
 - Boston matrix.

Businesses need to be able to identify target-consumers and why those consumers will be prepared to purchase a particular product or service. Candidates need to identify potential competitors and demonstrate why consumers may purchase the business's products rather than those marketed by competitors.

When constructing the marketing plan candidates will need to consider a number of issues. These include:

- choice of product or service and its distinctive features;
- price(s) of products/services;
- methods used to promote products/services;
- how products/services will be distributed to consumers.

Candidates need to consider all of the above criteria when undertaking their research and subsequent development of their own business plan for a new enterprise.

Production plan

As well as considering the features of their product or service, businesses need to determine the process by which they are produced. Candidates need to consider certain aspects of the production process. These aspects include:

- quantity to be produced;
- plant, machinery and equipment required;
- quality levels required and means of assuring targeted quality;
- different stages of production for the product or service;
- timing of production to meet customer needs.

Candidates need to relate the above criteria to their own business plan for a new enterprise and show how the criteria will be addressed.

Financial plan

Businesses need to understand and use financial information when constructing their business plan. Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of financial considerations which include:

- sources of finance;
- budgets, including estimates of start-up capital, sales and expenses;
- break-even forecasts;
- simple cash-flow forecasts;
- projected profit and loss accounts;
- start-up balance sheets.

Candidates need to provide relevant and appropriate financial information for their own chosen enterprise. This financial information needs to contain a number of financial projections relevant to their chosen product or service. All financial calculations must be supported with a clear explanation of candidates' workings. For example, how have they arrived at their fixed costs? what figures does it include?

Human-resource plan

Businesses need to collect information about the possible human-resource needs. Candidates

need to understand that this information includes considerations of:

- the number of employees needed;
- skills and competencies;
- recruitment method(s);
- training needs of employees.

Candidates need to show the human-resource requirements for their chosen enterprise.

Appropriate research for a business plan

To produce a **realistic** and **appropriate** business plan for their chosen enterprise, candidates need to ensure that their research is wide-ranging. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - face-to-face discussions with business representatives who have experience in writing business plans;
 - questionnaires, surveys to inform the construction of their business plan;
 - face-to-face conversation with a bank manager or business advisor to ascertain what qualities they look for in an effective business plan;
- secondary research:
 - marketing tools/models on business environment;
 - websites, case studies, exemplar business plans;
 - government statistics and databases;
 - newspaper articles.

Candidates need to analyse the information they collect to draw out key information that can be included in their own business plan. Candidates need to make use of statistical techniques and marketing models that they developed in the AS specification.

Business plan templates

When presenting the business plan, candidates need to understand that businesses use standardised templates. Candidates need to understand that, when formatting a business plan, they need to consider factors including:

- format requirements, e.g. layout of the plan;
- appropriate level of language used;
- clarity of information;
- accuracy of grammar and spelling;
- font styles and sizes;

-
- use of graphics.

Candidates will need to use their analysis of a variety of different business plans in order to help them structure and develop their own business plan for a new business enterprise.

Constraints that impact on implementation

Businesses need to take into account that there are a number of constraints that may impact on the implementation of their business plans. Candidates need to show awareness of constraints relevant to the context chosen, including:

- legal;
- financial;
- social;
- environmental;
- technological;
- competitive.

Candidates need to evaluate these constraints and discuss **how**, and in **what ways**, they may **impact** on the **successful implementation** of their business plan.

3.11 A2 Unit F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles*

Some form of supervision/management role will be found in all businesses. This unit will help candidates to gain a valuable insight into the role of a manager/supervisor as they investigate this role within an authentic business context of their choice.

Traditional management theory provides a basis for understanding a wide range of management styles. This unit will help candidates to develop an awareness that not all managers/supervisors will fit into one (or more) of these styles. Discussions with, and observations of, their chosen manager/supervisor will help candidates to recognise that managers/supervisors use a combination of skills and approaches when dealing with day-to-day management issues.

For this unit candidates will need to choose a particular individual in a managerial/supervisory position within a business. Using a combination of questionnaires, face-to-face interviews and work-shadowing, candidates will build up a picture of the way their chosen manager/supervisor performs her/his role. This will involve candidates investigating different managerial/supervisory functions, different styles of management/supervision, appropriate management theories, how managers/supervisors interact with other stakeholders in the business and factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs her/his role.

Candidates will write a report on the manager/supervisor's chosen approach. Secondary research into management styles will support this report.

This unit allows candidates to extend their knowledge and understanding of **one** of the key vocational pathways that underpins this whole specification, the theme of *the individual in business activity*.

The business context within which the report will take shape

Candidates need to provide an overview of their chosen business and understand the environment in which their chosen manager/supervisor works.

When investigating their business, candidates need to understand that the role of a manager/supervisor in business is wide-ranging. Candidates need to understand the different management/supervisory tasks that form part of a manager/supervisor's role.

- planning;
- organising;
- motivating;
- monitoring and directing;
- problem solving;
- training and mentoring;

-
- appraising.

Candidates also need to show how these functions can be affected by a number of variables, including:

- culture of the organisation;
- objectives of the organisation;
- structure of the organisation;
- availability of resources within the organisation.

Candidates need to show how these variables affect the managerial/supervisory set-up within their chosen business.

Planning how to gather information for the report

Candidates need to understand that businesses, when planning research, need to ensure their planning includes:

- setting of aims and objectives;
- targeting sources of information, e.g. different stakeholders within the business with views on the management/supervisory role, interviewing/questioning managers/supervisors about their role, work-shadowing managers/supervisors, using management theories and relating them to chosen business context etc.;
- types of research most suitable for generating the required information.

Researching the business context and analysing the information that is collected

Candidates need to understand that research is required that is clearly targeted and focused, to ensure an effective report is generated. This research can take a number of different forms and candidates will be expected to carry out both primary and secondary research:

- primary research:
 - questionnaire to gather information from manager/supervisor within their chosen business;
 - face-to-face discussions with their chosen manager/supervisor to gather information on the factors that can influence the effectiveness of their role;
 - visit to chosen business to carry out a survey on perspectives of workers and/or other stakeholders on managerial/supervisory techniques;
 - interview with a manager/supervisor who attends the centre for a discussion on their approach to management/supervision;
 - information on the individual qualities of their chosen manager/supervisor gained through face-to face-discussions:
 - the types of skills and competencies that they possess;
 - the type of personality they have;
 - what motivates them as an individual;
 - how they approach different managerial/supervisory tasks – see *The business context within which the report will take shape*;
 - how they deal with certain situations and scenarios in their role;
- secondary research:

-
- understanding, gained from textbooks and other sources, of different types of managerial/supervisory styles, including:
 - democratic;
 - consultative;
 - autocratic;
 - supportive;
 - collaborative;
 - passive;
 - directive;

 - theorists who have discussed approaches to management, including:
 - the scientific model – Taylor;
 - the human-relations model – Mayo;
 - the systems approach;
 - contingency and ‘what if’ modelling – Fiedler;
 - any other appropriate theories.

The appropriateness of these sources of information will depend on the business context chosen. Candidates need to build up a picture of the way their chosen individual performs her/his role by using many of the research techniques and methods listed above.

Producing a report

Candidates need to produce a report of how their chosen manager performs their current managerial/supervisory role. This should include an explanation of how the manager/supervisor deals with the tasks as outlined in *The business context within which the report will take shape*. Candidates will also need to consider the different managerial/supervisory styles and how these link to the motivational theories in *Research into the business context and analysis of the information that is collected*. This report must be clearly linked to their extensive research and applied directly to their chosen vocational context.

Evaluating the factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs her/his role

Candidates need to evaluate the factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs her/his role. To do this, candidates need to consider issues such as:

- whether **one** particular management/supervisory style is more likely to generate results than using alternative management/supervisory styles;
- whether a certain management style is more likely to foster better employee-employer relations than another;
- how a management/supervisory role can be affected by changes to the business’s aims and objectives;
- how a management/supervisory role can be affected by changes to the culture/structure of an organisation.

3.12 A2 Unit F251: *Launching a business on-line*

Recent years have seen an explosion in the use of the Internet by individuals and business organisations for a variety of activities, including global communication, information and data referencing and e-commerce. It is the selling of goods on-line by a business that will provide the focus for this unit.

In this unit candidates will explore issues relating to launching a business on-line by constructing an e-commerce strategy of their own for a business that has yet to develop e-commerce provision. This could include a business that currently has a website for advertising and information purposes only but has yet to develop the ability to sell on line. In their strategy candidates will need to consider how e-commerce would be used by their chosen business, the advantages and disadvantages of e-commerce provision, to both the business and customers, and the issues in setting up and running a website.

The strategy will be generated by candidates' research into a range of similar websites that are currently marketing a similar portfolio of products to their chosen business, as well as research into potential customers who may use the business's site, and their analysis of the gathered data.

Finally, candidates will evaluate critically what measures their business would need to take to deal with the manageability of the back-end of a website as part of their e-commerce strategy.

This unit will allow candidates to extend their knowledge and understanding of **one** of the key vocational pathways that underpins these specifications, the theme of *ICT*. Throughout the AS and A2 unit specifications candidates have been provided with numerous opportunities to make use of ICT skills in the preparation of their portfolio evidence, as well as in ICT-focused units such as F244 *ICT provision in a business*. This unit seeks to build upon the ICT theme and allows candidates to investigate ICT in relation to areas of particular interest to them.

Devising a strategy

Most businesses, before engaging in any kind of strategic activity, will need to plan their course of action carefully. This planning phase will involve:

- understanding the business environment within which the strategy will take shape;
- planning the strategy;
- researching the business environment to inform strategy development;
- analysing the gathered data to inform the development of the strategy;
- producing a plan of action based on research and analysis;
- monitoring and evaluating various aspects of their strategy with a view to recommending improvements and future updates to the strategy.

Candidates will be expected to go through this strategic process when devising their own

e-commerce strategy.

The environment within which the strategy will take shape

Candidates need to understand that e-commerce covers a wide range of uses of ICT based around the use of the Internet. Candidates need to understand some of these uses by businesses, examples include:

- using a website to market a portfolio of products and/or services;
- allowing customers to find out information (both individuals and businesses) about available products and services;
- offering customers the opportunity to purchase directly, using websites as an alternative to more traditional methods;
- transmitting purchase orders directly from the customer (individuals and businesses) to the supplier;
- processing payments for goods or services purchased.

Candidates need to understand how their chosen business could make use of e-commerce provision.

Candidates need to understand some of the *benefits* that e-commerce will bring to their business. These include:

- an additional revenue stream;
- the freedom of not having to sell through shop premises;
- increasing the available market.

Candidates also need to understand that e-commerce can bring with it certain *drawbacks*. These include:

- cost of development and site maintenance;
- need for specialist skills;
- updating of site information;
- technical problems;
- distribution/logistics problems.

Planning the strategy

Candidates need to understand that businesses, when planning strategic activity, will need to ensure their planning involves:

- setting of aims and objectives, e.g. by raising a business's profile through an effective, appropriate website;

-
- targeting potential customers, e.g. those customer groups who are most likely to use the e-commerce venture;
 - types of research, e.g. forms of research which will be most suitable for generating the required information.

Candidates need to show evidence of the planning considerations that they went through in the construction of their own e-commerce strategy for their chosen business.

Research of the strategy and analysis of the information that is collected

Candidates need to understand that effective research is required that is clearly targeted and focused, if an effective strategy is to emerge. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - questionnaires and surveys to gather information;
 - customers' on-line buying habits;
 - customers' opinions of different websites;
 - what attracts them to buying on-line;
 - customers' previous experiences of buying on-line;
 - discussions with a website designer to find out what kind of features might attract customers to their website;
 - visit to chosen business to find out more about the business's needs and what kind of products and/or services they may want to pursue in terms of e-commerce provision;
- secondary research:
 - similar websites that are marketing a similar portfolio of products to their chosen business.

When analysing collected information, candidates need to understand some of the techniques that can be employed. As well as statistical techniques that were developed during the course of the AS specification to analyse their market research, candidates need to analyse the websites of competitors to their chosen business against a series of common criteria. These include:

- availability – how easy to order, delivery times;
- image – professionalism of the site;
- product information – can you find out what you need to know;
- accessibility – ease of navigation;
- security – has the site got the padlock sign;
- user-friendliness – was the site idiot proof;
- aesthetics – colour, interesting graphics;
- ease of payment – was there a range of payment methods.

Production of the front-end of the website

Candidates need to learn the processes involved in setting up and running a website. This can be divided into **two** areas:

- front-end – what the customer sees on their screen when they visit their website;
- back-end – the processes that happen in the background that are never seen by the customer.

In order to achieve AO1 in addition to *The environment within which the strategy will take place*, candidates need to consider both the front and back-end of the website. In order to achieve AO2 candidates only need to consider the bullet points found above when developing their own website.

AO4 focuses on *Evaluation of the manageability of the back-end of the website* only.

Front-end

The front-end of a website usually has a 'homepage' which provides a general overview of the site's contents to a potential customer. This 'homepage' usually provides a series of links into **one** or more other screens that provide more specific information to the potential customer, related to a particular service/product/activity.

When creating a front-end to a website, businesses need to consider a range of issues. These include:

- attraction for the customer to the site – graphics and illustrations to improve the cosmetics of the website;
- functionality of the site;
- user-friendliness of the site;
- organisation of prices and descriptions of goods/services etc. on the site;
- kind of documents that will be used to gather customer details and their contents and layout;
- methods of payment that will be accepted;
- method of shipment of goods/information to potential customers, if required;
- any language options (dependent on target market).

Candidates need to produce a front-end as part of their e-commerce strategy for their chosen business and so need to understand the various methods that can be used to present the information. These include:

- PowerPoint slides;
- Internet site itself;
- concept board with accompanying text.

Evaluation of the manageability of the back-end of the website

Back-end

The back-end of a website covers all the systems and processes that are used to automate the site. Candidates need to evaluate critically what measures their business would need to take to deal with the manageability of the back-end of the website. Therefore, candidates need to consider a number of issues:

- security issues, e.g. credit-card numbers or account details can be vulnerable if transmitted from a standard web page;

-
- legislation, e.g. any information held about customers is protected by the Data Protection Act (1998 or as amended);
 - maintenance of the website, e.g. product information needing to be updated frequently;
 - training and development, e.g. existing staff may need extra training in using technologies that may be new to them;
 - cost issues;
 - distribution networks/logistics of supply.
-

3.13 A2 Unit F252: *Promotion in action*

Businesses communicate with customers in a wide variety of ways, some impersonal, e.g. point-of-sale displays or TV advertisements, and some personal, often through a salesperson. We have probably all received a telephone call saying we have been selected to receive a new kitchen or double glazing! Planning promotion strategies includes a consideration of these forms of communication. Many factors, both internal and external, will influence a business's choice of promotion methods.

In this unit, candidates will explore issues relating to promotional activity by constructing a promotional strategy for a new product or service of their choice within a chosen business context. In the strategy, candidates will need to consider the various forms promotional activity can take, including an understanding of how and when each is used, as well as the internal and external factors that can hinder promotional activity.

Candidates' strategy will be generated by research into the business environment to investigate how similar products or services are marketed, as well as research into possible consumer groups to investigate what they feel about certain types of promotional activity. Having carried out this research, candidates will then analyse the gathered data.

Finally, candidates will evaluate critically the effectiveness of their chosen promotional strategy taking into account possible internal and external influences.

This unit allows candidates to extend their knowledge and understanding of **one** of the key vocational pathways that underpins this whole specification, the theme of marketing. Throughout the AS and A2 unit specifications candidates have been provided with marketing-focused units including Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*, F243 *The impact of customer service* and F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*. This unit explores another aspect of marketing from a more strategic perspective.

