

Examiners' Report  
January 2012

GCE Business Studies 6BS02 01

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## Introduction

This is the sixth paper in the series. Section A, the supported multiple choice questions, has used the same format throughout the six papers. Its six questions account for 24 out of the 70 marks. Section B is based on data from actual businesses. Initially there were seven questions in this section but this has now been reduced to six in order to assist candidates complete the paper within the one and a quarter hours allowed. The number of marks, at 46, remains the same, with a re-adjustment of marks in the later questions. The assessment objectives and weightings remain the same.

This paper appeared accessible to the vast majority of candidates. In Section A, the supported multiple choice, very few candidates failed to answer questions, and whilst the ability of some to explain why a particular response was incorrect left something to be desired, it was clear (from the number of correct answers) that there was a good understanding of the subject matter. In Section B the detailed answers to most questions gave an indication of good knowledge of theory. The disappointing aspect, given the real business context of the paper, was the failure of a significant minority of candidates to answer in context. There appears to be good progress made in the manner and method of answer to q12, the highest mark question. Some very detailed answers, in context, with strong analysis and evaluated conclusions were produced, and whilst it was disappointing to see a number of blank responses, I would put this down to lack of preparation rather than a time issue. I base this comment on the longer length of answer to most questions given by many candidates.

## Question 1

Candidates did not find any difficulty in distinguishing between internal and external recruitment and there were some excellent answers explaining that time and cost considerations of an external agency mitigated against the use of such a firm. Despite this, too many candidates chose option A as their answer. Given that a vacancy filled internally will normally result in winners and losers, it would have been more appropriate to say that those not chosen may feel that the company didn't value them.

Marks are given for a good definition, the explanation of the cost of paying for an external agency, and for a reference to the time it might take.

- 1 (a) When seeking to fill the position of Football Development Officer at the East Riding County Football Association, the Board of Directors discussed whether to recruit internally or externally.

Which **one** of the following is the best argument for **internal** recruitment of this post?

(1)

- A Those that are not promoted may become demotivated
- B An external agency does not need to be hired
- C Valued employees who are clearly not qualified may apply
- D External candidates may be better qualified

Answer

B

- (b) Explain your answer.

(3)

Internal recruitment is the hiring of staff for a new position available within the company. It is B because when hiring externally they would be most likely have to pay an agency to find the right people for the job. This can take longer and will cost more in the end. It is not A because if you hire internally then there more people within the business would be potentially demotivated rather than a good ~~employee~~. It is not D because this is a good argument for external recruitment because external candidates may be better qualified than potential internal ones. It is not C either because many employees who are not qualified may apply causing issues with the business because they don't want to feel like favourites.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate tried to cover all bases and possibly took a little too long over it. The marks gained were for the positive responses. The attempts to explain why the incorrect responses were not correct were not clear enough to gain marks, but as the marks had already been awarded, in this case it did not matter.

Marks are given for a good definition of internal recruitment and an explanation of the costs involved in the external process.

- 1 (a) When seeking to fill the position of Football Development Officer at the East Riding County Football Association, the Board of Directors discussed whether to recruit internally or externally.

Which **one** of the following is the best argument for **internal** recruitment of this post?

(1)

- A Those that are not promoted may become demotivated
- B An external agency does not need to be hired
- C Valued employees who are clearly not qualified may apply
- D External candidates may be better qualified

Answer

B

- (b) Explain your answer.

(3)

Internal recruitment is where an employee is promoted into another position at the same business whereas external recruitment is where someone is hired from outside of the business. If an employer recruits internally they won't have to go through the recruitment process, hiring an agency. This is a useful method as it allows the business to reduce expenses.



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**Examiner Comments**

This answer is clearly written but makes only 2 points. It should always be possible to gain 3 explanation marks with positive reasoning, such as 'the external agency has a profit margin to build in', and that this adds to costs.



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**Examiner Tip**

If you do not feel you have enough reasoning to explain the correct response, you should attempt to explain at least one of the incorrect responses, with the emphasis being on 'explain'.

