

GCE

Business Studies

Advanced Subsidiary GCE

Unit F292: Business Functions

Mark Scheme for June 2011

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Section A

Que	stion	Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
1	(a)	Define the term 'margin of safety'. The level of output in excess of the break-even output <u>OR</u> the difference between the actual output/sales and break-even level of output/sales. 2 marks – knowledge of what the term means with a clear reference to the gap between actual output and break-even 1 mark – a general idea of what the term means with some reference to break-even	[2]	Only a definition is needed, it is not necessary to provide an explanation. Candidates who refer to a difference between break-even and actual revenue -1 mark. Candidates may write their answer as a formula, eg MoS = Actual output — break-even (2 marks).
	(b)	Identify two leadership styles. Any two from: autocratic/authoritarian democratic paternalistic laissez-faire (allow vaguely correct spellings) 2 x 1 mark	[2]	Accept other recognisable leadership styles, such as bureaucratic, technocratic, X, Y, styles linked to Blake's grid, etc.
	(c)	State two marketing objectives. Any two from: to increase sales increase market share increase (product) awareness to improve quality gain a unique selling point enter a new market introduce a new product extend the product life cycle to improve brand loyalty to understand customers better to change the product portfolio 2 x 1 mark	[2]	Allow objectives specific to the marketing mix: price, product, promotion and place. Do not reward identification of elements of the marketing mix Ensure that the two objectives are different. Do not reward general business objectives, eg to increase profit, to survive, etc Do not reward methods to achieve objectives

Question	Expected Answers		Mark	Additional Guidance
(d)	A business is considering purchasing a new piec machinery at a cost of £50,000. The machinery is expected to last for five years a annual net cash inflows as follows.			Award four marks for correct answer and a percentage sign (even with no working). Award three marks for 0.48 or 48 (OFR).
	Year Net cash inflow (£) 0 (50,000) 1 20,000 2 30,000 3 40,000 4 40,000 5 40,000			Look for the number of mistakes made by a candidate. This can help in the marking of more complicated attempts. No marks should be awarded for attempts to work out payback period.
	Calculate the Accounting Rate of Return (ARR) for machinery.	or the		
	Total Profit = £170,000 - £50,000 = £120,000	[1]		There is an alternative method to calculating ARR found in some books which has to be accepted.
	Average Annual Profit = £120,000 / 5 = £24,000	[1]		£170,000/5 (1) = £34,000 (1)
	ARR = $\frac{£24,000 \times 100}{£50,000}$ = $\frac{48\%}{}$	[2]		$(£34,000/£50,000) \times 100 = 68\%$ (2)
		OFR	[4]	Award three marks for 0.68 or 68 (OFR)

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Question	Expected Answer	Mark	Additional Guidance
(e)	Outline two benefits to a firm of using cell production.		Ensure that the two benefits are different.
	 improved quality – greater pride will be taken in their work due to increased empowerment and/or quality assurance workers will be more multi-skilled – because workers in the cell will be required to carry out a number of different tasks reduction in stock – cell production is part of the lean production philosophy reduced waste levels – there is less moving around of the product during the process so less damage can take place increased motivation – due to the greater empowerment which is usually associated with cell production increased productivity – due to more motivated staff/more efficient working methods, etc improved communication – due to increased teamwork. 		mark for the benefit & 1 mark for an explanation of it The explanation needs to make it clear why or how the benefit is achieved
	2 x (1 + 1 marks)	[4]	

Question	Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
(f)	Explain one advantage and one disadvantage to a business of having a high labour turnover.		1 mark for the benefit & 1 mark for an explanation of it
	 Advantages: introduction of new skills – as new people join the business they bring in new qualifications and experiences so the business can be more innovative/higher quality/respond to change etc able to recruit for a specific post – any new needs in workforce skills can be catered for makes change easier – new workers may be more comfortable with change in the organisation. 		Ensure that the disadvantage is not just a reworking of the advantage The explanation needs to make it clear why or how the advantage/disadvantage is achieved A candidate who gives two advantages or two disadvantages can only score a maximum of 2 marks.
	 Disadvantages: increased costs – more recruitment costs such as advertising and interview costs, as well as training costs lower levels of efficiency – this will apply to the new worker as they get used to the job and the other workers who may be affected by a new 'team member' adverse effect on the reputation of the business – which may affect recruitment/sales etc existing workers may become unsettled – which may lead to lower motivation/lower productivity/lower levels of quality, etc. 2 x (1 + 1 marks) 	[4]	
	Section A Total	[18]	