Devising a strategy

Most businesses, before engaging in any kind of promotional strategic activity, need to plan their course of action carefully. This planning phase will involve:

- understanding the business environment within which the strategy will take shape;
- planning the strategy;
- researching the business environment to inform strategy development;
- analysing the gathered data to inform the development of the strategy;
- producing a plan of action based on research and analysis;
- monitoring and evaluating various aspects of their strategy with a view to recommending improvements and future updates to the strategy.

Candidates are expected to go through this strategic process when devising their own promotional

strategy.

The environment within which the strategy will take shape

Candidates need to understand that, in an increasingly competitive market place, promotion is a vital way that businesses can stay ahead of their major rivals. Businesses that understand the needs of their customers, and their wants and desires when it comes to new products or services, will be able to produce relevant and appropriate forms of promotional activity, targeted to their specific needs, which can have a positive spin-off for the business in many different areas.

Candidates need to show how promotional activity currently takes place within their chosen business for its current range of products and/or services.

Planning the strategy

Candidates need to understand that businesses, when planning strategic activity, need to ensure their planning involves:

- setting of aims and objectives;
- targeting potential customers, e.g. which customer groups are most likely to take part;
- selecting appropriate types of research, e.g. the most suitable for generating the required information.

Central to the planning phase is the creation of promotional objectives. Candidates need to understand that these need to include a consideration of issues such as:

- making customers aware of the product/service and allowing them to recognise its existence;
- convincing the public of the purpose and benefits of the product/service;
- persuading customers that the product/service can benefit them;
- leading customers to act, e.g. make the decision to buy;
- changing customers' attitudes;
- creating desires in customers;
- giving reassurance to customers;
- reminding customers that the product exists.

Candidates need to produce their own promotional objectives for their chosen strategy.

Research of the strategy and analysis of the information that is collected

Candidates need to understand that effective research is required that is clearly targeted and focused, if an effective strategy is to emerge. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - questionnaires and surveys to gather information on:
 - the appeal of a variety of different promotional activities;

-
- what attracts people to different promotional media, eg colour, size, sound, movement;
 - what are the viewing figures, readership and circulation figures;
 - appropriate sitings for billboards/posters;
 - reasons for selection of geographical area for the promotional activity;
 - effectiveness of leaflets/direct mail;
 - discussions with individuals in their chosen business to find out what kind of promotional features attract customers to current products and services;
 - visits to chosen business to carry out a survey on the marketing department within the business;
- secondary research:
 - costs of different types of promotional media;
 - examples of promotional activity that businesses are using to promote a similar range of products or services to the new product or service that they choose to promote.

When analysing their collected information, candidates need to understand some of the techniques that can be employed. As well as statistical techniques that candidates developed during the course of the AS specification to analyse their market research, candidates need to analyse examples of promotional activity that businesses are using against a series of common criteria. These include:

- aesthetics;
- message;
- fitness for purpose;
- originality;
- communication.

Producing a plan of action

Promotion appeals to customers' imaginations; the *added value* is often highlighted through the use of imagery. Candidates need to understand the full range of promotional activities:

- advertising using mass media, including TV and radio;
- Internet;
- newspapers and specialist journals;
- sponsorship, including events such as sports meetings, celebrity endorsements and particular programmes on TV;
- PR (public relations), including press releases and conferences;
- merchandising, including coupons, demonstrations, free trials and point-of-sale displays;
- sales promotions, including coupons, competitions, BOGOF (buy one, get one free) and cash discounts;
- direct mailing, including trial packs, coupons and information leaflets.

Candidates need to understand how, and in what ways, promotions can be used to create repeat business or encourage consumers to stockpile their product. Candidates need to understand that businesses can use promotions to:

- bring forward a decision to buy – using an offer of a free product if the customer buys by a certain date;
- encourage repeat purchases, so creating loyalty, e.g. offering a discount for cash with order;
- encourage stockpiling by offering extra products for the same price, e.g. 3 for 2 offers;
- encourage long-term loyalty to the company by the use of loyalty cards, often with bonus points when times are quiet;
- encourage consumers to try a new product.

Candidates need to decide on appropriate forms of promotional activity to use in their promotional strategy. Candidates also need to consider cost implications of their promotional strategy linked to the timescale of the promotional campaign.

Internal and external influences on promotional activity

Businesses need to take into account a number of influences that may impact on the scope and type of promotional activity that can be undertaken. Candidates need to understand that these influences can be internal or external to the business and can include:

- *internal* influences:
 - the aims and objectives of the business as a whole;
 - the aims and objectives of the planned campaign;
 - market research;
 - the message to be communicated and the targeted audience;
 - the promotional budget;
 - the timescale involved.
- *external* influences:
 - social, cultural and economic;
 - ethical and environmental;
 - legislative and regulatory;
 - pressure groups;
 - competitors;
 - technology.

Candidates need to evaluate critically the effectiveness of their promotional strategy in the context of these internal and external influences.

3.14 A2 Unit F253: *Constructing a financial strategy*

The purpose of constructing a financial strategy primarily involves the control of resources, keeping track of the assets and liabilities of a business, and planning effectively for the future.

In this unit, candidates will construct a financial strategy within a given business context. Candidates will be provided with a series of financial data in the form of a case study which will inform their subsequent investigation. Candidates need to produce a series of final accounts based on the given data and use their analysis of the material to make a series of recommendations for how the business should move forward in terms of their financial planning for the future.

The financial strategy needs to show that candidates understand the reasons behind keeping financial records, the consequences of not producing accurate records and the processes involved in creating a series of final accounts that would be fit for publication. Candidates then need to apply this knowledge and understanding to given data to produce their own set of final accounts for their chosen business context. Candidates need to use a variety of financial ratios to comment on the financial position of the business before evaluating critically how their business, in the given context, should plan its financial activities in the future.

This unit allows candidates to extend their knowledge and understanding of **one** of the key vocational pathways that underpins these specifications, the theme of *finance*. Throughout the AS and A2 unit specifications, candidates have been provided with finance-focused units, including Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*, F246: *Financial providers and products* and F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*. This unit explores another aspect of finance from a more strategic perspective.

Devising a strategy

Most businesses, before engaging in any kind of strategic activity, need to plan their course of action carefully. This planning phase involves:

- understanding the business context within which the strategy will take shape;
- planning the strategy;
- researching the business environment to inform strategy development;
- analysing the gathered data to inform the development of the strategy;
- producing a plan of action based on research and analysis;
- monitoring and evaluating various aspects of their strategy with a view to recommending improvements and future updates to their strategy.

Candidates are expected to go through this strategic process when devising their own financial strategy.

The business context within which the strategy will take shape

Candidates need to understand that it is important that all businesses record accurately financial transactions. These include the assets and liabilities of the business, as well as the goods or services it buys and sells in order to make a profit. Candidates need to understand some of the reasons why accurate financial records need to be kept by businesses:

- to calculate accurately profit and loss;
- to meet legal requirements;
- to show the assets and liabilities of the business;
- to compare the business's financial position to previous years;
- to prepare accurate budgets/forecasts for future years;
- to obtain additional finance;
- to plan any future expansion.

Candidates need to understand the consequences to a business if financial information was found to be inaccurate. These include:

- criminal action;
- cash-flow problems from a high tax bill or criminal action;
- shareholders losing confidence and investing elsewhere;
- bad public image;
- change to management structure.

Planning the strategy

To enable candidates to plan an effective financial strategy for their given business, they need to construct a set of final accounts allowing them to gain a *snapshot* of the current financial condition of the business.

Candidates need to understand the different types of income and expenditure which are often included in a set of final accounts:

- capital and bank loans;
- assets such as premises and vehicles, including items bought on credit;
- expenses for running the business, e.g. wages, electricity;
- items/services purchased for resale including those bought on credit;

-
- items/services sold including those sold on credit.

Candidates need to be aware that this information can be found from various source documents, including invoices, credit notes, bank records, e.g. direct debits and till receipts.

Candidates then need to understand how a series of final accounts are created and this involves understanding a number of processes and financial documents, including double-entry accounting and the role of the trial balance.

Process of double-entry accounting

Candidates need to learn that, for every transaction that occurs in business, an equal and opposite transaction needs to be recorded. For example, the sale of an item leads to a *reduction* in stock, but an *increase* in cash or debtors. The process of recording both aspects of the transaction is the principle behind double-entry accounting. In order to record financial transactions accurately, candidates need to learn the following skills:

- double-entry transaction recording;
- how to balance-off accounts accurately;
- division of ledgers.

Role of the trial balance

Once the double-entry transactions have been recorded, the balances from the ledger accounts need to be entered into a *trial balance*. Candidates need to understand that if the double entry has been performed accurately, the *debit* balances and *credit* balances in the trial balance will be of equal value. Candidates also need to learn that, in certain circumstances, the double entry may not have been completed accurately, yet the trial balance may still balance. Examples include:

- the complete omission of a transaction when neither a debit nor credit has been recorded;
- compensating errors, e.g. an error of £100 is exactly cancelled by another £100 error elsewhere;
- errors of principle, e.g. where cash received from a debtor is debited to the debtor's account and credited to cash, instead of the other way around.

Candidates need to understand that, although the trial balance does not have to be prepared, it is a very effective method of checking the accuracy of the double-entry transactions. Candidates also need to understand that, once a trial balance has been completed, there are some adjustments that need to be made before the final accounts can be prepared. These are for certain calculations that can only be made at this point in the accounting process. Candidates need to understand that once these adjustments have been made, an extended trial balance can be produced.

Candidates need to understand how to:

- compile an accurate trial balance;

-
- make the necessary adjustments to the trial balance for accruals, prepayments, provisions for depreciation, bad debts and doubtful debts, adjustments for closing-stock valuation, bad debts written off, taxation and dividends;

Candidates need to learn that the information needed for the construction of the final accounts is extracted from the trial balance. Candidates then need to construct:

- a trading and profit and loss account;
 - a balance sheet.
-

Strategic research

Candidates need to understand that effective research is required that is clearly targeted and focused, if an effective strategy is to emerge. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - discussions with a small accountancy business to discuss some of the key issues and potential pitfalls to watch out for when constructing final accounts;
- secondary research:
 - information gained from the Internet on the legal requirements that a business must follow when preparing their final accounts for publication;
 - research into different templates and an appropriate layout for the final accounts;
 - examples of accounts laid out in summary reports by businesses or through the Registrar of Companies.

Candidates' research needs to be targeted towards producing an appropriate format and layout for their final accounts.

Analysis to inform the strategy

Candidates need to be aware that businesses can interpret financial information in different ways. Candidates need to understand that **one** form of analysis used by businesses is a series of performance and profitability ratios to make a series of comments on the financial position of the business. Candidates need to calculate and use ratios relating to:

- profitability;
- solvency;
- performance.

Candidates need to compare past and present data for a business as provided in the given scenario. Candidates need to use the information that their financial analysis generates to comment on the financial position of the business. Candidates also need to understand the limitations of using ratios to make judgements about the financial viability of the business.

Evaluation and recommendations

Candidates need to use their analysis of a business's final accounts to make recommendations for how their business, in the given context, should plan its financial activities in the future. The given scenario will provide a number of options available to the business in terms of financial planning for the future and candidates need to evaluate critically which option (or combination of options) would be most suitable for the business to pursue. Depending on the focus of the case study, candidates need to consider issues such as:

- costs of the business holding too much cash, including loss of interest and opportunity costs;
- costs of the business holding too little cash, such as inability to meet creditors' demands and need to borrow at expensive rates;

-
- methods of improving cash-flow;
 - cash vs. profit;
 - the business changing its aim, due to such things as expansion, diversification, down-sizing, and its impact on financial planning.
-

3.15 A2 Unit F254: *Launching a new product or service in Europe*

This unit has a practical and vocationally-based emphasis that enables candidates to investigate, understand and consider various issues that a UK business has to take into account when planning to expand and operate in another EU member state.

In this unit, candidates will explore issues in a European context by constructing a strategy for a UK business which currently operates in the UK and may wish to launch a new product or service into European markets in the future. Part of their strategy will include a written summary showing how their business will deal with the many issues it needs to consider when launching this new product or service.

Candidates' strategy will be generated by research into their chosen business and the wider UK/European business environment, and their subsequent analysis of the gathered data. In order to meet the requirements of this unit, candidates must have a direct link with their selected business in order to gain an overview of their current business practices and activities. This is essential if an appropriate and relevant strategy is to be created for the launch of a new product or service.

Finally, candidates will evaluate critically the likely effectiveness of their chosen strategy within the context of their chosen business.

This unit will allow candidates to extend their knowledge and understanding of **one** of the key vocational pathways that underpins the whole qualification, the theme of *the business environment*. Throughout the AS and A2 unit specifications, candidates have met units offering an overview of how the business environment affects different aspects of business activity and decision making. This unit explores another aspect of the business environment from a wider, more strategic perspective.

Devising a strategy

Most businesses, before engaging in any kind of strategic activity, need to plan their course of action carefully. This planning phase involves:

- understanding the business environment within which the strategy will take shape;
- planning the strategy;
- researching the business environment to inform strategy development;
- analysing the gathered data to inform the development of the strategy;
- producing a plan of action based on research and analysis;
- monitoring and evaluating various aspects of their strategy with a view to recommending improvements and future updates to strategy.

Candidates are expected to go through this strategic process when devising their own expansion

strategy.

The business context within which the strategy will take shape

As well as providing an overview of their chosen business, candidates need to understand some characteristics of the European market within which the business is thinking of launching a new product.

Candidates need to know a number of key characteristics that define the EU and its individual member states. These include:

- demographic profile;
- main imports and exports;
- income level;
- labour skills and employment rates.

Candidates need to understand the areas that will impact on any business that is thinking of operating in European markets. Such areas include:

- economic – the impact of operating in the Single Market, including the implications of the European Monetary Union (EMU) for certain member states;
- legislation – the impact of EU legislation on employers and employees, including regulations and directives, particularly the impact of the Social Charter on employment and minimum wage rates;
- customs – differences in business practices, including banking systems, working hours, national holidays, operating in different languages, awareness of different social customs and lifestyles;
- trade – the *significant* differences between trading within the EU and trading with non-EU countries – these differences vary from country to country within the EU and between non-EU countries;
- European assistance to businesses – the EU offers support to businesses in the member countries in the form of financial assistance (available for both private- and public-sector organisations), advice and representation, and also information on the range of assistance available.

Planning the strategy

Candidates need to understand that businesses, when planning strategic activity, need to ensure their planning involves:

- setting of aims and objectives;
- types of research – methods which will be most suitable for generating the required information;
- sources of information – sources which will be most useful for gaining information on issues relating to European expansion.

Candidates need to go through this planning phase for their own strategy before any research is undertaken.

Candidates need to understand that effective research is required that is clearly targeted and focused, if an effective strategy is to emerge. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:
 - visits to the business to find out an overview of their current business practices and activities
 - this is essential if an appropriate and relevant strategy is to be created for the launch of a new product or service;
 - discussions with representatives from agencies who have been established to provide assistance to UK businesses;
 - surveys on different departments within their chosen business to find out information on how European expansion would impact on their day-to-day working practices;
- secondary research:
 - information gleaned from the Internet and other publications on European-related issues;
 - leaflets, brochures gained from writing to European institutions such as The European Commission, European Parliament and The Council of the European Union;
 - information gained from sources such as the European Investment Fund and European Social Fund.