## Question 2

The vast majority of candidates were comfortable with this question, indicated by the number of correct answers. Many attempted to explain the incorrect responses when it may have been better to concentrate on the explanation of the correct response in more detail.

Marks gained from explanation of correct response - reasoning that supermarkets have a wider product portfolio; from a very good explanation of why longer credit terms would not be a reason to stop trading, and from a definition of 'trading'. The explanation of why good stock control is not a reason to cease trading would have secured a mark as well.

- 2 (a) Skeltons, a family run bakery for over 100 years, renowned for good customer service, has closed down.

Which **one** of the following is the **most** likely cause of its decision to stop trading? (1)

- A Well managed cash flow
- ~~B Effective stock control~~
- C Competition from supermarkets ←
- D Longer credit terms from suppliers

Answer

**C**

(b) Explain your answer.

(3)

→ OPTION C is correct as competition from supermarkets has increased meaning they have a decrease in customers as supermarkets have a wider product portfolio and can offer more

- OPTION B an effective <sup>stock control.</sup> ~~cost flow~~ would make Skeltons stay open as they have enough supply to meet demand and is run sufficiently as incorrect.
- Longer credit terms from suppliers means that they don't have to pay for supplies straight away and shows they (Total for Question 2 = 4 marks) have a good relationship. So they can pay for supplies when an order has been payed option D incorrect.
- trading is where a group or individual swaps a good or service for the value of another object.



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Examiner Comments

Clear answer, points are made well. The candidate had ample material without taking the anticipated route of lower supermarket prices leading to a fall in demand for independent bakeries such as Skeltons.

A very well made first point showing a good grasp of competition issues. The last point of longer credit terms is succinctly put. Linking the other two incorrect responses together is not recommended. However, understanding overall is good and the benefit of doubt is given.

- 2 (a) Skeltons, a family run bakery for over 100 years, renowned for good customer service, has closed down.

Which **one** of the following is the **most** likely cause of its decision to stop trading?

(1)

- A Well managed cash flow
- B Effective stock control
- C Competition from supermarkets
- D Longer credit terms from suppliers

Answer



- (b) Explain your answer.

(3)

Many supermarkets now have sections devoted to bakery, because of the nature of supermarkets they are able to produce baked products for a cheaper price than a sole trading bakery, this means Skeltons cannot compete and stop trading. A/B are finance related to Skeltons and a good stock control and cash flow forecasts would help the business not cause them to stop trading. D is a short term finance solution which would also ~~not~~ help the business not cause it to stop trade.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

Although this candidate scored full marks, attention is drawn to the continued use of dismissing/explaining incorrect responses in batches, e.g. a, b and c are wrong because.... Regardless of whether they are wrong, possible marks are lost as each point should be explained separately.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Marks can only be awarded if it is clear which option they are explaining. Grouping options together such as a, b and c should be avoided as they might not be the correct responses to dismiss. Explain each separately. As the maximum number of marks that can be gained by candidates explaining why options are incorrect is 2, candidates should restrict themselves to two items.



### Question 3

Candidates appeared confident with the idea of capacity utilisation. Some could give a correct definition and provide the formula - only 1 knowledge mark was available, though. Even those who didn't define or didn't define correctly realised that renting a cab out for a greater period of time improved capacity utilisation. Where candidates were less successful was in dismissing the incorrect response of 'management of stock'. Understanding the difference between stock and a fixed asset is important.

Mark for either formula or definition - not both. Mark given for stating that assets are being used more frequently, thus spreading fixed costs and final mark for explaining why it is not under-utilisation.

- 3 (a) Asher Moses, a London based taxi driver, drives his cab at night. To generate extra income, he has decided to rent his taxi to another driver during the day.

This decision illustrates the concept of

(1)

- ~~A~~ Improving capacity utilisation. ←  
B under-utilisation of capacity.  
C surplus capacity.  
~~D~~ management of stock.

Answer

A

- (b) Explain your answer.