Section B

Que	stion		Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
Que 2	(a)	(i)	Matthew Albie estimates that there are currently a total of 120,000 children in day nurseries in JKL's target market in the Birmingham area. Calculate JKL's market share. Market share = JKL's output	Mark [2]	In the formula, reference to JKL's customers and/or total customers in market, rather than output is fine. An answer of 0.25% with no working gains full marks. Accept an answer of 0.2% or 0.3%. Accept answers that calculate JKL's share of the UK market = 0.05% If no % sign – maximum 1 mark Do not give any reward for candidates who calculate profit margin – 18% No reward for just calculating profit per unit of £45. An answer of 22.5% with no working gains full marks. Accept an answer of 22% or 23%. Candidates who calculate the mark up for age 2 to 5
			= <u>45</u> x 100 200		years (-2.6%), awarded one mark if the formula is written or implied.
			= <u>22.5%</u> [1]	[2]	

Question	Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
2 (b)	Discuss the factors that JKL might consider in setting its prices in response to the threat of increased competition. We are told that private sector nursery education is a growing market. However, JKL has no market power (it only has 0.25% of the local market share) and according to the market research there is a growing number of nursery groups (currently 11% of the market) which will increasingly see JKL marginalised. JKL produces a range of different services which all may have different pricing issues to consider and its prices are significantly higher than the national average (£182 a week). There may be room for cutting prices given the fact that JKL has a profit margin of 22.5%. With a growing number of new competitors on the scene, this may be a reasonable policy to suggest. Is this sort of product one which responds to price changes in this way? It would be useful to know how price elastic nursery education is. A cut in costs may also lead to a fall in quality which is against JKL's ethos and Harriet's objectives. JKL may wish to consider charging different prices at those centres where there is the additional competition appearing. (TotsAtPlay does have lower weekly prices in all of the main services offered.) There is no reason to think that JKL must charge identical prices across all three of its centres, as long as there is no opportunity for customers to move their child to the lower charging centre. This is unlikely as parents will mainly choose the centre of ease of location to their home. The opening of the new centre in September may also present an opportunity to carry out some promotional pricing in the short-run.		Candidates who answer a different question, such as, 'What pricing strategy should JKL adopt?' can only be rewarded if factors are implicit in their answer. Candidates who use their answers from 2 (a) – the OFR applies.

Question	Expected A	Answers		Mark	Additional Guidance
	the pricing customer r child to nu number of	cant difference between JKL and TotsAtPlay's period. TotsAtPlay charges daily which gives to more flexibility in choosing how many days to sery – this is particularly relevant given the largement who work part-time. However, chargings, gives it more certainty over revenues.	he end their ge		Better answers will only consider appropriate pricing factors for JKL and are likely to make good use of the data in Table 1 and Appendix 1. A 'good' answer should be awarded at or above the default mark in whichever level is gained.
	price. We a sector is gr of its centre the market economy o	argued that JKL does not need to worry too more told in the market research that the demand owing and JKL has 100% capacity utilisation in es. This would suggest that there is plenty of deat current price levels and unless the state of the reserved reducation preferences change, there hink that demand for JKL's services will begin to	d in this n all three emand in the is no		
	Level 4	Some evaluation shown by making a justified judgement about the relative importance of the different factors affecting pricing and/or a suitable course of action for JKL.	(16-12)		
	Level 3	Some analysis of appropriate pricing factors and how they may be used by JKL in responding to the competition.	(11-7)		
	Level 2	Some understanding shown of factors that may affect pricing decisions.	(6-3)		
	Level 1	Some knowledge of factors affecting price or statements about how JKL's pricing is different to TAP's.	(2-1)		