Candidates' research needs to be targeted at how their business will deal with the many issues it needs to consider when launching a new product or service in European markets. This list of considerations is wide-ranging and involves:

- logistics;
- promotional activity, including branding;
- ICT provision;
- transport and distribution networks;
- training and development of workforce;
- skills of workforce;
- financial context – sources of finance and budgeting;
- communications both internal and external to business;
- language, culture and custom;
- regional assistance;
- monetary framework;
- trade policy;
- management resources.

Candidates need to consider those issues listed above which relate directly to their chosen business context.

Producing a plan of action

Candidates need to produce a written summary showing how their business will deal with the many issues it needs to consider when launching a new product or service in European markets. This summary needs to come out of their research and analysis and will include the following considerations:

- promotional activity – how the business will promote the new product or service;
- transport and distribution networks – how the business will transport and distribute their new product or service to European destinations;
- production of a new product or service – whether this will be carried out in the UK and then transported across or a production plant be opened in an EU member state;
- legal and workforce issues connected with this move;
- how the customer-service side of the operation will be organised, within the context of different languages and different customs, to support the new product or service.

Candidates need to consider those issues listed above which relate directly to their chosen business context.

Evaluating the strategy

Candidates need to evaluate the likely effectiveness of their strategy within the context of their chosen business. Depending on their chosen context, candidates will need to consider issues such as:

- whether the launch of their new product or service will require a different approach depending on the EU member state in which it is introduced;
- what their strategy will mean in terms of their business's current short- and long-term aims and objectives;
- how external influences, such as a change in market conditions in the UK or in Europe, will affect their chosen business's strategy;
- impact on UK business – whether success abroad will damage market position at home, and how the disruption at home can be minimised.

Candidates need to consider those issues listed above which relate directly to their chosen business context.

3.16 A2 Unit F255: *Training and development*

This unit focuses on the purpose and importance of training and development within a business.

In this unit, candidates need to explore issues relating to training and development by constructing a training and development strategy for **two** functional areas within a chosen business context. In their strategy candidates will need to consider the reasons for training staff, different types of training methods and training initiatives, and the constraints that can impact on training and development plans.

Candidates' strategy will be generated by research into their chosen business and wider training and development practices that take place in other businesses. Candidates need to analyse the current skills provision in their **two** chosen functional areas through a skills-gap analysis, which will then allow candidates to produce an appropriate and relevant training and development strategy within their chosen business context. To complete an effective skills gap analysis candidates will need access to employees' job descriptions and person specifications. Candidates will also need to map the skills of the employees against the above documents to ascertain the training needs of the two functional areas.

Finally, candidates need to evaluate critically the effectiveness of their training and development strategy against both the aims and objectives of their functional areas and the overall aims and objectives of the business.

This unit allows candidates to extend their knowledge and understanding of **one** of the key vocational pathways that underpins this specification, the theme of *human resources*. Throughout the AS and A2 unit specifications, candidates have been provided with human-resource focused units, including Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace*, F243 *The impact of customer service* and F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*. This unit explores another aspect of human resources from a more strategic perspective.

Devising a strategy

Most businesses, before engaging in any kind of training and development strategic activity, need to plan their course of action carefully. This planning phase involves:

- understanding the business environment within which the strategy will take shape;
- planning the strategy;
- researching the business environment to inform strategy development;
- analysing the gathered data to inform the development of the strategy;
- producing a plan of action based on research and analysis;
- monitoring and evaluating various aspects of their strategy with a view to recommending improvements and future updates to the strategy.

Candidates will be expected to go through this strategic process when devising their own training

and development strategy.

The business context within which the strategy will take shape

If a business is going to be successful then it has to ensure it has the appropriate staff who possess the necessary skills to meet its objectives. To do this, it needs to recruit the right employees and ensure that they receive the appropriate training for their jobs, so as to support the development of the business through a structured staff-development strategy.

Candidates need to understand why it is important for businesses to train their workforce. Reasons include:

- to meet departmental and overall business objectives;
- to increase productivity;
- to help introduce new technology;
- to improve health and safety;
- to create a more flexible workforce, e.g. job rotation;
- to help employees take on new job roles, e.g. due to promotion or taking on new responsibilities;
- to improve job performance and motivation;
- to satisfy UK and European legislation in areas such as employment and equal opportunities.

Planning the strategy

Candidates need to understand that businesses, when planning strategic activity, need to ensure the planning stage involves:

- setting of aims and objectives which fit within the framework of departmental objectives and overall corporate objectives;
- targeting research at the appropriate audience, e.g. the workers within the **two** functional areas;
- types of research which are most suitable for generating the required information.

Researching the strategy and analysing the information that is collected

Candidates need to understand that effective research is required that is clearly targeted and focused, if an effective strategy is to emerge. Candidates need to carry out both:

- primary research:

-
- questionnaires and surveys to gather information on workers within the **two** chosen functional areas to include the following;
 - ascertain the knowledge, skills and qualities required to undertake the job roles;
 - the knowledge, skills and qualities the employees perceive they have;
 - their training and development needs;
 - discussion on what they consider to be the most effective forms of training programmes;
 - discussion with a member of senior management to gain a second perspective on the training and development needs of staff;
 - ascertain the short-, medium- and long-term business objectives;
 - visit to their business to hold a meeting with the HR department and explore their role in promoting training and development.

Analysis of this research will form the basis for candidate to produce their skills gap analysis.

- secondary research:
 - examples of training and development initiatives that take place in other businesses;
 - research into training and development programmes offered by external agencies to include costings.

Production of a plan of action

Having carried out a skills-gap analysis, candidates need to understand that businesses use a vast range of training programmes and refer to a variety of training initiatives when planning a training and development strategy. These include:

- training programmes:
 - job shadowing;
 - coaching;
 - computer-based training (CBT);
 - in-house courses;
 - simulations;
 - external courses.
- training initiatives:
 - Investors in People;
 - appraisals/performance reviews;
 - Learning Skills Council.

Candidates need to understand the different forms training can take, including on-the-job and off-the-job activities. On-the-job training is conducted whilst the employee is carrying out an activity, whilst off-the-job training takes place away from the job, at a different location.

Candidates need to use their research into their business to investigate what types of training are popular and effective to inform the development of their strategy. Candidates need to link the training needs of the workforce into these methods of training to produce their own course of action.

Candidates need to show evidence of their proposed training programmes for their **two** chosen functional areas, which needs to include:

- an outline of the training programmes;

-
- aims and objectives of the training programmes;
 - an outline of workshops that would be covered during the course of the training programmes.

Ideally candidates should produce at least one internal training programme to meet the training and development needs identified within their skills gap analysis for one functional area. The other training and development programme could be either internal or external to the business for the second functional area. Each training and development programme must clearly outline the aims and objectives, learning outcomes and workshops that will be covered within the course of the training initiatives.

Evaluating effectiveness

Businesses consider training and development as an ongoing process which is vital in providing the workforce with the necessary skills and expertise to better meet departmental and overall corporate objectives.

Candidates need to evaluate the effectiveness of their chosen strategy in meeting departmental and corporate aims and objectives, and therefore need to consider issues such as:

- how the effectiveness of a training strategy can be affected by internal and external constraints:
 - legislation,
 - competition,
 - physical resources,
 - cost implications,which can hinder the development of training activity and the achievement of key aims and objectives, whether at departmental or corporate level;
- the problems associated with one-off training rather than ongoing training initiatives;
- a radical change to a business's aims, such as expansion, causing a revision of training initiatives.

Candidates need to consider those issues listed above which relate directly to their chosen business context.

3.17 A2 Unit F256: *Business law*

This unit provides an introduction to the laws affecting businesses in the UK. It provides a basic introduction to business law for those wishing to study the area further. This unit is also relevant for candidates planning further studies in business in higher education.

Sources of law

Candidates need to have a basic understanding of the difference between **civil** and **criminal** law.

Candidates need to know how the following areas of law are formed:

- Common/Case law;
- Statute law (Acts of Parliament);
- European Union law.

Law of contract

Candidates need to know:

- how contracts are formed – for contracts to be legally enforceable, there needs to be:
 - offer;
 - acceptance;
 - consideration;
 - intention;
 - capacity;
 - legality.
- how contracts are brought to an end:
 - discharge through performance;
 - mutual agreement;
 - frustration;
 - breach.
- the difference between **express** and **implied** terms;
- remedies for breach of contract.

Business formation

Candidates need to know the following different *types* of business organisations (including charities), how they are formed (including any documentation) and their principle features:

- sole traders;
 - partnerships;
-

-
- private limited companies;
 - public limited companies.

Candidates need to have knowledge of:

- limited/unlimited liability;
- ability to raise finance;
- tax implications;
- legal/documentation formalities;
- stakeholders (including their role, ownership and control);

and also

- The Companies Acts (2006 or as amended);
- The Partnership Act (1890 or as amended);
- The Limited Partnership Act (1907 or as amended).

Business dissolution

Candidates need to have a basic understanding of The Insolvency Act (2000 or as amended).

Candidates need to address issues relating to how, and why, businesses cease to exist:

- companies:
 - liquidation (compulsory and voluntary);
 - administration;
- partnerships:
 - dissolution;

the steps involved in the cessation of trading including:

- resolutions;
- declarations;
- administration orders; – insolvency practitioner appointed;
- directors dismissed;
- employees' contract terminated;
- liquidation of assets;
- payment of creditors.

Employment protection

Candidates need to know the principle issues relating to employing people:

- equal opportunities legislation:
 - Disability Discrimination Act (2005 or as amended);
 - Race Relations Act (2000 or as amended);
 - Sex Discrimination Act (1975/86 or as amended);
 - Equal Pay Act (1970 or as amended);
 - The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (2006 or as amended);
- contracts of employment (according to Employment Rights Act 2002 or as amended):
 - what needs to be included;
 - when issued;
 - why issued;
- common law duties of the:
 - employer, e.g. pay employees;
 - employee, e.g. to obey all reasonable orders;
- dismissal (according to Employment Rights Act (2002 or as amended) and Employment Relations Act (2004 or as amended):
 - unfair/fair dismissal including reasons: misconduct/gross misconduct, incapacity, statutory restriction, redundancy, retirement and other substantial reasons;
 - constructive dismissal;
 - wrongful dismissal: – disciplinary process, warning procedures and notice requirements;
 - legal rights after dismissal – overview of tribunal system and the role of ACAS (LRA in Northern Ireland) and trades unions.
- wages – Minimum Wage Act (1998 or as amended) and the effects on the business (knowledge of the current minimum wage for all age categories is useful, given possible wage-related information in the examination);
- the working time regulations (2002 or as amended).

In all areas, candidates need to weigh up evidence, make decisions and discuss actions which can be taken by employers and/or employees with grievances.

Health and safety legislation

Candidates need to know and understand the main provisions of the law:

- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974 or as amended), e.g. maintenance of plant and systems of work;
 - common-law duties of the employer, e.g. provision of safe working environment;
 - common-law duties of the employee, e.g. work with reasonable skill and reasonable care;
- contributory negligence;
- vicarious liability – general circumstances as to when employer is/is not liable;
- Occupiers Liability Act (1957/84 or as amended).

In all areas, candidates need to be able to weigh up evidence, make decisions and discuss how

organisations/individuals should act in different circumstances.

Consumer protection legislation

Candidates need to know the principle areas of consumer protection legislation and be able to apply them in a variety of legal situations:

- Sale and Supply of Goods Act (1979/94 or as amended) – goods must be of satisfactory quality, as described and fit for purpose;
- Supply of Goods and Services Act (1982 or as amended) – work will be performed with reasonable skill and care;
- Trade Descriptions Act (1968 or as amended) – as described and matching sample;
- Consumer Protection Act (1987 or as amended) – strict liability for unsafe products;
- Consumer Credit Act (2006 or as amended) – licensing requirement, statutory right of cancellation and interest rate clearly stated;
- Weights and Measures Act (1985 or as amended) – net weight in metric labelled correctly on packaging;
- Data Protection Act (1984/98 or as amended) – registered with Information Commissioner, data subject permission required, EU restriction and underpinning principles.

In all areas, candidates need to be able to weigh up evidence, make decisions and discuss actions which can be taken by consumers who feel unfairly treated.

Intellectual property rights

Candidates need to understand the basic principles in the UK regarding the protection of intellectual property as outlined in the following:

- Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act (1988 or as amended); including copyright relating to Internet transmissions;
 - Trade Marks Act (1994 or as amended).
-

3.18 A2 Unit F257: *Managing risk in the workplace*

This unit considers risk management in the workplace, which is a wide-ranging field of study. It covers not only the 'workplace' in a business, but also the strategic decisions that a business will have to make on a regular basis. All decisions bring with them an element of risk and a business must do everything it can to minimise any potential negative consequences.

In this unit a range of issues will be covered including daily risks and hazards in the workplace, the concept of the 'duty of care', and training and strategic planning for effective risk management.

Understanding risk in the workplace

Candidates need to understand that the term 'risk' is used to describe the potential negative consequences or likelihood of harm that can impact on a business from a particular hazard.

Candidates need to understand that the term 'hazard' refers to something which has the potential to cause harm, e.g. a method of working, or a material or substance.

Candidates need to understand that the term 'duty of care' means that everything which is reasonably practical must be done to maintain the standards of the health and safety of the workplace.

Candidates need to understand that the term 'risk management' refers to a distinct management function which needs to be integrated into business practices to minimise the exposure to the possible negative consequences of a particular course of action.

Candidates need to understand that the term 'training' refers to ensuring the competence of the workforce.

Candidates need to understand that the term 'contingency planning' refers to an integrated strategy created to deal with a range of 'what-if' scenarios.

Types of risk present in the workplace

Candidates need to apply their understanding of these risks within the context of the scenario set within the external assessment.

Workplace-related risks

These can include:

- activities:
 - lifting or moving heavy loads;
 - consequences of poor work posture;
 - lack of consideration of ergonomic factors;
 - excessive work load, shifts, breaks.
- use of equipment and machinery:

-
- moving parts such as conveyor belts, fork lift truck;
 - vibration;
 - electrical and gas safety;
 - activities involving vehicles to move goods and materials.
-
- substances – breathing, handling, being in contact with potentially hazardous substances such as:
 - chemicals and solvents;
 - materials (asbestos, wood, plastics, metals and radioactive);
 - dust and other airborne particles.
- environmental risks:
- noise levels;
 - radiation;
 - fire;
 - biological agents;
 - areas of restricted vision;
 - heights;
 - heating and lighting;
 - working with monitors (VDUs) and computer/workstations.
-
- physical working conditions:
 - untidy/dangerous work areas;
 - lack of guidance for visitors.
-
- those associated with strategic change:
 - business expansion/contraction/form of ownership;
 - diversification, change of product range/service;
 - technological advancement.

Dealing with risk in the workplace

Candidates need to understand that dealing with risk in the workplace is the responsibility of all stakeholders including the:

- employer, who must ensure a safe working environment for all their employees, as well as managing risk in a more strategic way, including which direction the business should take (expansion/diversification, etc);
- employees, who view safe working conditions as one of their employee rights, and also have the responsibility of adhering to health and safety policy;
- customers/contractors/visitors, who have a responsibility to conduct themselves appropriately whilst on work premises in order to minimise any possible negative consequences;
- Health and Safety Executive, which has a responsibility to ensure businesses comply with regulations.

How risk can be minimised effectively in the workplace

Candidates need to understand the ways in which risk can be minimised in the everyday workplace

and at a higher, more strategic level. Ways that risk can be minimised include:

- protective measures:
 - induction training;
 - on-the-job training;
 - off-the-job training.
- risk assessments:
 - identifying areas of potential risk;
 - evaluating the risks;
 - deciding whether existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done;
 - recording findings;
 - reviewing assessment and revising if necessary.