(3)

→ Capacity utilisation is the ~~maximum~~ extent to which the capacity of the taxi is being used at a given time.

→ Capacity utilisation =  $\frac{\text{present output}}{\text{maximum output}} \times 100$ .

→ Capacity is being increased which is why A correct as being used more frequently this spreads fixed costs ~~over~~ more.

→ D is incorrect as a taxi does not hold stock as it is a service.

→ it is not under-utilised (Total for Question 3 = 4 marks) as more capacity is being used there for its increasing & wrong.



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**Examiner Comments**

This response is a joy for markers. Clear responses, with arrows separating the points, even the incorrect one. This combination of definition, an explanation of why the response is correct, and an explanation of one of the incorrect responses is a popular route to full marks.



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**Examiner Tip**

The more clear the separation of points, even if just in a different sentence, the easier it is to award marks.

## Question 4

This question was well understood by most candidates, producing a large number of correct answers, some of which were reasoned very confidently. Some weaker candidates felt that it is sufficient, for instance, to say that (as an explanation of an incorrect response) the increased price of non-alcoholic drinks will lead to an increase in the consumption of alcoholic drinks, without any reasoning. If they had added 'because non-alcoholic drinks are a substitute for alcoholic drinks', then a mark would have been awarded.

- 4 (a) In summer 2010, it was reported that there had been the biggest fall in alcohol consumption in Britain in 60 years.

Which **one** of the following might explain this?

(1)

- A Greater availability of quality British wine
- B A rise in duties (taxation) on alcohol
- C Increased prices of non-alcoholic drinks
- D Discounted supermarket prices for beer

Answer

**B**

(b) Explain your answer.

(3)

A rise in duties or taxation is an added percentage to ~~the~~ <sup>original</sup> price by the government, this percentage will then be a source of income to the british government. B is correct because a rise in duties ultimately means the alcohol within ~~the~~ Britain has become more expensive to buy, therefore less appealing. D is incorrect because discounted prices at supermarkets for beer may encourage alcohol consumption as the low price is very appealing.

(Total for Question 4 = 4 marks)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate provides a very good explanation of what duty (taxation) is and a clear (if not a full) explanation of how when the price rises, consumption will fall. A second mark could have been awarded for this explanation if the candidate had referred to price elasticity. Ultimately the final mark was awarded for stating that discounted supermarket prices for beer make the product more appealing.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Always provide reasoning when discounting incorrect options.

## Question 5

The responses to this question were mixed. The correct response (D) was the preferred answer of choice but too many candidates thought that the other 3 responses were not advantages of trademarking. Furthermore, too many candidates were satisfied with stating that trademarking could not prevent other businesses from setting up in the same market without any further reasoning. It is not recommended that candidates should just repeat the incorrect response. All that was needed was an explanation that in a market place any firm is free to enter.

- 5 (a) When setting up their baby and toddler clothing business, one of the first things Jason and Anita Pritchard did was to trademark the name 'Dijie' and the bear's head logo in their design.

All of the following would be an advantage of doing this, **except**

(1)

- A to protect the brand.
- B to gain bargaining power when negotiating with retailers.
- C to make the business more attractive to potential investors.
- D to prevent other businesses from setting up in the same market.

Answer

**D**

(b) Explain your answer.

(3)

Trademarking the name and logo of a business/product means that it is illegal for another business to use the product name and logo. It also gives the business/product exclusivity making it appear more professional to possible investors and when pitching to retailers. However it doesn't prevent other businesses entering the market. They could enter with a similar product but not with the 'Dijie' name or logo.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate starts with a sound explanation of what trademarking means and then goes on to justify why option C cannot be a disadvantage as trademarking 'gives the business/product exclusivity making it appear more professional to retailers'. I liked that wording. Finally the candidate points out that others can enter the market but not with that particular name/logo.