Question	Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
3	Discuss how JKL may improve its cash-flow in the future.		
	The majority of cash-flow problems are caused by an imbalance in the timings between when outflows are paid and inflows are received. Therefore, any solutions to cash-flow problems are generally centred around reducing or delaying outflows and speeding up or increasing inflows.		
	Could JKL change its charging policy so that the invoices for the full-time children are payable in less than 30 days? This policy means that, in some cases, payment is being received up to seven weeks after the provision of the service. Additionally, could JKL request payment for the other services, eg babysitting, to be paid on the day? However, the impact on customers of this change in policy must be considered, especially considering JKL's tiny market share and lack of market power. What do the competitors do?		
	An increase in price could also increase inflows, given that JKL is working at 100% capacity with excess demand. Demand is likely to be price inelastic so revenues will respond positively to any increase in price.		
	A major outflow is labour costs. Could JKL pay part-time staff monthly? This may have a detrimental effect on the staff and go against Harriet's ethos. Again, what does the competition do? Also, as JKL's staff-child ratio exceeds the legal minimum, could it reduce the number of staff, although this may affect the quality of JKL's service which may be necessary to justify the high prices.		
	There is significant planned expenditure in new equipment and maintenance in April, June and November. Is this absolutely necessary and do the two items have to be planned for the same month? JKL's centres are all very new and purpose built so should not need that much additional expenditure. However, JKL is in a very competitive market where customers are paying above the		

Question Expected	Answers		Ma	ark	Additional Guidance
average mage of level of quage on a regular health and health and health and looking for a venture of improve Jack drastic chairs.	arket price and so they may well expectality. Also, children's equipment will get ar basis, so that replacement may be not safety grounds. The provided have a safety grounds and Harriet, the firm coul a cash injection from a new business 'properties or an equity investor. This would be cash-flow without any need to makinges. However, it may have an impact	broken and ecessary on d consider partner', whe ald immediate e any other	ether ely		Candidates who approach this question from the point of view of sources of finance will also need to consider changing inflows and/or outflows to access the higher marks in any level. A 'good' answer should be awarded at or above the default mark in whichever level is gained.
Better ansi flow proble new centre really a lor	control of the company. Better answers may recognise that JKL's most significant cashflow problems for 2011 appear to be linked to the opening of the new centre in September. It could be argued that there is not really a long-term cash-flow problem as there is a significant improvement between September and December.				
Level 4	Some evaluation shown by supporting any judgement made about whether any suggested changes at JKL will work and/or be appropriate in its current situation.	(16-12)			
Level 3	Some analysis of specific suggestions for JKL of how it might improve its current cash-flow position.	(11-7)			
Level 2	Some understanding shown of how cash-flow can be improved.	(6-3)			
Level 1	Some knowledge of cash-flow and/or how to improve it.	(2-1)	[1	6]	

Question	Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
Question 4	Assess the likely impact on the motivation of JKL's employees of the proposal to increase capacity utilisation in each childcare centre. JKL appears to be a business which respects its employees, is keen to look after them by paying a salary above the industry norm and thus ensure they are motivated and happy. One of Harriet's stated aims is to raise the standards and status of the childcare profession. In addition, she has regular meetings with the staff. One potential impact of the proposal to increase capacity utilisation above 100% is on the staff-child ratio. We are told that this is currently above the required standard so that the workers will have more time to play with, supervise and look after the children in their care. If we assume that the workers are currently motivated then any increased pressures on their work may reduce this motivation. This may also have implications in terms of safety standards and the level of customer happiness. This is not something to be jeopardised – given the current concerns about increased competition and the imminent opening of a new centre. Up to 40% of the staff are currently working towards some form of childcare qualification. In addition, JKL provides paid study leave	Mark	Answers that consider the possible impact of the proposal on JKL may be rewarded as long as there is an explicit or implicit link from employee motivation.
	childcare qualification. In addition, JKL provides paid study leave and allows training time for at least 10 in-house training courses. Training, and the opportunity for promotion which comes with it, are seen as motivators by Herzberg and Maslow. Increased pressure on work will jeopardise this and may ultimately mean that JKL's employees are less well qualified and so do their job less well. (The proposal to introduce the Quality Counts initiative may also be affected by increased capacity utilisation.)		