Candidates may be asked to carry out a risk assessment in the external examination.

- complying with health and safety regulations;

Candidates need to understand that businesses need to work within a legal framework to ensure that risk is minimised. Candidates must have a general understanding of the following:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (or as amended);
 - EC Directive on Work with Display Screens;
 - Workplace (Health and Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (or as amended);
 - Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (or as amended);
 - Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (or as amended);
 - Provision and Use of Workplace Equipment Regulations 1998 (or as amended);
 - Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (or as amended);
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (or as amended);
 - Working time regulations 2002 (or as amended).
- consulting a health and safety advisor

Candidates need to understand that businesses may call on advisors who are familiar with legal aspects and the measures businesses need to take to ensure they adhere to certain health and safety guidelines. Candidates need to weigh up the implications of such a policy instead of dealing with health and safety issues via internal procedures such as budgeting.

- contingency planning

Contingency planning ensures that there are procedures in place to deal with all business eventualities. Including:

-
- holding regular meetings;
 - carrying out research;
 - anticipating key changes in external influences.

Consequences to a business of NOT managing risk effectively

These can include:

- poor industrial relations between employees and employers:
 - the possibility of increased absenteeism;
 - poor relationships in the future;
 - a fall in motivation and production levels.
- types of industrial action, including:
 - strikes;
 - work-to-rule or go-slows;
 - overtime ban;
 - sit-ins/work-ins.
- physical or psychological conditions
 - burns;
 - poisoning;
 - breathing impairment;
 - loss of/impaired hearing;
 - skin complaints;
 - eye damage;
 - death;
 - disablement;
 - blindness;
 - broken bones;
 - trauma;
 - cuts, abrasions;
 - electric shock;
 - pain/discomfort;
 - RSI (repetitive strain injury);
 - ULD (upper limb disorder);
 - suicide;
 - heart disease;
 - high blood pressure;
 - headaches;
 - depression;
 - irritability;
 - social and relationship problems.
- visit by the Health and Safety Executive, leading to temporary/permanent closure of business;
- legal implications such as court action and fines;
- financial implications such as loss of earnings, compensation and legal fees;
- poor reputation (uncaring employer), bad name in the industry, difficulties with recruitment and

retention of employees.

Benefits to a business of effective risk management

These can include:

- improved industrial relations between employees and employers;
 - fewer accidents;
 - lower absenteeism and sickness rate;
 - compliance with Health and Safety Executive requirements;
 - reduction in long term legal consequences;
 - reduction in long term financial costs;
 - improved reputation;
 - increased employee motivation.
-

4 Schemes of Assessment

4.1 AS GCE Scheme of Assessment

AS GCE in Applied Business (H026)

AS Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*

33% of the total AS GCE marks This unit is assessed through portfolio work.

Coursework

This unit is internally assessed.

50 marks

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

AS Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace*

33% of the total AS GCE marks This unit is assessed through portfolio work.

Coursework

This unit is internally assessed.

50 marks

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

AS Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*

33% of the total AS GCE marks This paper has questions based on the pre-release material.

1 hr 30 mins written paper

This unit is externally assessed.

100 marks

4.2 AS GCE (Double Award) Scheme of Assessment

AS GCE (Double Award) Applied Business (H226)

Candidates must complete Units F240-F242 above, Unit F243, and choose 2 units from Units F244-F247.

AS Unit F243: *The impact of customer service*

16.7% of the total AS GCE This paper has questions based on the pre-release material.

(Double Award) marks

This unit is externally assessed.

1hr 30 mins written paper

100 marks

AS Unit F244: *ICT provision in a business*

16.7% of the total AS GCE This unit is assessed through portfolio work.

(Double Award) marks

This unit is an optional part of the double award only and is internally assessed.

Coursework

50 marks

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

AS Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*

16.7% of the total AS GCE
(Double Award) marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work

This unit is an optional part of the double award only and is internally assessed

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

AS Unit F246: *Financial providers and products*

16.7% of the total AS GCE
(Double Award) marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work

This unit is an optional part of the double award only and is internally assessed

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

AS Unit F247: *Understanding production in business*

16.7% of the total AS GCE
(Double Award) marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work

This unit is an optional part of the double award only and is internally assessed

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

4.3 Advanced GCE Scheme of Assessment

Advanced GCE in Applied Business (H426)

Candidates must complete AS Units F240-F242, Units F248 and F249, and must choose one unit from Units F250-F255, all units being 16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks.

A2 Unit F248: *Strategic decision-making*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks
2 hrs written paper
100 marks

This paper has questions based on the pre-release material.
This unit is externally assessed.

A2 Unit F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work.
This unit is internally assessed.

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

A2 Unit F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work.
This unit is internally assessed.

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

A2 Unit F251: *Launching a business on-line*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work.
This unit is internally assessed.

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

A2 Unit F252: *Promotion in action*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work.
This unit is internally assessed.

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

A2 Unit F253: *Constructing a financial strategy*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work.
This unit is internally assessed.

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

A2 Unit F254: *Launching a new product or service in Europe*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks
Coursework
50 marks

This unit is assessed through portfolio work.
This unit is internally assessed.

Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

A2 Unit F255: *Training and development*

16.7% of the total Advanced GCE marks	This unit is assessed through portfolio work.
Coursework	This unit is internally assessed.
50 marks	Assessment Criteria: Please refer to Appendix B at the back of this specification.

4.4 Advanced GCE Scheme of Assessment (Double Award)

Advanced GCE (Double Award) Applied Business (H626)

Candidates must complete AS Units F240-F243 *and* A2 Units F248 and F249, choose 2 units from Units F244-F247, 3 units from Units F250-F255, and either Unit F256 or F257, all units being 8.3% of the Advanced GCE (Double Award).

A2 Unit F256: *Business law*

8.3% of the total Advanced GCE (Double Award) marks	This unit is externally assessed.
2 hrs written paper	
100 marks	

A2 Unit F257: *Managing risk in the workplace*

8.3% of the total Advanced GCE (Double Award) marks	This unit is externally assessed.
2 hrs written paper	
100 marks	

For the Advanced Subsidiary GCE **two** units will be assessed internally, through a teacher-assessed portfolio and **one** unit will be assessed externally with the assessment set and marked by OCR. These **three** units will be equally sized and equally weighted.

For the Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award) and the Advanced GCE **four** units will be assessed internally, through a teacher-assessed portfolio and **two** units will be assessed externally with the assessment set and marked by OCR. These **six** units will be equally sized and equally weighted.

For the Advanced GCE (Double Award) **eight** units will be assessed internally, through a teacher-assessed portfolio and **four** units will be assessed externally with the assessment set and marked by OCR. These **twelve** units will be equally sized and equally weighted.

The assessment will be conducted in accordance with the GCE Code of Practice.

4.5 External Assessment

External assessment forms at least 33% of each qualification:

Advanced Subsidiary GCE:	Candidates take one unit of external assessment.
Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award):	Candidates take at least two units of external assessment.
Advanced GCE:	Candidates take at least two units of external assessment.
Advanced GCE (Double Award):	Candidates take at least four units of external assessment.

External assessments are 1 hour 30 minutes at AS and two hours at A2.

Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*, Unit F243: *The impact of customer service* and Unit F248: *Strategic decision-making* have pre-released case-study material which will be available to centres (once they have made their *provisional* candidate entries) approximately **six** weeks prior to the examination dates.

The externally assessed units will be marked by OCR. The maximum raw score will be stated on the front cover of the question paper.

4.6 Portfolio Assessment

Internal assessment forms 67% of each qualification. Internally assessed units take the form of a portfolio of work designed to enable the candidate to demonstrate understanding of the content of the unit. Each internal assessment is set by the centre to OCR guidelines, is internally marked and externally moderated by OCR.

4.7 Unit Order

Units may be taken in any order, though centres are strongly advised to cover AS Units F240, F241 and F242 early in the course, since they form a core on which other units are based.

The normal order in which the unit assessments are designed to be taken is AS Units in the first year of a **two** year course, leading to an AS GCE award, then A2 Units are designed to be taken in the second year leading to the Advanced GCE award.

Alternatively, candidates may take a valid combination of unit assessments at the end of their AS GCE or Advanced GCE course in a 'linear' fashion.

Suggested schemes of assessment will be provided as part of the teacher resource material. Centres should also ensure all authentication documentation for every candidate is completed and kept securely with the work until moderation takes place.

4.8 Unit Options (at AS/A2)

There are no optional units in the AS GCE specification; for AS GCE in Applied Business candidates must take AS Units F240, F241 and F242.

There are optional units in the AS GCE (Double Award) specification; for AS GCE (Double Award) Applied Business candidates must take AS Units F240-F243, and choose two Units from AS Units F244 – F247.

There are optional units in the Advanced GCE specification; for Advanced GCE in Applied Business candidates must take AS Units F240-F242 *and* A2 Units F248 and F249, and choose one Unit from A2 Units F250 –F255.

There are optional units in the Advanced GCE (Double Award) specification; for Advanced GCE (Double Award) Applied Business candidates must take AS Units F240-F243 *and* A2 Units F248 and F249. Candidates choose 2 units from Units F244-F247 and 3 units from A2 Units F250-F255, and either Unit F256 or F257.

4.9 Synoptic Assessment (A Level GCE)

Synoptic assessment at Advanced GCE is designed to ensure that candidates have a good understanding of the subject as a whole and are able to address issues within the subject from a range of perspectives and in an integrated way. The emphasis is on strategic understanding and on the ability to draw evidence together from any relevant areas of the specifications. Assessment focuses on the breadth, depth and quality of candidates' analysis and evaluation. Synoptic assessment will involve candidates bringing together, and making connections between, the areas of knowledge, skills and understanding covered within the specifications and applying this when carrying out a business investigation. A level of synoptic understanding is clearly a requirement of Unit F248: *Strategic decision-making* and Unit F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur* although there are opportunities for developing synoptic understanding in other optional units throughout the course.

4.10 Assessment Availability

There are two examination series each year, in January and June.

4.11 Assessment Objectives

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in a range of work related contexts:

AO1 Knowledge, skills and understanding

- Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.

AO2 Application of knowledge, skills and understanding

- Candidates apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.

AO3 Research and analysis

- Candidates use appropriate methods in order to obtain and select information from a range of sources to analyse business problems.

AO4 Evaluation

- Candidates evaluate evidence to reach reasoned judgements.

The assessment objectives are weighted as follows:

	AS Units	A2 Units	GCE and GCE (Double Award)
AO1	30-40%	20-30%	25-35%
AO2	25-35%	25-35%	25-35%
AO3	15-25%	15-25%	15-25%
AO4	10-20%	20-30%	15-25%

4.12 AO weightings

The relationship between assessment objectives and the units of assessment is shown in the grids below.

AO weightings in AS GCE

Unit of Assessment	Mandatory or Optional	Level	Percentages				Total
			AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	
F240	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F241	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F242	m	AS	45	34	12	9	100
Total			105	90	60	45	300

AO weightings in AS GCE (Double Award)

Unit of Assessment	Mandatory or Optional	Level	Percentages				Total
			AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	
F240	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F241	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F242	m	AS	45	34	12	9	100
F243	m	AS	45	34	12	9	100
One of F244-F247	o	AS	30	28	24	18	100
One of F244-F247	o	AS	30	28	24	18	100
Total			210	180	120	90	600

AO weightings in Advanced GCE

Unit of Assessment	Mandatory or Optional	Level	Percentages				Total
			AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	
F240	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F241	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F242	m	AS	45	34	12	9	100
F248	m	A2	39	34	12	15	100
F249	m	A2	18	28	24	30	100
One of F250-F255	o	A2	18	28	24	30	100
Total			180	180	120	120	600

AO weightings in Advanced GCE (Double Award)

Unit of Assessment	Mandatory or Optional	Level	Percentages				Total
			AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	
F240	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F241	m	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F242	m	AS	45	34	12	9	100
F243	m	AS	45	34	12	9	100
One of F244-F247	o	AS	30	28	24	18	100
One of F244-F247	o	AS	30	28	24	18	100
F248	m	A2	39	34	12	15	100
F249	m	A2	18	28	24	30	100
One of F250-F255	o	A2	18	28	24	30	100
One of F250-F255	o	A2	18	28	24	30	100
One of F250-F255	o	A2	18	28	24	30	100
One of F256-F257	o	A2	39	34	12	15	100
Total			360	360	240	240	1200

4.13 Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in all units where candidates are required to produce extended written material and credit may be restricted if communication is unclear.

Candidates will:

- Ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear
- Select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter
- Organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

5 Technical Information

5.1 Making Unit Entries

Please note that centres must be registered with OCR in order to make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become a registered centre well in advance of making their first entries. Final entries for units (including internally assessed units) are made in October for January units and in March for June units. It is important that entries are received by the deadline date – late entries cause major problems for OCR and attract a substantial late entry fee to reflect this. Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms or moderator details for coursework.

It is essential that unit entry codes are quoted in all correspondence with OCR. See Sections 4.1 – 4.4 for these unit entry codes.

To enter for certification, candidates must have a valid combination of unencashed units for that qualification.

For Units F240, F241, F244, F245, F246, F247, F249, F250, F251, F252, F253, F253 and F255 candidates must be entered for either component 01 or 02. Centres must enter all of their candidates for ONE of these components. It is not possible for centres to offer both components within the same series.

Unit Entry code	Component code	Submission method	Unit titles
F240	01	OCR Repository	Creating a marketing proposal
	02	Postal moderation	
F241	01	OCR Repository	Recruitment in the workplace
	02	Postal moderation	
F242	01	-	Understanding the business environment
F243	01	-	The impact of customer service
F244	01	OCR Repository	ICT provision in a business
	02	Postal moderation	
F245	01	OCR Repository	Running an enterprise activity
	02	Postal moderation	
F246	01	OCR Repository	Financial providers and products
	02	Postal moderation	

F247	01	OCR Repository	Understanding production in business
	02	Postal moderation	
F248	01	-	Strategic decision-making
F249	01	OCR Repository	A business plan for the entrepreneur
	02	Postal moderation	
F250	01	OCR Repository	Managerial and supervisory roles
	02	Postal moderation	
F251	01	OCR Repository	Launching a business on-line
	02	Postal moderation	
F252	01	OCR Repository	Promotion in action
	02	Postal moderation	
F253	01	OCR Repository	Constructing a financial strategy
	02	Postal moderation	
F254	01	OCR Repository	Launching a new product or service in Europe
	02	Postal moderation	
F255	01	OCR Repository	Training and development
	02	Postal moderation	
F256	01	-	Business law
F257	01	-	Managing risk in the workplace

5.2 Making Qualification Entries

Candidates must enter for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is **not** made, no overall grade can be awarded.

Candidates may enter for:

- AS GCE certification (H026).
- AS GCE (Double Award) certification (H226).
- Advanced GCE certification (H426).
- Advanced GCE (Double Award) certification (H626).

A candidate who has completed all the units required for the qualification may enter for certification either in the same examination series (within a specified period after publication of results) or at a later series.

Candidates following a course over a number of examination series have a variety of options open to them that allow them to certificate part-way through their course. All three- and six-unit qualifications are automatically 'banked' by OCR to enable the candidate to use them towards larger qualifications at a later date.