## Question 6

Candidates clearly had done work on this area as most knew which of the options were financial rewards and that 'job enrichment' was not. The explanation of job enrichment enabled many candidates to score a mark as a correct reason as to why 'B' was not the answer. Similarly many candidates explained another incorrect response - piecework, correctly showing that it couldn't be the correct response. Any confusion that arose did so as a result of candidates failing to distinguish between bonus, an extra payment made in recognition of the performance of the business, and in the case of Sainsbury's paid equally to all staff, and performance related pay which depends on a measurable achievement of an individual.

- 6 (a) All staff at Sainsbury plc are expected to gain from a £70m payout, averaging at £580 each, after a successful year in 2009 for Britain's third-biggest supermarket chain.

This payment could **best** be described by which **one** of the following?

(1)

- A Piecework
- B Job enrichment
- C Bonus
- D Performance related pay

Answer

C

- (b) Explain your answer.

(3)

A bonus is an extra payment on top of your wage as a result of working hard, used as a reward. C is correct because a bonus of £580 is being given to each employee due to the successful year in 2009, rewarding workers for their efforts. A is incorrect because the employees at Sainsbury plc are not manufacturing<sup>products</sup> so wouldn't receive a payment for each product they produce, as they are only selling.

(Total for Question 6 = 4 marks)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate identifies what a bonus is and then answers, in context, relating to the example in the question - two marks. Following this the final mark is given for explaining why option A is incorrect.

## Question 7

This question was the one that candidates appeared least comfortable with, despite the fact that the term working capital is clearly identified in the specification for this unit. There were references in the text which suggested what the £500m could be used for. Although theoretically, building a new warehouse would not directly affect working capital, this response was allowed as it was implied in the text, as was paying off debt which is much more a part of working capital use. A significant minority of candidates failed to pick up on either of these examples.

7 Briefly describe **two** ways that the £500m raised by Ocado could affect its working capital.

Working capital is the money that the business has to use on an daily basis. By raising the £500m ocado could have paid of the debt and this could reduce their liabilities and improve the cash flow inside the business. Also it would mean that ocado working capital would have increased. This could then have been used to build a new warehouse in midlands thus expanding into a new market and gaining a higher market share. The raised money could have spread the risk and helped to improve the cash flow inside the business.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate appears confident. A brisk explanation of working capital, is followed by a reasoned explanation of how paying off debt could affect working capital. The candidate then goes on to explain how spending the £500m on the warehouse could lead to new markets and an expanded market share and then reasons that the business would benefit from this with an improved cash flow.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Questions 7 and 8 normally require candidates to explain an answer in context and provide reasoned explanations (analysis).

## Question 8

In contrast to the previous 4 mark question, question 8 allowed candidates to link Ocado's green credentials to low environmental impact in a convincing way. Many candidates did this well, evidenced by a good working knowledge of the 'green' agenda. A number then stated that a low environmental impact meant not damaging the environment, without examples or context making awarding a mark difficult. When the stronger candidates start writing about low carbon footprint from a lorry delivering goods to a large number of houses thus obviating the need for individual car journeys then it obvious that understanding is strong.

8 Explain why 'low environmental impact' is important to Ocado (see Evidence A).

Low environmental impacts means that Ocado considers the environment and try not to pollute and inflict as little damage on the environment as possible. This will give customer a high opinion of the business and promote customer loyalty as consumers trust Ocado more and should increase repeat purchases. They was green retailer of the year which will hopefully give them a competitive advantage over other business, all of which is important to help Ocado achieve it's growth and profitability.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate is asked to say why a low environmental impact is important to Ocado. After stating what this means the candidate correctly goes on to explain how this achieves high customer loyalty, citing the award of 'green retailer of the year' and its reward of competitive advantage. Finally this is linked to growth and profitability.

## Question 9

An 8 mark question, marked in 2 groups of 4. There is ample evidence in the text to enable candidates to argue why investors may still provide funds despite a lack of profit, and many candidates took the opportunity to do so. This enabled many candidates to score 7 or 8 marks.

- 9 By 2010, Ocado had been trading for over 8 years without making a profit. Analyse two reasons why lenders might still be prepared to provide further funds.

