

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

June 2011

GCE Applied Business (6929)
Paper 01

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External Influences on Business

To successfully achieve this unit, learners need to demonstrate an appropriate level of understanding and application of knowledge across the full range and scope of the unit outcomes, in particular the unit assessment outcomes/criteria, the specific AOs, and the mark band (MB) distributions (Applied Business Awards Specifications Pages 148 to 149). In as much as learners need to show a clear understanding of the subject and the practical application of the unit requirements from a balanced contribution across the four knowledge/applications Strands, the related AOs and marking criteria bands.

Therefore, in relation to the Unit specifications (p145 and 157) learners should:

- Provide clear coverage of the four issues influences on a business, with suitable exemplar material to support the discussion.
- Include relevant and up-to-date information, from a suitable range of sources and examples with appropriate materials presented in support of the final issue conclusions
- Use appropriate techniques and methods on the collection of information and analysis, showing awareness of the selection and relevance of information, issues, problems or opportunities.
- Explain the positive and negative aspects of the key issues on a business.
- Show judgement in the selection and appropriate presentation of the findings in a suitable format.
- Evaluate the business external issues, the business influences and the wider organisational context, thus beings aware of the issues, problems and/or opportunities
- Show QWC in strand (d).

The work sampled indicated an adoption of the chair's reports suggested from previous reports and training material. The report should be supported by supplementary documentation that explains and highlighting the external issue (including evidence of research) that the company may/is facing over the next years.

It should be noted that the unit has four prescribes issues to address and each strands focuses specifically on an individual AOs and performance descriptors, with QWC identified within strand (d) Therefore, the business selection is important for the candidates to research and explore the external impacts associated with that business.

Candidates demonstrated a generally good understand of the overall external factors (stand a)), with substantial amount of research data generated in some cases, however, this material needs to be filtered, evaluated and used as appropriate to the business and influence under discussion, thus enhancing the overall quality of the report as required for MB2/3 in strands (b), (C) and (d).

Authentication

Evidence to confirm originality of learner work, the counter signature of the Assessment Marking Forms by tutors is critical in this process.

Standardisation

Suitable marking by centres was evident however in assessing higher performance assessors need to consider the depth and scope of material in terms of quantity of examples and the quality of reasoning and evaluation in the candidates work to award the higher marks.

Enhancing Assessment

An appropriate Chair's report must be produced, although no specific structure is suggested, it would be advisable for candidates to present their findings in a form as previously described in unit reports and training material. Candidates should be encouraged to select a business which is of sufficient size, structure and product and/or service range to allow all four influences to be examined to an appropriate depth.

Where candidates select a Non-UK based organisation, the influences should still be addresses primarily from a UK perspective, (as outline in the unit content specification), therefore the legal and economic influences should be described and where necessary alternative country legislation and economic situation be explained and compared to that of the UK to show equability or difference in influences.

Centres should encourage fuller/wider consideration of the range, value, up to date and appropriateness of the information being used and applied. Guidance on currency of material is given within the specifications. However, for higher grade performance it is expected the most up to date and current references material should be used and considered.

Although substantial amounts of research data/material is being generated, it needs to be filtered and evaluated for appropriateness (covering AO2 and AO3) to the business of choice and the influence under discussion., this will enhance the quality of the documentation and offer the opportunity for fuller consideration of the appropriateness of the material presented for each influence, as required for MB3.

For stand (d) a clear justification should be made for each influence/impact with a wider consideration of the chosen business context, beyond descriptive/generic, is required for beyond MB2. The marks for QWC (out of three) should be clearly identified within the assessment of this strand.

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