Candidates may enter for:

- Advanced Subsidiary GCE aggregation
- Advanced Subsidiary GCE aggregation, bank the result, and complete the Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award) assessment at a later date
- Advanced Subsidiary GCE aggregation, bank the result, and complete the A2 assessment at a later date for either an Advanced GCE or an Advanced GCE (Double Award)
- Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award) aggregation
- Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award) aggregation, bank the result, and complete the A2 assessment at a later date for either an Advanced GCE or an Advanced GCE (Double Award)
- Advanced GCE aggregation
- Advanced GCE aggregation, bank the result, and complete the Advanced GCE (Double Award) assessment at a later date
- Advanced GCE (Double Award) aggregation.

Candidates must enter the appropriate Advanced Subsidiary units to qualify for the Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award).

Candidates must enter the appropriate AS and A2 units to qualify for the Advanced (Single or Double Award) GCE.

These specifications will be shown on the certificate as:

- OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Business.
- OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Business (Double Award).
- OCR Advanced GCE in Applied Business.
- OCR Advanced GCE in Applied Business (Double Award).

5.3 Issue of Results

Individual unit Statements of Results will be issued in March for January entries and in August for June entries for all units (both portfolio units and external units). Statements of Results will include, for each unit, the unit title, the unit UMS mark, the grade and the date the unit was taken.

Certification is **not** an automatic process, since OCR is unable to determine at which point a candidate wishes to complete their course. Candidates **must** be entered for the appropriate certification code (see Section 5.2) to claim their overall grade.

Entry for unit will *not* generate a final certificate – a separate certification entry must be made at the appropriate time. If it is not, there will be a delay in issuing the candidate’s final grade.

5.4 Grading

All GCE units are awarded A to E. The Advanced Subsidiary GCE is awarded on the scale A to E. The Advanced GCE is awarded on the scale A to E with access to an A*. To be awarded an A*, candidates will need to achieve a grade A on their full A Level qualification and an A* on the aggregate of their A2 units. Grades are reported on certificates. Results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (E or e) will be recorded as *unclassified* (U or u) and this is **not** certificated.

A Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) enables aggregation of candidates’ best performances across units and series to determine the qualification grade. The three-unit AS GCE has a total of 300 *uniform* marks and the six-unit Advanced Subsidiary (Double Award) GCE has a total of 600 *uniform* marks. The six-unit Advanced GCE has a total of 600 *uniform* marks and the twelve-unit Advanced (Double Award) GCE has a total of 1200 *uniform* marks.

OCR converts the candidate’s *raw* mark for each unit to a *uniform* mark. The maximum *uniform* mark for any unit depends on that unit’s weighting in the specification. In these Applied Business specifications, all the units have equal UMS weightings with a *uniform* mark total of 100 for each unit. Each unit’s *raw* mark grade boundary equates to the *uniform* mark boundary at the same grade. Intermediate marks are converted on a pro-rata basis.

Uniform marks correspond to *unit* grades as follows:

(Advanced GCE) Unit Weighting	Maximum Unit Uniform Mark	Unit Grade					u
		a	b	c	d	e	
16.67%	100	100-80	79-70	69-60	59-50	49-40	39-0

OCR adds together the unit *uniform* marks and compares these to pre-set boundaries (see the table below) to arrive at *qualification* grades.

Qualification	Qualification Grade					U
	A	B	C	D	E	
AS GCE	300-240	239-210	209-180	179-150	149-120	119-0
Advanced GCE	600-480	479-420	419-360	359-300	299-240	239-0

Qualification	Qualification Grade									U
	AA	AB	BB	BC	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE	
AS GCE (Double Award)	600-480	479-450	449-420	419-390	389-360	359-330	329-300	299-270	269-240	239-0
Advanced GCE (Double Award)	1200-960	959-900	899-840	839-780	779-720	719-660	659-600	599-540	539-480	479-0

Candidates who fail to achieve the standard for a grade EE will be awarded a Uniform Mark in the range 0-239 for the Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award) and 0-479 for the Advanced GCE (Double Award) and will be recorded as U (unclassified). This does not lead to a certificate.

5.5 Enquiries about Results

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the result issued to one or more candidates. Enquiries about Results for GCE units must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken (by the Enquiries about Results deadline).

Please refer to the *JCQ Post-Results Services* booklet and the *OCR Admin Guide* for further guidance about action on the release of results. Copies of the latest versions of these documents can be obtained from the OCR website.

5.6 Shelf-Life of Units

Individual unit results, prior to certification of the qualification, have a shelf-life limited only by that of the qualification.

5.7 Unit and Qualification Re-sits

There is no restriction on the number of times a candidate may re-sit each unit before entering for certification for an AS GCE or Advanced GCE.

Candidates may enter for the full qualifications an unlimited number of times.

5.8 Guided Learning Hours

Each unit requires 60 guided learning hours.

AS GCE in Applied Business requires **180** guided learning hours in total.
AS GCE in Applied Business (Double Award) requires **360** guided learning hours in total.

Advanced GCE in Applied Business requires **360** guided learning hours in total.
Advanced GCE in Applied Business (Double Award) requires **720** guided learning hours in total.

5.9 Code of Practice/Subject Criteria/Common Criteria Requirements

These specifications comply in all respects with the revised *GCSE, GCE, and AEA Code of Practice* as available from the QCA website, the subject criteria for GCE in Applied Business and *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004*.

5.10 Disability Discrimination Act information relating to this specification

GCEs often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher-level courses.

The revised GCE qualifications and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments and to demonstrate what they know and can do. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration* produced by the Joint Council www.jcq.org.uk.

Candidates who are unable to access part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Where group work is expected (in units F241 and F245), this may take the form of either a face-to-face or virtual group.

5.11 Arrangements for Candidates with Particular Requirements

For candidates who are unable to complete the full assessment or whose performance may be adversely affected through no fault of their own, teachers should consult *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*. In such cases advice should be sought from OCR as early as possible during the course.

5.12 Classification Code

Every specification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for these specifications is 0002.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should seek advice, for example from their centre or the institution to which they wish to progress.

6 Coursework Administration/Regulations

6.1 Supervision and Authentication

As with all coursework, teachers must be able to verify that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own work. Sufficient work must be carried out under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate the coursework marks with confidence.

OCR expects teachers to supervise and guide candidates who are producing portfolios. The degree of teacher guidance in candidates' work will vary according to the kind of work being undertaken. However, it should be remembered that candidates are required to reach their own judgements and conclusions.

When supervising candidates, teachers are expected to:

- Offer candidates advice about how best to approach their tasks
- Exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism
- Ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements and can be assessed in accordance with the specified marking criteria and procedures.

Work on portfolios may be undertaken outside the centre and in the course of normal curriculum time. As with all internally assessed work, the teacher must be satisfied that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own work. This does not prevent groups of candidates working together in the initial stages, but it is important to ensure that the individual work of a candidate is clearly identified separately from that of any group in which they work.

Throughout the course, the teacher should encourage the candidate to focus on achieving the criteria listed in the *Assessment Evidence Grids*.

Once the mark for the unit portfolio has been submitted to OCR, no further work may take place. However, the portfolio can be improved and resubmitted under the re-sit rule (Section 5.7)

Teachers may comment on a candidate's unit portfolio and return it for redrafting without limit until the deadline for the submission of marks to OCR.

Teachers must record details of any assistance given and this must be taken into account when assessing candidates' work.

Teachers must complete and sign the *Centre Authentication Form* to confirm that the work submitted for moderation was produced by the candidates concerned. Once completed this form must be sent to the moderator along with candidates' work.

6.2 Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism in coursework is the equivalent of cheating in written examinations.

Candidates should be taught how to present material taken directly from other sources and must observe the following when producing portfolios:

- Any copied material must be suitably acknowledged
- Quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible.

6.3 Submitting marks to OCR

Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms or moderator details for coursework. Coursework administration documents are sent to centres on the basis of estimated entries. Marks may be submitted to OCR either via Interchange, on the computer-printed Coursework Mark Sheets (MS1) provided by OCR (sending the top copy to OCR and the second copy to their allocated moderator) or by EDI (centres using EDI are asked to print a copy of their file and sign it before sending to their allocated moderator).

Teachers may set internal deadlines for candidates submitting work to them. However, should candidates fail to meet this deadline, they may only be penalised if they fail to achieve one or more of the criteria in the *Assessment Evidence* Grid for that unit. A candidate whose work is submitted so late that the teacher is unable to meet OCR's deadline for receipt of marks should be warned by the teacher that failure to submit marks by this deadline may result in OCR failing to issue grades on the agreed date. OCR will supply centres with MS1 Internal Assessment Mark Sheets to record the marks and instructions for completion. It is essential that centres send the top copy of these completed forms to OCR, the second copy to the Moderator and keep the third copy for their own records.

The deadlines for the receipt of coursework marks are published on the OCR website.

The awarding body must require centres to obtain from each candidate a signed declaration that authenticates the coursework they produce as their own. For regulations governing coursework, centres should consult the *OCR Admin Guide: 14-19 Qualifications*. Further copies of the coursework administration documents are available on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk).

6.4 The Assessment Evidence Grids

Centres are required to carry out internal assessment of portfolios using the *Assessment Evidence Grids* in accordance with OCR procedures. Candidates' marks are recorded on these grids. **One** grid should be completed for each candidate's **unit** portfolio. The information on each of these grids should eventually be transferred onto a *Unit Recording Sheet* and attached to the front of the candidate's portfolio for the unit for inspection by the Moderator when the moderation process takes place.

When candidates are given their assignments, they should also be issued with a reference copy of the appropriate *Assessment Evidence Grid*.

Candidates' portfolios must be clearly annotated to demonstrate where, and to what level, criteria have been achieved. This will help in the moderation process. On completion of a unit, the teacher must complete the *Assessment Evidence Grid* and award a mark out of **50** for the unit.

6.5 Standardisation and Moderation

All internally-assessed coursework is marked by the teacher and internally standardised by the centre. Marks must be submitted to OCR by the agreed date, after which moderation takes place in accordance with OCR procedures.

Internal standardisation can be done in a number of ways. In the first year, reference material and OCR training meetings will provide a basis for centres' own standardisation. In subsequent years, this, or centres' own archive material, may be used. Centres are advised to hold a preliminary meeting of staff involved to compare standards through cross-marking a small sample of work. After most marking has been completed, a further meeting at which work is exchanged and discussed will enable final adjustments to be made.

The purpose of moderation is to ensure that the standard for the award of marks in internally-assessed coursework is the same for each centre, and that each teacher has applied the standards appropriately across the range of candidates within the centre.

Work submitted for moderation must be marked with the:

- Centre number
- Centre name
- Candidate number
- Candidate name
- Specification code and title
- Unit code.

For each (portfolio) unit, centres must complete the appropriate *Unit Recording Sheet* sent out annually by OCR and downloadable from the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk)

Work submitted on paper for moderation or marking must be secured by treasury tags. Work submitted in digital format (CD or online) must be in a suitable file structure as detailed in Appendix C.

6.6 Centre accreditation

If your centre demonstrates accurate marking of internally assessed units, your centre may be offered accredited status (by specification and level). This means that there is **no** requirement to submit work for moderation for those specifications.

Eligibility for accreditation is offered to a Programme Leader (nominated by the centre), who is responsible for the standardisation of internal assessment and must be personally involved in the assessment of candidates' work.

In each examination series, a number of accredited centres will be randomly selected for moderation as part of the control procedure. Every accredited centre will be 'sampled' at least once in every period of accreditation.

The standard accreditation period lasts for the remainder of the academic year in which it is granted and the following two academic years although the period of accreditation may be altered on the basis of the results of the random sampling. You will be informed of any changes to your accreditation status before each series.

Centres must ensure that:

- The Head of Centre provides the Programme Leader details and initially accepts accreditation for each level
- OCR is informed if the Programme Leader leaves the post or their responsibilities change with respect to the specification(s)
- All marks are submitted to OCR by the published deadlines
- Centre Authentication forms for accredited units with entries are completed and submitted to OCR Data Capture each series.

However, centres must have work available in case they receive requests for work required for awarding purposes.

6.7 Minimum Coursework Required

If a candidate submits no work for a unit, then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that unit on the coursework mark sheets submitted to OCR. If a candidate completes any work at all for that unit then the work should be assessed according to the criteria and marking instructions and the appropriate mark awarded, which may be zero.

6.8 Instructions for Marking

Sources of Guidance

The starting point in assessing portfolios is the *Assessment Evidence Grid* within each unit. These contain levels of criteria for the skills, knowledge and understanding that the candidate is required to demonstrate. The *Guidance for Teachers* within the unit expands on these criteria and clarifies the level of achievement the assessor should be looking for when awarding marks.

OCR will hold training meetings on portfolio assessment led by senior GCE moderators. Details of these are in the OCR INSET booklets which are sent to centres in the summer term or they may be obtained from the Training and Customer Support Division (tel. 01223 552950). They are also published on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk).

OCR also operates a network of Portfolio Consultants. Centres can obtain advice on assessment of portfolios from an OCR Portfolio Consultant. These are both subject specialists and senior moderators. Details may be obtained from the OCR Qualification Manager.

Determining a candidate's mark

It must be stressed that teachers determine only the *mark* for a candidate's portfolio evidence and not the *grade* which will be determined by OCR.

Regular, early and constructive feedback to candidates on their performance is essential and crucial. Help with planning and structuring their portfolio work in a logical manner throughout the course will lead to better understanding of their work and is likely to achieve higher grades.

Giving candidates deadlines for the completion of various sections of their work, and encouraging them to adhere to them, is also essential if candidates are not going to rush to complete and possibly finish up with grades below their potential.

Each portfolio should be marked by the teacher according to the assessment objectives and content requirements in the *Assessment Evidence Grid* within each portfolio unit (a sample of which follows).

Each row in the *grid* comprises a strand showing the development of an assessment objective, each row corresponding to an assessment objective descriptor in the banner (the top section of the *grid*).

The maximum mark for each strand is shown in the far right hand column of the *grid* and this maximum mark is further broken down into a number of mark bands across each row with a range of descriptors.

Teachers use their professional judgement to determine which descriptor in a strand best suits the candidate's work and from the range of marks available within that particular mark band, they circle the mark that best fits the work. They then record this mark in the column headed *Mark*.

Teachers should use the full range of marks available to them. Teachers must award full marks in any strand of work which fully meets the criteria. This is work which is the best one could expect from candidates working at AS or A2 level.

However, for strands which include a quantified element, e.g. **two** care workers or **four** therapies, and where a candidate's evidence includes less than the number specified, or includes the correct number but at varying levels of quality, teachers will use their professional judgement to allocate an appropriate mark. It is the *quality* of the evidence that is paramount rather than the *quantity*, although, in such circumstances, candidates will be unable to access the highest mark band for that strand.

Only **one** mark per strand/row will be entered. The final mark for the candidate is out of a total of **50** and is found by totalling the marks for each strand.

6.9 Administering Portfolio Assessment and Moderation

Portfolio units are internally assessed by centres and externally moderated by OCR. There are **three** key points in the administrative cycle that require action by the teacher:

The centre enters candidates who wish to submit portfolios (October for January examinations, March for June examinations)

The centre sends OCR and the moderator a set of provisional marks by a set deadline.

The moderator contacts the centre on receipt of marks and asks for a sample of work.

OCR will conduct all administration of the GCE through the Examination Officer at the centre. Teachers are strongly advised to liaise with their Examination Officer to ensure that they are aware of key dates in the administrative cycle.

Assessment-recording materials and full details of administrative arrangements for portfolio assessment, will be forwarded to Examination Officers, following receipt of provisional entries. At the same time the materials will be made available within *Portfolio Assessment Packs* and on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk). The materials will include master copies of mandatory *Unit Recording Sheets* on which to transfer assessments from each candidate's *Assessment Evidence Grids*. Forms may be photocopied and used as required.