Profit is the money made after all costs have been deducted from the revenue.

Lenders would still be prepared to invest because the sales figures were shown to be growing rapidly. This means the business is still growing and profits are expected to be made in the near future. They are constantly increasing their market share and attracting new customers, which so investors might see potential especially when their current share prices would be low. However, having already had sales revenue of £422m and still not made a profit there may just be an error in their financial plan.

Another reason could be that online businesses are becoming increasingly popular as more and more people have access to the web. This means that investors are looking at any new businesses selling using this method as sales via the internet are rising across the board. Being environmentally friendly as well would encourage them that popularity will continue to rise as people are becoming more aware of these issues.

However, they may decide that because of increasing competition from big named brands selling online that Ocado will be priced out of the market.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate uses the evidence well. In particular the reference to an increase in online business is well promoted and analysed. This could have been a little more strongly linked to the environmental aspect but the point is made. Attempts at evaluation are understandable but not needed in this answer. The command is 'analyse'.



## Question 10

Candidates are tutored well in this area: there is knowledge of what budgeting is, and its advantages and disadvantages are well understood. These answers need to be placed in context, however. Candidates need to be reminded that as we use real business examples, we expect reference to them in the answer. If there is no context then it is difficult to award marks for analysis at the top level, nor for evaluation.

10 Prior to opening its new Midlands based warehouse Ocado will need to prepare budgets. Assess the likely value of budgeting to Ocado.

Since Ocado has been making loss its even more important for them to budget so that ~~peop~~ workers can't use more money than what has been budget for. So they are less likely to lose money if the budget has been done well. Also budgeting ~~can motivate staff~~ will mean that managers could be motivated more as they are delegated some authority to the business. But budgeting can cause demotivation between <sup>department</sup> managers or resentment as they 'fight' for money if Ocado was to use zero budgeting. Also budgeting can be time consuming as managers get stuck on concentrating too much on the budget instead of the real matter of time being the well being of Ocado and making profits.

I think it would be a good idea to use historical data for Ocado to budget since in the past they made losses so they can use this to budget for the costs so less likely to make a loss. But budgeting has to be well done and research if there is a change in economy things could be disastrous.  
(Total for Question 10 = 8 marks)



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### Examiner Comments

It is clear that the candidate understands the purpose of budgets and is well versed in how this can help firms and employees. The candidate also understands the different types of budgets. The context is provided late on but nevertheless ensures that analysis marks can be awarded at the top end of the scale. Balance is provided in the last sentence. This is a well-crafted response.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

Whenever you are asked to assess, you are being invited to give a balanced response. It matters not if that response is weighted in one direction or the other. The important thing is that evaluation means assessing both sides of an argument - in this case whether budgeting is useful to Ocado.

## Question 11

The format to question 11 is similar to that used for question 10. It comes from the same area of the specification. Finances are clearly an important issue for all firms.

Forecasting is well understood by a majority of candidates, many of whom have used the evidence well, enabling them to show their understanding of the area. It is not difficult to find context and at the risk of repeat it is emphasised that top marks only come from integrating theory with the real business world.

11 Evaluate the likely difficulties Ocado might experience in forecasting sales for the next few years.

Forecasting is predicting how many products Ocado will sell. This can be difficult as forecasting is only a prediction based on previous sales. There may be unforeseen external influences such as a recession which will affect sales as shoppers will have less disposable income and most food products are in-elastic, so any change in price will affect demand. In a recession prices generally increase & inflation rises go up, so sales of luxury food items especially will decrease, this would affect Ocado's forecast negatively and if one month's prediction is wrong then the rest of the year also tends to be wrong. If figures are inaccurate predicted income + expenditure will be inaccurate and Ocado may end up with a cash flow problem as there may not be enough working capital to fund day to day expenses which may force Ocado to close.

On the other hand Ocado may have little difficulties forecasting sales for the next few years as because they have old & previous data on sales figures this data may follow a clear trend which will make forecasting sales easy for Ocado.

