



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
January 2014

Business Studies

Assessment Unit A2 2

assessing

The Changing Business Environment

[AT221]

THURSDAY 23 JANUARY, AFTERNOON

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

Mark schemes are published to assist teachers and students in their preparation for examinations. Through the mark schemes teachers and students will be able to see what examiners are looking for in response to questions and exactly where the marks have been awarded. The publishing of the mark schemes may help to show that examiners are not concerned about finding out what a student does not know but rather with rewarding students for what they do know.

The Purpose of Mark Schemes

Examination papers are set and revised by teams of examiners and revisers appointed by the Council. The teams of examiners and revisers include experienced teachers who are familiar with the level and standards expected of students in schools and colleges.

The job of the examiners is to set the questions and the mark schemes; and the job of the revisers is to review the questions and mark schemes commenting on a large range of issues about which they must be satisfied before the question papers and mark schemes are finalised.

The questions and the mark schemes are developed in association with each other so that the issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed right from the start. Mark schemes, therefore, are regarded as part of an integral process which begins with the setting of questions and ends with the marking of the examination.

The main purpose of the mark scheme is to provide a uniform basis for the marking process so that all the markers are following exactly the same instructions and making the same judgements in so far as this is possible. Before marking begins a standardising meeting is held where all the markers are briefed using the mark scheme and samples of the students' work in the form of scripts. Consideration is also given at this stage to any comments on the operational papers received from teachers and their organisations. During this meeting, and up to and including the end of the marking, there is provision for amendments to be made to the mark scheme. What is published represents this final form of the mark scheme.

It is important to recognise that in some cases there may well be other correct responses which are equally acceptable to those published: the mark scheme can only cover those responses which emerged in the examination. There may also be instances where certain judgements may have to be left to the experience of the examiner, for example, where there is no absolute correct response – all teachers will be familiar with making such judgements.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and issues relating to the report.

AVAILABLE MARKS

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|--|
| Level 0 | [0] | No knowledge and understanding. |
| Level 1 | [1]–[4] | Little knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes limited use of specialist terms. |
| Level 2 | [5]–[8] | Some knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes satisfactory use of specialist terms when appropriate. |
| Level 3 | [9]–[12] | Good knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes good use of specialist terms when appropriate. |
| Level 4 | [13]–[16] | Excellent knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes excellent use of specialist terms when appropriate. |

Candidates cannot achieve the top band if the report is not in an appropriate format.

Report format should be:

Title – Providence Resources plc. – The Way Forward in Northern Ireland

Aim – The aim of the report is to examine whether Providence Resources plc. should seek to develop the oil field off Rathlin Island.

Introduction – Should set the scene by briefly describing current issues relating to Providence Resources plc and evaluate whether the company might achieve its aims by developing the oil field off Rathlin Island.

Analysis & discussion of findings – Should examine arguments for and against developing the Rathlin oil field and analyse these in the wider context.

Conclusions/Evaluation – The report should reach a conclusion on whether Providence Resources plc. should seek to develop the Rathlin oil field and justify the conclusion reached using evidence from the case study.

Recommendations – The report should make recommendations to the management team of Providence Resources plc.

Knowledge and understanding in this report might include:

business objectives, stakeholder objectives, financial implications, pressure groups, business ethics, corporate social responsibility, economic growth, employment, economic instruments used to achieve government objectives, effect of government objectives on business, international dimension of business, change management.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to problems and issues relating to the report.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|---|
| Level 0 | [0] | No evidence that knowledge and initial understanding has been applied. |
| Level 1 | [1]–[5] | Little evidence that knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. The candidate makes limited use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited. |
| Level 2 | [6]–[10] | Some evidence that knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. Candidate demonstrates satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear most of the time. The candidate demonstrates a satisfactory level of writing, form and style appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a satisfactory manner. |
| Level 3 | [11]–[15] | Good evidence that knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner. |
| Level 4 | [16]–[20] | Comprehensive evidence that excellent knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. Candidate demonstrates excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner. |

Candidates should draw on information presented in the case study. They must apply their knowledge and understanding to select that information relevant in order to effectively assess the current issues facing Providence Resources plc and analyse and evaluate whether it should develop the Rathlin oil field. They must also apply their knowledge and understanding to consider recommendations to the management team of Providence Resources plc.

Information selected might include evidence relating to the size/history of the company, the declining financial situation, the potential size of the oil well, environmental concerns, corporate social responsibility, global economic conditions, pricing of oil, pressure groups, ethical issues, employment considerations, impact on Northern Ireland economy, change management issues.

AO3: Analyse problems, issues and situations relating to the report.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|--|
| Level 0 | [0] | No analysis of the problems, issues and situations. |
| Level 1 | [1]–[5] | Little analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. The candidate makes limited use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited. |
| Level 2 | [6]–[10] | Some analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. Candidate demonstrates satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear most of the time. The candidate demonstrates a satisfactory level of writing, form and style appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a satisfactory manner. |
| Level 3 | [11]–[15] | Good analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner. |
| Level 4 | [16]–[20] | Comprehensive analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner. The candidate makes excellent use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited. |

Candidates must analyse the selected information in order to gain a full awareness of the extent of issues affecting Providence Resources plc. They should proceed to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of developing the Rathlin oil field as a feasible business objective in the circumstances of the current economic climate. Information selected and analysed should include:

Arguments in favour of developing the Rathlin oil field – the importance of maximising returns to investors, attracting investment, expanding the product portfolio, responsibilities as an employer, globalisation, diversification, government incentives;

Arguments against developing the Rathlin oil field – not feasible, ethical issues, environmental concerns, image, alternative business objectives e.g. growth, survival, image; loss of profits if unsuccessful, alternative energy availability, costs, change management issues, globalisation, joint venture risks, regulatory aspects.

AO4: Evaluate, distinguish between and assess appropriateness of fact and opinion, and judge information from a variety of sources.

| AVAILABLE MARKS | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| | |
| Total | 80 |

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|--|
| Level 0 | [0] | No evaluation of the evidence. |
| Level 1 | [1]–[6] | Little evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. The candidate makes limited use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited. |
| Level 2 | [7]–[12] | Some evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. Candidate demonstrates satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear most of the time. The candidate demonstrates a satisfactory level of writing, form and style appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a satisfactory manner. |
| Level 3 | [13]–[18] | Good evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner. |
| Level 4 | [19]–[24] | Comprehensive evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. Candidate demonstrates excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner. |

Candidates should draw conclusions, based on their analysis of the issues, regarding an assessment of whether or not Providence Resources plc should develop the Rathlin oil field. They must use different sources from the case study and be able to show that they know the difference between fact and opinions.

In the evaluation they must show both the positive and negative sides of options considered and must make a final judgement regarding the development of the Rathlin oil field as a viable business objective for Providence Resources plc.

The final judgement is likely to be that the oil field off Rathlin should be developed. In reaching this judgement candidates should recognise the conflict of interest between competing business objectives.

Candidates should also make realistic recommendations to the management team of Providence Resources plc.