Although coursework submitted for moderation will normally be returned to centres as soon as possible, candidates must keep a copy of their work.

6.10 OCR Repository

The OCR Repository allows centres to submit moderation samples in electronic format.

The OCR GCE in Applied Business units (F240, F241, F244, F245, F246, F247, F249, F250, F251, F252, F253, F254, F255) can be submitted electronically to the OCR Repository via Interchange: please check section 5.1 for unit entry codes for the OCR Repository.

More information on the OCR Repository can be found in Appendix C: Guidance for the Production of Electronic Coursework Portfolio. Instructions for how to upload files to OCR using the OCR Repository can be found on OCR Interchange.

7 Other Specification Issues

7.1 Overlap with other Qualifications

The units of these qualifications have significant overlap of content with the OCR GCE in Business Studies, although it is expected that the teaching and assessment methods will be significantly different. Some units also cover similar topic areas to OCR GCEs in Economics, Leisure and Recreation and Travel and Tourism.

7.2 Progression from these Qualifications

These specifications are designed to give a broad introduction to this sector and aim to prepare candidates for further study in higher education or further training which might be whilst in employment. However, these qualifications are not designed for candidates' direct entry into employment.

Candidates who achieve these qualifications may be prepared to enter a variety of HND or degree level courses in business-related subjects.

7.3 Key Skills Mapping

These specifications provide opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* at Levels 2 and/or 3. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each unit.

The following table indicates where opportunities *may* exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 2 and/or 3 for each unit.

Unit	C2				C3				AoN2			AoN3			ICT2			ICT3			WwO2			WwO3			IoLP2			IoLP3			PS2			PS3			Unit	
	.1a	.1b	.2	.3	.1a	.1b	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3		
F240		F		P		F		P	P	P	P	P	P												F	F	F	F	F	F							F240			
F241	F			P	F									P	P	P									P	P	P											F241		
F244		F				F			P	P	P			P	P	P								P	P	P												F244		
F245									P	P	P	P	P	P					F	F	F	F	F	F							P	P	P					F245		
F246				P				P	P	P	P	P	P																	P	P	P							F246	
F247				P				P	P	P	P			P	P	P																							F247	
F249				P				P						P	P	P									P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						F249	
F250	F		F	P	F		F	P																															F250	
F251																	P	P	P						P	P		F	F										F251	
F252														P	P	P									P	P	P												F252	
F253									P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																						F253
F254			F	P			F	P						P	P	P																								F254
F255																									P	P	P													F255
Unit	.1a	.1b	.2	.3	.1a	.1b	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	.1	.2	.3	Unit	
	C2				C3				AoN2			AoN3			ICT2			ICT3			WwO2			WwO3			IoLP2			IoLP3			PS2			PS3				

F: full coverage of that criterion of the key skill possible;
P: partial coverage of that criterion of the key skill possible.

7.4 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Economic and Cultural Issues

Applied Business offers a wide range of opportunities for the exploration of spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues.

It is expected that these specifications will be presented in ways which give scope for perspectives on control and direction of the business environment, the relationships between business organisations and behaviour within organisations which include ethical, moral and social dimensions. This is particularly appropriate in considering the way in which businesses are managed, the management and use of human and financial resources and the ways in which goods and services are marketed.

Spiritual, Moral and Ethical issues may be specifically addressed in Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*, Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*, Unit F248: *Strategic decision-making*, Unit F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles*, Unit F251: *Launching a business on-line*, Unit F252: *Promotion in action* and Unit F257: *Managing risk in the workplace*.

Social issues may be specifically addressed in Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace*, Unit F243: *The impact of customer service*, Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*, Unit F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles*, Unit F252: *Promotion in action* and Unit F255: *Training and development*.

Cultural issues may be specifically addressed in Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal*, Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*, Unit F254: *Launching a new product or service in Europe* and Unit F255: *Training and development*.

Legislative and economic issues are addressed in each unit, where appropriate.

7.5 Sustainable Development, Health and Safety Considerations and European Developments

OCR has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report *Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education*, 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen assessments.

Unit F242: *Understanding the business environment*, Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*, Unit F248: *Strategic decision-making* and Unit F257: *Managing risk in the workplace* provide opportunities to cover environmental issues in depth.

OCR has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen assessments. European examples should be used where appropriate in the delivery of the subject content. Relevant European legislation is identified within the specification where applicable.

Teachers are expected to take appropriate opportunities to consider issues in the European context.

The European dimension is considered in Unit F254: *Launching a new product or service in Europe* and Unit F256: *Business Law*. The legal perspective is inherent in many of the units across the AS and A2 specifications.

Candidates are introduced to health and safety issues in the context of this sector and should be made aware of the significance of safe working practices.

The health and safety dimension is considered in Unit F257: *Managing risk in the workplace*. The health and safety perspective is inherent in many of the units across the AS and A2 specifications.

7.6 Avoidance of Bias

OCR has taken great care in preparation of these specifications and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

7.7 Language

These specifications and associated assessment materials are in English only.

7.8 Status in Wales and Northern Ireland

These specifications have been approved by DCELLS for use by centres in Wales and by CCEA for use by centres in Northern Ireland.

Candidates in Wales or Northern Ireland should not be disadvantaged by terms, legislation or aspects of government that are different from those in England. Where such situations might occur, including in the external assessment, the terms used have been selected as neutral, so that candidates may apply whatever is appropriate to their own situation.

7.9 Citizenship

This section offers guidance on opportunities for delivering knowledge, skills and understanding of citizenship issues during the course. Candidates are introduced to citizenship issues, in the context of this sector, in Unit F241: *Recruitment in the workplace*, Unit F243: *The impact of customer service*, Unit F245: *Running an enterprise activity*, Unit F249: *A business plan for the entrepreneur* and Unit F250: *Managerial and supervisory roles*.

Appendix A: Performance Descriptions

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. The performance descriptions for GCE in Applied Business aim to describe learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be shown by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for the AS and A2. They illustrate the expectations at these boundaries for the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at a specification or unit level. Each performance description is aligned to **one** assessment objective. An alphabetical system has been used to denote each element of a performance description. There is no hierarchy of elements.

Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement at awarding meetings where the grade A/B and E/U boundaries will be set by examiners using professional judgement. This judgement will reflect the quality of the candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions will be reviewed continually and updated where necessary.

Teachers may find performance descriptions useful in understanding candidates' performance across qualifications as a whole but should use the marking criteria identified in the specification when assessing candidates' work.

	Assessment Objective 1	Assessment Objective 2	Assessment Objective 3	Assessment Objective 4	Quality of Written Communication
Assessment Objectives for both AS GCE and Advanced GCE	Candidates demonstrate relevant knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.	Candidates apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.	Candidates use appropriate methods in order to obtain and select information from a range of sources to analyse business problems.	Candidates evaluate evidence to reach reasoned judgements	
AS A/B boundary Performance Descriptions	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS specification • Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits of relevant business skills and how and when these can be used. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively apply depth of knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS specification • Effectively apply relevant business skills to business contexts • Effectively apply appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select relevant and up-to-date information from a range of sources • Use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the selected information to analyse business issues, problems or opportunities. 	<p>Candidates demonstrate evaluation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising evidence and arguments • Showing judgement in the selection and presentation of findings • Presenting supported conclusions • Making appropriate recommendations. 	<p>Candidates use written expression which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear. • Is appropriate for purpose • Organises information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
AS E/U boundary Performance Descriptions	<p>Candidates demonstrate, perhaps with significant omissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS specification. • An understanding of relevant business skills and when these can be used. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS specification • Apply relevant business skills to business contexts • Apply appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect relevant and up-to-date information from a limited range of sources • Use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the collected information to partially analyse business issues, problems, or opportunities. 	<p>Candidates demonstrate evaluation by using some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising evidence • Presenting conclusions • Making recommendations. 	<p>Candidates use written expression which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear. • May be expressed in a non-specialist way. • Is appropriate for purpose
A2 A/B boundary Performance Descriptions	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS and A2 specifications, as appropriate • Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits of the relevant business skills, including higher level skills, and when these can be used. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively apply in-depth knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS and A2 specifications, as appropriate • Effectively apply relevant business skills, including higher level skills; appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select relevant and up-to-date information from a range of sources • Use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the selected information to analyse complex business issues, problems or opportunities • Develop a business strategy. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate evaluation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prioritising evidence and arguments – Showing judgement in the selection and presentation of findings – Presenting supported conclusions – Making appropriate recommendations. • Justify business strategies 	<p>Candidates use written expression which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear. • Is appropriate for purpose • Organises information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

A2 E/U
boundary
Performance
Descriptions

Candidates demonstrate, perhaps with significant omissions:

- Knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS and A2 specifications, as appropriate
- An understanding of relevant business skills, including higher level skills, and when these can be used.

Candidates:

- Effectively apply knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS and A2 specifications, as appropriate
- Effectively apply relevant business skills, including higher level skills; appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts.

Candidates;

- Collect relevant and up-to-date information from a range of sources
- Use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the collected information to partially analyse complex business issues, problems or opportunities
- Outline a business strategy.

Candidates demonstrate evaluation by using some of the following:

- Prioritising evidence and arguments
- Making judgements
- Presenting conclusions
- Making recommendations.

Candidates use written expression which:

- Ensures that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear.
- May be expressed in a non-specialist way.
- Is appropriate for purpose

Appendix B: Coursework Assessment Evidence Grids

Unit F240 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F240: Creating a marketing proposal				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will investigate a medium- to large-sized business and will produce a marketing proposal to launch a new product or service of their choice within the context of their chosen business [50 marks].</p> <p>The marketing proposal, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of marketing objectives, the role functional areas can play in supporting marketing activity and the different parts of the marketing mix [15];</p> <p>AO2: the candidate's oral or multimedia presentation with, as its key focus, a marketing mix for their chosen new product or service [14];</p> <p>AO3: market research and subsequent analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: reasoned judgment as candidates consider the likely success of their marketing proposal [9].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	<p>The candidate identifies marketing objectives, the role functional areas can play in supporting marketing activity and the different parts of the marketing mix;</p> <p>Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of marketing objectives, the role functional areas can play in supporting marketing activity and the different parts of the marketing mix;</p> <p>However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth;</p> <p>[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of marketing objectives, the role functional areas can play in supporting marketing activity and the different parts of the marketing mix;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth.</p> <p>[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
AO2	<p>The candidate's marketing proposal is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to the needs of the customer within the chosen business context;</p> <p>The candidate's presentation skills are limited and visual aids and/or other techniques, used to engage their audience, show a limited fitness for purpose;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate applies their marketing proposal to the needs of the customer within the chosen business context;</p> <p>The candidate's presentation skills are sound and the majority of visual aids and other techniques, used to engage their audience, show a fitness for purpose;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p>[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate targets their marketing proposal to the specific needs of the customer within the chosen business context;</p> <p>The candidate's presentation skills are highly effective and the visual aids and other techniques, used to engage and inform their audience, show a clear fitness for purpose;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p>[11 12 13 14]</p>	/14

Unit F240: Creating a marketing proposal (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their market research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of the marketing proposal; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their market research is sound, informing the development of the marketing proposal; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their market research is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of the marketing proposal. [9 10 11 12]	/12
AO4	The candidate makes weak judgements on the likely success of their marketing proposal, with little or no attempt to offer supporting evidence; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate makes appropriate judgements on the likely success of their marketing proposal, supported by an attempt to construct reasoned arguments; [4 5 6]	The candidate makes appropriate, realistic judgements on the likely success of their marketing proposal, supported by strong evidence and reasoned, logical arguments. [7 8 9]	/9
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F241 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F241: Recruitment in the workplace				
What candidates need to do:				
<p><i>As an employee in the Human Resource department of a medium- to large-sized business, candidates have been asked to assist in the recruitment and selection of an individual for a particular job role, and produce an appropriate induction and motivational package for the successful applicant.</i></p> <p>Candidates need to produce a report, with supporting documentation, on how they approached this human-resource activity [50 marks].</p> <p>The report, in the vocational context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the processes of recruitment, selection, induction and employee motivation, as well as the legal framework which covers all human-resource activity [15];</p> <p>AO2: how candidates have recruited and selected an individual for their chosen job-role, and an appropriate induction and motivational package for the successful applicant [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and subsequent analysis [12];</p> <p>AO4: reasoned judgements as candidates consider the effectiveness of their recruitment and selection processes, and the induction and motivational programmes created for their chosen job role and successful applicant [9].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	<p>The candidate identifies the processes of recruitment, selection, induction and employee motivation, as well as the legal framework which covers human-resource activity;</p> <p>Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the processes of recruitment, selection, induction, employee motivation and the legal framework which covers human-resource activity;</p> <p>However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the processes of recruitment, selection, induction, employee motivation and the legal framework which covers human-resource activity;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
AO2	<p>The candidate's material to recruit and select an individual, and their induction and motivational package, is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to their chosen job role and successful applicant;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate applies their report to the chosen business context;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate targets their report specifically to the chosen business context, demonstrating high levels of application;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14]</p>	/14
AO3	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform their recruitment and selection processes and induction/motivational package for their chosen job role and successful applicant;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4]</p>	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing their recruitment and selection processes and induction/motivational package for their chosen job role and successful applicant;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[5 6 7 8]</p>	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is thorough and comprehensive, and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into informing their recruitment and selection processes and induction/motivational package for their chosen job role and successful applicant.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[9 10 11 12]</p>	/12

AO4	The candidate makes weak judgements on the effectiveness of their chosen approaches, with little or no attempt to offer supporting evidence; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate makes appropriate judgements on the effectiveness of their chosen approaches, supported by an attempt to construct reasoned arguments; [4 5 6]	The candidate makes appropriate, realistic judgements on the effectiveness of their chosen approaches, supported by strong evidence and reasoned, logical arguments. [7 8 9]	/9
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F244 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F244: ICT provision in a business				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce an ICT proposal showing how they would <i>either</i> introduce ICT provision to a start-up business <i>or</i> update ICT provision in a business that is looking to improve and update its current limited ICT provision [50 marks].</p> <p>The ICT proposal, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the possible uses of ICT by a business and the various forms ICT provision can take; the potential benefits and drawbacks of introducing/updating ICT to/in a business and the need for contingency planning in minimising the negative impacts of introducing/updating ICT to/in a business [15];</p> <p>AO2: the candidate's oral or multimedia presentation of their business proposal [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and subsequent analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: reasoned judgements as candidates consider the viability of their ICT proposal for their chosen business [9].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	<p>The candidate identifies the possible uses of ICT by a business, the various forms ICT provision can take, the potential benefits and drawbacks of introducing/updating ICT to/in a business and the need for contingency planning in minimising the negative impacts of introducing/updating ICT;</p> <p>Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the possible uses of ICT by a business, the various forms ICT provision can take, the potential benefits and drawbacks of introducing/updating ICT to/in a business and the need for contingency planning in minimising the negative impacts of introducing/updating ICT;</p> <p>However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the possible uses of ICT by a business, the various forms ICT provision can take, the potential benefits and drawbacks of introducing/updating ICT to/in a business and the need for contingency planning in minimising the negative impacts of introducing/updating ICT;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
AO2	<p>The candidate's ICT proposal is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to the chosen business context;</p> <p>The candidate's presentation skills are limited and visual aids and/or other techniques, used to engage their audience, show a limited fitness for purpose;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate applies their ICT proposal to the needs of their chosen business context;</p> <p>The candidate's presentation skills are sound and the majority of visual aids and other techniques, used to engage their audience, show a fitness for purpose;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate targets their ICT proposal to the specific needs of their chosen business context;</p> <p>The candidate's presentation skills are highly effective and the visual aids and other techniques, used to engage and inform their audience, show a clear fitness for purpose.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14]</p>	/14