Overall I believe it will be difficult for Ocado to forecast sales as there are many external factors which will influence sales for example Ocado may have a key food supplier and may have to find another which may be costly due to fierce competition from Tesco, Sainsbury's + Asda.



**ResultsPlus**  
**Examiner Comments**

This is a first class answer integrating theory and the evidence provided early in the piece. Use of external factors is fused with direct implications for Ocado's food operation and the difficulties of sales forecasting, yet when balance is provided this is also in context. The use of past sales figures is suggested as a reason why forecasts may not be too difficult. Couple this with a strong conclusion, again in context, and the ingredients for full marks are present.

## Question 12

The final question on the paper is always the one where most marks are available for evaluation. Candidates who possess strong evaluative skills, being able to provide balanced view points, score particularly well on this question.

There is a range of lean management techniques that candidates could have chosen from when answering this question. Generally speaking candidates made correct choices but there were those who chose to explain leadership style and consequently scored no marks. The time factor come into play here and candidates should try to give equal weight to both parts of their answer.

\*12 Evaluate **two** lean management techniques Ocado could adopt to give it a competitive advantage.

Ocado might adopt Total Quality Management (TQM) to give it a competitive advantage. Total Quality Management (TQM) is whereby the quality of goods/products is checked to make sure that the minimum expected quality has been reached. This can be used through Quality Assurance whereby all the components ~~are~~ are checked through throughout the production process to make sure quality is reached. Ocado can use this when it comes to buying groceries for customers as they by making sure they get the best groceries for their ~~store~~ customers especially if they are perishables. Quality control can be used by Ocado by checking whether all products are in the right state before handing them to customers. The advantage of quality assurance is that faults can be eliminated at an early stage and faults can then be corrected. The drawback is that it is time consuming and costs much and will affect staff morale if an external inspector comes to judge them staff at Ocado. The advantage of Quality control is that it is relatively cheaper compared to Quality assurance but it has a risk that staff will ignore the role of maintaining high quality as the staff down the line will be responsible. TQM will allow Ocado to produce goods of

high quality and will then improve the brand image resulting in more people wanting to buy from them which in turn will boost sales and profits. The second is Just in time. This is where goods materials are sourced when needed so no stock is held. This is will give Oxo a competitive advantage in the sense that they will be able to give fresh groceries to consumers which also gives them a good reputation of providing fresh produce. The draw back is that administration costs are more likely to be higher as each consumer's needs are different.

I think Oxo will gain a competitive advantage if they use either or both TQM or JIT as they will improve the quality and time of their services which improves reliability of the consumers which is favorable.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a strong answer. In the first part of the answer, which may have been a little too long, the candidate combines TQM with QA - not strictly necessary. The answer is quickly in context and not superficial. The structure is sound and whilst the second technique - quality control, is similar, it is appropriate in this context (it is not used so much in manufacturing these days) and it is also in context. A third technique - JIT, is then explained in context, with advantages and disadvantages mentioned. A conclusion follows. TQM and quality control are examples of new and old techniques. This candidate is deserving of high marks despite the mixture of techniques.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It is not advisable to use more than the two techniques demanded. It is better to explain a couple of points, analyse them and then evaluate by assessing one against the other.

## Paper Summary

Performances in general continue to improve and centres should be congratulated as should their candidates. Even better marks would be obtained if candidates would remember to use the evidence which is so carefully presented to them. In order to improve their performance candidates should:

- bear in mind the suggested split of time between each section in order to avoid rushing later responses;
- bear in mind that the supported multiple choice section always allocates marks for knowledge and application and that these marks can best be obtained by providing an explanation of a key concept and then answering the question in context;
- check carefully the command word of the question, e.g. if asked to analyse, candidates must explain their reasons but need not provide a balanced conclusion;
- realise that the assessment objectives and weightings do not change, i.e. that knowledge and application each account for 30 per cent of the marks, and that analysis and evaluation each account for 20 per cent;
- try to write clearly and precisely, separating points with simple sentences and that, if they have time, they should re-read their answers.

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