F244 ICT provision in a business (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of their ICT proposal; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing the development of their ICT proposal; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of their ICT proposal. [9 10 11 12]	/12
AO4	The candidate makes weak judgments on the viability of their ICT proposal, with little or no attempt to offer supporting evidence; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate makes appropriate judgements on the viability of their ICT proposal, supported by an attempt to construct reasoned arguments; [4 5 6]	The candidate makes appropriate, realistic judgements on the viability of their ICT proposal, supported by strong evidence and reasoned, logical arguments. [7 8 9]	/9
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F245 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F245: Running an enterprise activity				
What candidates need to do:				
<p><i>Candidates will help to organise and run, as part of a team, a profit-making enterprise activity of their choice.</i></p> <p>Candidates will need to produce a report on their chosen activity [50 marks].</p> <p>The report, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the considerations that need to be taken into account when planning a profit-making enterprise activity [15];</p> <p>AO2: how candidates and their team dealt with these considerations when planning and running their profit-making enterprise activity [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and analysis as to the running of their activity from a number of different perspectives [12];</p> <p>AO4: reasoned judgement as candidates consider changes that they would make to their enterprise activity to improve the performance of their group, and their own contribution, should the enterprise activity be run a second time [9].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	<p>The candidate identifies the considerations that must be taken into account when planning a profit-making enterprise activity; much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive; [0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the considerations that must be taken into account when planning a profit-making enterprise activity; However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive; [6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the considerations that must be taken into account when planning a profit-making enterprise; The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth; The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency, with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. [11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
AO2	<p>The candidate's report, indicating how the candidate and their team planned and ran their enterprise activity, is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to the chosen business context; [0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate applies their report, indicating how they and their team planned and ran their enterprise activity, to the chosen business context; [6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate targets their report, indicating how they and their team planned and ran their enterprise activity, specifically to the chosen business context, demonstrating high levels of application. [11 12 13 14]</p>	/14
AO3	<p>The candidate's interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform their analysis of their profit-making enterprise activity; [0 1 2 3 4]</p>	<p>The candidate's interpretation of their research is sound, informing their analysis of their profit-making enterprise activity; [5 6 7 8]</p>	<p>The candidate's interpretation of their research is thorough and comprehensive, with an extensive focus on analysing their profit-making enterprise activity. [9 10 11 12]</p>	/12
AO4	<p>The candidate makes weak judgements on changes that they would make to their enterprise activity to improve the performance of their group, and their own contribution, should the enterprise activity be run a second time, with little or no attempt to offer supporting evidence; [0 1 2 3]</p>	<p>The candidate makes appropriate judgements on changes that they would make to their enterprise activity to improve the performance of their group, and their own contribution, should the enterprise activity be run a second time, supported by an attempt to construct reasoned arguments; [4 5 6]</p>	<p>The candidate makes appropriate, realistic judgements on changes that they would make to their enterprise activity to improve the performance of their group, and their own contribution, should the enterprise activity be run a second time, backed up by strong supporting evidence and reasoned, logical arguments. [7 8 9]</p>	/9

Unit F246 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F246: Financial providers and products				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce a written report based on the financial information contained within stimulus material supplied by OCR. Candidates will be given some information on an individual(s), on both a personal and a business level. Candidates have been asked to produce an appropriate financial package to meet the personal and business needs of the individual(s) [50 marks].</p> <p>The financial package, in the context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the different financial needs of individuals and businesses, the financial providers and products that are available and the constraints that can impact on the provision of financial services [15];</p> <p>AO2: a package that is directly applied to the needs of the given context [14];</p> <p>AO3: research into financial services and providers and analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: reasoned judgements as candidates consider the effectiveness of the financial package they have created, given a future change in circumstances for their customer [9].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	<p>The candidate identifies the different financial needs of individuals and businesses, available financial providers and products, and the constraints that can impact on the provision of financial services;</p> <p>Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the different financial needs of individuals and businesses, available financial providers and products, and the constraints that can impact on the provision of financial services;</p> <p>However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the different financial needs of individuals and businesses, available financial providers and products, and the constraints that can impact on the provision of financial services;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
AO2	<p>The candidate's financial package is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to the needs of the given context;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate applies their financial package to the needs of the given context;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate targets their financial package to the specific needs of the given context.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14]</p>	/14

Unit F246: Financial providers and products (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of the financial package; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing the development of the financial package; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of the financial package. [9 10 11 12]	/12
AO4	The candidate makes weak judgements on the effectiveness of the financial package they have created in the event of a future change in circumstances for their customer, with little or no attempt to offer supporting evidence; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate makes appropriate judgements on the effectiveness of the financial package they have created in the event of a future change in circumstances for their customer, supported by an attempt to construct reasoned arguments; [4 5 6]	The candidate makes appropriate, realistic judgements on the effectiveness of the financial package they have created in the event of a future change in circumstances for their customer, supported by strong evidence and reasoned, logical arguments. [7 8 9]	/9
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F247 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F247: Understanding production in business				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce a written report containing visual images of how their chosen business produces a particular item within their chosen business context [50 marks]. The report, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the role of the production functional area, its interaction with other departments and different aspects relating to production, including operation efficiency, organising production, ensuring quality, stock control and legal constraints [15];</p> <p>AO2: how the candidates' business produces their chosen item, including a consideration of different aspects of the production process – quality, stock control etc. [14];</p> <p>AO3: research, and subsequent analysis of the gathered data, focusing on strengths and weaknesses of the business's production in its current form [12];</p> <p>AO4: reasoned judgment as candidates consider possible improvements that they would make to how their item is produced [9].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	<p>The candidate identifies the role of the production department, its interaction with other departments and the different aspects relating to the production process; Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the role of the production department, its interaction with other departments and the different aspects relating to the production process; However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p>[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the role of the production department, its interaction with other departments and different aspects relating to the production process; The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth; The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p>[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
AO2	<p>The candidate's report is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to the chosen business context;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate applies their report to the chosen business context;</p> <p>[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate targets their report specifically to the chosen business context, demonstrating high levels of application.</p> <p>[11 12 13 14]</p>	/14
AO3	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of the report;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4]</p>	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing the development of the report;</p> <p>[5 6 7 8]</p>	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of the report.</p> <p>[9 10 11 12]</p>	/12
AO4	<p>The candidate makes weak judgements on the possible improvements that they would make to how their item is produced, with little or no attempt to offer supporting evidence;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3]</p>	<p>The candidate makes appropriate judgements on the possible improvements that they would make to how their item is produced, supported by an attempt to construct reasoned arguments;</p> <p>[4 5 6]</p>	<p>The candidate makes appropriate, realistic judgements on the possible improvements that they would make to how their item is produced, supported by strong evidence and reasoned, logical arguments.</p> <p>[7 8 9]</p>	/9

Total mark awarded:

/50

Unit F249 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F249: A business plan for the entrepreneur				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce a business plan for a new business enterprise of their choice [50 marks]. The business plan, in the context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of why a business plan is created, the different parts of a business plan and the constraints that can impact on the successful implementation of a business plan [9]; AO2: the plan being applied directly to their chosen business enterprise [14]; AO3: research and subsequent analysis of their gathered data [12]; AO4: critical evaluation as candidates consider how, and in what ways, constraints may impact on the successful implementation of their business plan [15].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	The candidate identifies the reasons behind creating a business plan, the different parts of a business plan and the constraints that can impact on the successful implementation of a business plan; Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the reasons behind creating a business plan, the different parts of a business plan and the constraints that can impact on the successful implementation of a business plan; However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; [4 5 6]	The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the reasons behind creating a business plan, the different parts of a business plan and the constraints that can impact on the successful implementation of a business plan; the candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth. [7 8 9]	/9
AO2	The candidate's business plan is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to their new enterprise; [0 1 2 3 4 5]	The candidate applies their business plan to their new enterprise; [6 7 8 9 10]	The candidate targets their business plan to the specific needs of their new enterprise. [11 12 13 14]	/14
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of their business plan; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is weak, with little evidence of integrated or strategic thinking; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their data is sound, informing the development of their business plan; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is sound, with evidence of integrated and strategic thinking; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their data is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of their business plan; The candidate's synthesis of material is comprehensive, with frequent demonstration of integrated and strategic thinking. [9 10 11 12]	/12

F249: A business plan for the entrepreneur (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO4	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of how, and in what ways, constraints may impact on the successful implementation of their business plan is limited;</p> <p>The candidate makes no real attempt to prioritise evidence or to select appropriate lines of argument from information contained within either their business plan or their research and analysis, resulting in weak, unsupported conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of how, and in what ways, constraints may impact on the successful implementation of their business plan is sound;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence is prioritised with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their business plan and their research and analysis, resulting in sound conclusions;</p> <p>the candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of how, and in what ways, constraints may impact on the successful implementation of their business plan is comprehensive and in-depth;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence is effectively prioritised with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their business plan and their research and analysis, resulting in reasoned, appropriate, logical conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F250 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F250: Managerial and supervisory roles				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce a report showing how an individual approaches her/his current managerial/supervisory role within an appropriately-sized business of their choice [50 marks].</p> <p>The report, in the given business context, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the different types of management/supervisory functions, the different types of management/supervisory styles, appropriate management theories and the factors influencing the effectiveness of a management/supervisory role [9];</p> <p>AO2: application of their theoretical understanding to the manager/supervisor role they have chosen within their business [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and subsequent analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: evaluation as they consider the factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs their role [15].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	The candidate identifies the different types of management/supervisory functions, the different types of management/supervisory styles, appropriate management theories and the factors influencing the effectiveness of a management/supervisory role; Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of management/supervisory functions, the different types of management/supervisory styles, appropriate management theories and the factors influencing the effectiveness of a management/supervisory role; However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; [4 5 6]	The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of management/supervisory functions, the different types of management/supervisory styles, appropriate management theories and the factors influencing the effectiveness of a management/supervisory role; The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth. [7 8 9]	/9
AO2	The candidate's report is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to the chosen business context; [0 1 2 3 4 5]	The candidate's report is applied to the chosen business context; [6 7 8 9 10]	The candidate's report is targeted to specific requirements of the chosen business context. [11 12 13 14]	/14
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of their report; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is weak, with little evidence of integrated or strategic thinking; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of the candidate's research is sound, informing the development of the candidate's report; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is sound, with evidence of integrated and strategic thinking; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of the candidate's research is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting the candidate's research and analysis into the development of the candidate's report; The candidate's synthesis of material is comprehensive, with frequent demonstration of integrated and strategic thinking. [9 10 11 12]	/12

Unit F250: Managerial and supervisory roles (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO4	<p>The candidate's evaluation of the factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs her/his role is limited; The candidate makes no real attempt to prioritise evidence or to select appropriate lines of argument from information contained within either their written report or their research and analysis, resulting in weak, unsupported conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrate limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate's evaluation of the factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs her/his role is sound; The candidate's evidence is prioritised with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their written report and their research and analysis, resulting in sound conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the factors which can influence the environment in which a manager/supervisor performs her/his role is comprehensive and in-depth;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence is effectively prioritised with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their written report and their research and analysis, resulting in reasoned, appropriate, logical conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
Total Mark Awarded:				/50

Unit F251 - Assessment Evidence Grid

Unit F251: Launching a business on-line				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce an e-commerce strategy for a business that has yet to develop e-commerce provision [50 marks]. The e-commerce strategy, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of how e-commerce would be used by their chosen business, the benefits and drawbacks of e-commerce provision to their business and the issues in setting up and running a website [9];</p> <p>AO2: the front-end of their website, which is directly applied to the requirements of their business [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and subsequent analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: critical evaluation as they consider what measures they would take to deal with the manageability of the back-end of their website [15].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	The candidate identifies the ways in which e-commerce can be used, the benefits and drawbacks of e-commerce provision to their business, and the issues involved in setting up and running a website; Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3]</p>	The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the ways in which e-commerce can be used, the benefits and drawbacks of e-commerce provision to their business, and the issues involved in setting up and running a website; However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; <p style="text-align: right;">[4 5 6]</p>	The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the ways in which e-commerce can be used, the benefits and drawbacks of e-commerce provision to their business, and the issues involved in setting up and running a website; The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth. <p style="text-align: right;">[7 8 9]</p>	/9
AO2	The front-end of the candidate's website is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to their chosen business context; <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	The candidate applies the front-end of their website to their chosen business context; <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	The candidate targets the front-end of their website to the specific needs of their chosen business context. <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14]</p>	/14
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of the front-end of their website; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is weak, with little evidence of integrated or strategic thinking; <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4]</p>	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing the development of the front-end of their website; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is sound, with evidence of integrated and strategic thinking; <p style="text-align: right;">[5 6 7 8]</p>	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their data is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of the front-end of their website; The candidate's synthesis of material is comprehensive, with frequent demonstration of integrated and strategic thinking. <p style="text-align: right;">[9 10 11 12]</p>	/12

F251: Launching a business on-line (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO4	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of what measures their business would take to deal with the manageability of the back-end of their website is limited;</p> <p>The candidate makes no real attempt to prioritise evidence or to select appropriate lines of argument from information contained within either their strategy or their research and analysis, resulting in weak, unsupported conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of what measures their business would take to deal with the manageability of the back-end of their website is sound;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence is prioritised with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in sound conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of what measures their business would take to deal with the manageability of the back-end of their website is comprehensive and in-depth;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence is effectively prioritised with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in reasoned, appropriate, logical conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
Total Mark Awarded				/50

Unit F252 - Assessment Evidence Grid

F252: Promotion in action				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce a promotional strategy (containing at least two promotional media) for promoting a new product or service of their choice [50 marks]. The promotional strategy, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the various forms promotional activity can take, including an understanding of how and when each is used, as well as the internal and external factors that can influence promotional activity [9];</p> <p>AO2: an outline of the two promotional media to promote their chosen new product or service [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and subsequent analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: critical evaluation as candidates consider the effectiveness of their chosen promotional strategy, taking into account possible internal and external influences [15].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	The candidate identifies the various forms promotional activity can take, how and when each form of promotional activity is used, and the internal/external influences that can hinder promotional activity; Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the various forms promotional activity can take, how and when each form of promotional activity is used, and the internal/external influences that can hinder promotional activity; However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; [4 5 6]	The candidate demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the various forms promotional activity can take, how and when each form of promotional activity is used, and the internal / external influences that can hinder promotional activity; The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth. [7 8 9]	/9
AO2	The candidate's promotional media are over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply them to the chosen business context; [0 1 2 3 4 5]	The candidate applies their promotional media to the chosen business context; [6 7 8 9 10]	The candidate targets their promotional media to the specific needs of the chosen business context. [11 12 13 14]	/14
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of their promotional media; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is weak, with little evidence of integrated or strategic thinking; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing the development of their promotional media; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is sound, with evidence of integrated and strategic thinking; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is thorough and comprehensive and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of their promotional media; The candidate's synthesis of material is comprehensive with frequent demonstration of integrated and strategic thinking. [9 10 11 12]	/12

F252: Promotion in action (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO4	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the effectiveness of their chosen promotional strategy, taking into account possible internal and external influences, is limited and the candidate makes no real attempt to prioritise evidence or to select appropriate lines of argument from information contained within either their strategy or their research and analysis, resulting in weak, unsupported conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the effectiveness of their chosen promotional strategy, taking into account possible internal and external influences, is sound and their evidence is prioritised, with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in sound conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the effectiveness of their chosen promotional strategy, taking into account possible internal and external influences, is comprehensive and in-depth and their evidence is effectively prioritised, with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in reasoned, appropriate, logical conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F253 - Assessment Evidence Grid

F253: Constructing a financial strategy				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will construct a financial strategy within a given business context. Candidates will be provided with a series of financial data in the form of a case study which will inform the subsequent investigation [50 marks].</p> <p>The financial strategy, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the reasons behind keeping financial records, the consequences of not producing accurate records and the processes involved in creating a series of final accounts that would be fit for publication [9];</p> <p>AO2: the construction of accounts for the given business context [14];</p> <p>AO3: research into how final accounts are constructed and analysis of financial data using a series of ratios [12];</p> <p>AO4: critical evaluation as candidates consider how their business, in the given context, should plan its financial activities in the future [15].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	<p>The candidate identifies the reasons behind keeping financial records, the consequences of not producing accurate records and the processes involved in creating a series of final accounts that would be fit for publication; Much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the reasons behind keeping financial records, the consequences of not producing accurate records and the processes involved in creating a series of final accounts that would be fit for publication; However, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth;</p> <p>[4 5 6]</p>	<p>The candidate demonstrates clear and comprehensive understanding of the reasons behind keeping financial records, the consequences of not producing accurate records and the processes involved in creating a series of final accounts that would be fit for publication; The candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth.</p> <p>[7 8 9]</p>	/9
AO2	<p>When constructing the final accounts, there are significant errors and weaknesses within them and the candidate presents them in an inappropriate format;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>When constructing the final accounts, there are some errors and weaknesses present within them but they are not intrusive, and the candidate presents them in an appropriate format;</p> <p>[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>When constructing the final accounts, there are few, if any, errors or weaknesses present within them, and the candidate presents them in an appropriate professional format.</p> <p>[11 12 13 14]</p>	/14
AO3	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of the final accounts is limited in scope and their use of accounting ratios is basic and does little to inform discussions on the financial position of their business; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is weak, with little evidence of integrated or strategic thinking;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4]</p>	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of the final accounts is sound, with a range of accounting ratios informing discussions on the financial position of their business; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is sound, with evidence of integrated and strategic thinking;</p> <p>[5 6 7 8]</p>	<p>The candidate's analysis and interpretation of the final accounts is comprehensive and in-depth and they use a wide range of accounting ratios to inform extensive discussions on the financial position of their business; The candidate's synthesis of material is comprehensive with frequent demonstration of integrated and strategic thinking.</p> <p>[9 10 11 12]</p>	/12

F253: Constructing a financial strategy (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO4	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of how their business, in the given context, should plan its financial activities in the future is limited and they make no real attempt to prioritise evidence or to select appropriate lines of argument from information contained within either their final accounts or their research and analysis, resulting in weak, unsupported conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of how their business, in the given context, should plan its financial activities in the future is sound;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence is prioritised and appropriate lines of argument are selected and presented from information contained within both their final accounts and their research and analysis, resulting in sound conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of how their business, in the given context, should plan its financial activities in the future is comprehensive and in-depth;</p> <p>The candidate's evidence is effectively prioritised with appropriate lines of arguments selected and presented from information contained within both their final accounts and their research and analysis, resulting in reasoned, appropriate, logical conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F254 - Assessment Evidence Grid

F254: Launching a new product or service in Europe				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>The candidate is a business consultant who offers support and guidance to businesses which are looking to move into European markets. The candidate needs to produce a strategy for a medium- to large-sized business that is looking to launch a new product or service in Europe [50 marks].</p> <p>The expansion strategy, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding of the characteristics of the European market and its potential impact on UK businesses [9];</p> <p>AO2: a written summary showing how the candidate's business will deal with the many issues it needs to consider when launching a new product or service in European markets [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and the candidate's subsequent analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: critical evaluation as the candidate considers the likely effectiveness of their strategy within the context of their chosen business [15].</p>				
How the candidate will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	The candidate identifies the characteristics of the European market and its potential impact on UK businesses; much of their evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the characteristics of the European market and its potential impact on UK businesses; however, their evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; [4 5 6]	The candidate demonstrates clear and comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the European market and its potential impact on UK businesses; the candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth. [7 8 9]	/9
AO2	The candidate's written summary is over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply it to the chosen business context; [0 1 2 3 4 5]	The candidate applies their written summary to the chosen business context; [6 7 8 9 10]	The candidate targets their written summary effectively to the specific needs of the chosen business context. [11 12 13 14]	/14
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of their strategy; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is weak, with little evidence of integrated or strategic thinking; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing the development of their strategy; The candidate's synthesis of gathered data is sound, with evidence of integrated and strategic thinking; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is comprehensive and in-depth and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of their strategy; The candidate's synthesis of material is comprehensive, with frequent demonstration of integrated and strategic thinking. [9 10 11 12]	/12

AO4	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the likely effectiveness of their strategy, within the context of their chosen business, is limited and the candidate makes no real attempt to prioritise evidence or to select appropriate lines of argument from information contained within either their strategy or their research and analysis, resulting in weak, unsupported conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the likely effectiveness of their strategy, within the context of their chosen business, is sound and their evidence is prioritised, with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in sound conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the likely effectiveness of their strategy, within the context of their chosen business, is comprehensive and in-depth and their evidence is effectively prioritised, with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in reasoned, appropriate, logical conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
Total mark awarded:				/50

Unit F255 - Assessment Evidence Grid

F255: Training and development				
What candidates need to do:				
<p>Candidates will produce a training and development strategy for two functional areas of a medium- to large-sized business [50 marks]. The training and development strategy, in the business context chosen, needs to contain evidence of:</p> <p>AO1: understanding and consideration of the reasons for training staff, different types of training methods and the constraints that can impact on training and development plans [9];</p> <p>AO2 the training and development programmes for candidates' two chosen functional areas [14];</p> <p>AO3: research and subsequent analysis of the gathered data [12];</p> <p>AO4: critical evaluation as candidates consider the effectiveness of their chosen strategy in meeting departmental and corporate aims and objectives [15].</p>				
How the candidates will be assessed:				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO1	The candidate identifies the reasons for training staff, different types of training methods and initiatives that can impact on training and development plans; much of the candidate's evidence requires further clarification and elaboration; [0 1 2 3]	The candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of the reasons for training staff, different types of training methods and initiatives, and the constraints that can impact on training and development plans; however, the candidate's evidence, at times, does not demonstrate sufficient depth; [4 5 6]	The candidate demonstrates clear and comprehensive understanding of the reasons for training staff, different types of training methods and initiatives, and the constraints that can impact on training and development plans; the candidate's evidence displays both breadth and depth. [7 8 9]	/9
AO2	The candidate's training and development programmes are over-theoretical with only a basic attempt to apply them to their chosen business context; [0 1 2 3 4 5]	The candidate applies their training and development programmes to their chosen business context; [6 7 8 9 10]	The candidate targets their training and development programmes to the specific needs of their chosen business context. [11 12 13 14]	/14
AO3	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is limited in scope and does little to inform the development of their training and development strategy; the candidate's synthesis of gathered data is weak, with little evidence of integrated or strategic thinking; [0 1 2 3 4]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their research is sound, informing the development of their training and development strategy; the candidate's synthesis of gathered data is sound, with evidence of integrated and strategic thinking; [5 6 7 8]	The candidate's analysis and interpretation of their data is thorough and comprehensive, and there is an extensive focus on targeting their research and analysis into the development of their training and development strategy; the candidate's synthesis of material is comprehensive, with frequent demonstration of integrated and strategic thinking. [9 10 11 12]	/12

F255: Training and development (continued)				
Assessment Objective	Mark Band 1	Mark Band 2	Mark Band 3	Mark Awarded
AO4	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the likely effectiveness of their chosen strategy in meeting departmental and corporate aims and objectives is limited, and the candidate makes no real attempt to prioritise evidence or to select appropriate lines of argument from information contained within either their strategy or their research and analysis, resulting in weak, unsupported conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with only basic use of business terminology – errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[0 1 2 3 4 5]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the likely effectiveness of their chosen strategy in meeting departmental and corporate aims and objectives is sound, and their evidence is prioritised, with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in sound conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity and coherence, with appropriate use of business terminology – there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar but these are not intrusive;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[6 7 8 9 10]</p>	<p>The candidate's critical evaluation of the likely effectiveness of their chosen strategy in meeting departmental and corporate aims and objectives is comprehensive and in-depth, and their evidence is effectively prioritised, with appropriate lines of argument selected and presented from information contained within both their strategy and their research and analysis, resulting in reasoned, appropriate, logical conclusions;</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate business terminology – there are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[11 12 13 14 15]</p>	/15
Total mark awarded:				/50

Appendix C: Guidance for the Production of Electronic Coursework Portfolio

Structure for evidence

A Coursework portfolio is a collection of folders and files containing the candidate's evidence for each unit. Folders should be organised in a structured way so that the evidence can be accessed easily by a teacher or moderator. This structure is commonly known as a folder tree. It would be helpful if the location of particular evidence is made clear by naming each file and folder appropriately and by use of an index, called 'Home Page.'

There should be a top level folder detailing the candidate's centre number, candidate number, surname and forename, together with the Unit code, so that the portfolio is clearly identified as the work of one candidate.

Each candidate's Coursework portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the centre network. Prior to submitting the Coursework portfolio to OCR, the centre should add a folder to the folder tree containing Coursework mark sheets.

Data formats for evidence

In order to minimise software and hardware compatibility issues it will be necessary to save candidates' work using an appropriate file format.

Candidates must use formats appropriate to the evidence that they are providing and appropriate to viewing for assessment and moderation. Open file formats or proprietary formats for which a downloadable reader or player is available are acceptable. Where this is not available, the file format is not acceptable.

Electronic Coursework is designed to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do using current technology. Candidates do not gain marks for using more sophisticated formats or for using a range of formats. A candidate who chooses to use only digital photographs (as required by the specification) and word documents will not be disadvantaged by that choice.

Evidence submitted is likely to be in the form of word processed documents, PowerPoint presentations, digital photos and digital video.

To ensure compatibility, all files submitted must be in the formats listed below. Where new formats become available that might be acceptable, OCR will provide further guidance. OCR advises against changing the file format that the document was originally created in. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the electronic portfolios submitted for moderation are accessible to the moderator and fully represent the evidence available for each candidate.

Accepted File Formats

Movie formats for digital video evidence

MPEG (*.mpg)

QuickTime movie (*.mov)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.aam)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.dcr)

Flash (*.swf)

Windows Media File (*.wmf)

MPEG Video Layer 4 (*.mp4)

Audio or sound formats

MPEG Audio Layer 3 (*.mp3)

Graphics formats including photographic evidence

JPEG (*.jpg)

Graphics file (*.pcx)

MS bitmap (*.bmp)

GIF images (*.gif)

Animation formats

Macromedia Flash (*.fla)

Structured markup formats

XML (*.xml)

Text formats

Comma Separated Values (.csv)

PDF (.pdf)

Rich text format (.rtf)

Text document (.txt)

Microsoft Office suite

PowerPoint (.ppt)

Word (.doc)

Excel (.xls)

Visio (.vsd)

Project (.mpp)

Appendix D: Witness Statements

Unit F240: *Creating a marketing proposal* – Witness Statement

This witness statement is a crucial document enabling comments to be made on the candidate's ability to apply their marketing proposal to the needs of the customer within their chosen business context. Comments can also be made on the presentation skills demonstrated by the candidate.

Centre Name: _____ Centre Number: _____

Candidate Name: _____

Context of presentation:

Comments on candidate's ability to apply their marketing proposal to the needs of the consumer within their chosen business context:

Presentational skills:

Criteria	Comments
Use of appropriate business terminology:	
Use of visual aids and other techniques to engage the audience:	
Structuring of the material so that the presentation may be easily followed and moves at a reasonable pace:	
Clarity of expression with the stimulus material that is being used:	
Eye contact and use of body language:	
Willingness to take questions from the audience at the appropriate time:	

Additional Comments:**Evidence provided to support presentation:**

Copy of the PowerPoint slides Yes/No
OHTs Yes/No
Prompt cards Yes/No

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____

Unit F244: ICT Provision in a business – Witness Statement

This witness statement is a crucial document enabling comments to be made on the candidate's ability to apply their ICT proposal to their chosen business context. Comments can also be made on the presentation skills demonstrated by the candidate.

Centre Name: _____ Centre Number: _____

Candidate Name: _____

Context of presentation:

Comments on candidate's ability to apply their ICT proposal to the needs of the customer within their chosen business context:

Presentational skills:

Criteria	Comments
Use of appropriate business terminology:	
Use of visual aids and other techniques to engage the audience:	
Structuring of the material so that the presentation may be easily followed and moves at a reasonable pace:	
Clarity of expression with the stimulus material that is being used:	
Eye contact and use of body language:	
Willingness to take questions from the audience at the appropriate time:	

Additional Comments:**Evidence provided to support presentation:**

Copy of the PowerPoint slides Yes/No
OHTs Yes/No
Prompt cards Yes/No

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____

Appendix E: Glossary of 'Trigger' Words for External Examinations

Teachers need to make use of the following amplification of 'trigger words' when preparing their candidates for external examinations.

AO1 – Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.

In an examination setting one would expect candidates to show an understanding of the:

- use of business theories and concepts – no reference to the context of the business and its situation.

Key words used in examination questions may include *define, state, list, give, name, describe, identify*.

AO2 – Candidates apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.

In an examination setting one would expect candidates to demonstrate:

- knowledge and understanding of the issues and concepts shown in the context of the business and its situation.

Key words used in examination questions may include *illustrate, calculate, apply, outline, define, describe, explain, complete, estimate*.

AO3 – Candidates use appropriate methods in order to obtain and select information from a range of sources to analyse business problems.

In an examination setting one would expect candidates to:

- use, break down and/or manipulate information or data for a purpose;
- turn information into evidence that can then be used to justify a judgement;
- show how business studies theory is used or carried out within the context of a business to make some relevant point;
- select, e.g. choose what is relevant and what can be rejected as not being useful;
- show how points, issues or factors are drawn together (synthesis);
- show how points, issues or factors are broken down – the way in which data is interpreted;

- identify the implications of actions or situations for the business.

Key words used in examination questions may include *analyse, interpret, explain (the reason for), account for, consider, explore, calculate.*

AO4 – Candidates evaluate evidence to reach reasoned judgements.

In an examination setting one would expect candidates to:

- assess information from a variety of sources and then be able to draw a conclusion in context and justify it; judgements need to be underpinned by some analysis of the evidence available:
 - examining arguments critically, and highlighting differing opinions, being able to distinguish between fact, well-supported argument and opinion;
 - questioning the validity of the data or the appropriateness of a technique;
 - the ability to make comparisons and explain both sides before making a judgement about which is the best option;
 - weighing up the strength of different factors and arguments, in order to show which they believe to be the most important and why;
 - showing understanding of the effects of different time spans on the situation or problem, i.e. long run/short run;
 - considering the influence of wider business, social, political or economic issues;
 - looking at feasibility, e.g. in terms of money, time, people, resources available, capacity etc.

Key words used in examination questions may include *assess, discuss, evaluate, justify, recommend, make judgments, to what extent, advise whether or not.*