Question Expecte	d Answers		Mark	Additional Guidance
the theol of worke at the mo		approach g present		Evaluative answers are likely to discuss the actual significance of any change on the workforce which may be largely affected by how many extra children each centre takes in.
the effici workforc quality a utilisation	ly, JKL need to consider the balance between in the ention of its factors and the impact which this e, in an industry which is highly reliant on the new dedication of its staff. Will this increase in can be a short-run issue or may it jeopardise the labeliance.	has on the notivation, apacity		A 'good' answer should be awarded at or above the default mark in whichever level is gained.
Level 4	Some evaluation shown by taking a judgemental approach to the consequences for JKL and/or its employees of changes in motivation resulting from higher capacity utilisation.	(16-12)		
Level 3		(11-7)		
Level 2	Some understanding shown of how motivation may be affected by changes in capacity utilisation.	(6-3)		
Level 1	Some knowledge about factors affecting motivation and/or motivational theories.	(2-1)	[16]	

Question	Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
5*	The NDNA's Quality Counts scheme is one example of a quality initiative (lines 123-127) Evaluate how JKL could improve the quality of the services it provides.		Candidates who just produce textbook discussions about one or more quality initiatives should not be rewarded above Level 2.
	Quality is clearly a central focus for JKL and something which Harriet believes in strongly. It is also vital in JKL's line of business, especially given the recent bad publicity surrounding the industry. Although there are statutory checks, such as OFSTED, and voluntary checks, as a member of the NDNA, all childcare centres will have to abide by these and so there is no differentiation in the eye of the customer. Customers will also expect higher levels of quality to justify the higher price that JKL charges relative to the competition (eg better equipment, lower staff-child ratio, specialised diets etc.)		
	The proposal by Darius to sign up for the NDNA's Quality Counts scheme may be considered by candidates. Discussion can be expected about what impact running such a scheme may have on the management and workforce. Even though it is to be done online, it will still take time and distract everyone from their day-to-day jobs. This may be particularly an issue for management at present as they are in the last few months before opening a new centre in September. It is vital that this is done correctly and efficiently, especially given the latest market trends. In addition, many of the workers are already studying for a childcare course both during worktime and in their own time. Will completion of the modules for Quality Counts get in the way of this studying/work and lead to one or the other being neglected? This may have a financial implication for the staff as pay is linked to the level of qualification.		

Question	Expected Answers	Mark	Additional Guidance
	The cost of any idea to improve quality is also a factor to consider. For the four centres (as of September) the initial cost of the NDNA scheme will be £4360, with further payments of £840 in each of years two and three. JKL is therefore, looking at a total cost of over £5000, without considering the indirect costs created as a consequence of this training. This comes at a time when cash is tight and additional funding is being sought. As with any way of improving quality, it is important that the visible benefits (to the paying customer) justify the cash outlay for the project. This can be difficult to quantify in any service organisation, but even more so in a childcare centre where the customer does not directly consume the product and, in fact, does not tangibly see what they are paying for. Better answers will consider one or more of these issues in relation to the specific circumstances facing a childcare centre.		Candidates who argue that improvements in quality are unnecessary for JKL can only reach L4 if they have previously analysed method(s) to improve quality. A 'good' answer should be awarded at or above the default mark in whichever level is gained. Candidates may consider other quality initiatives, such as: unufle quality circles benchmarking ISO9001 Investors in People TQM.

Question	Expected Answers			Mark	Additional Guidance
	Level 4	Some evaluation shown by making a justified judgement about whether suggested ideas will be appropriate in the circumstances which JKL face. Complex idea(s) have been expressed clearly and fluently using a style of writing appropriate to the complex subject matter. Sentences and paragraphs, consistently relevant, have been well structured, using appropriate technical terminology. There	(20-15)		
	Level 3	may be few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Some analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of appropriate idea(s) which JKL could use.	(14-9)		
		Relatively straightforward ideas have been expressed with some clarity and fluency. Arguments are generally relevant, though may stray from the point of the question. There will be some errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar, but these are unlikely to be intrusive or obscure meaning.			

Question	Expected Answers			Mark	Additional Guidance
Question	Level 1	Some understanding shown of how quality can be improved in any business. Some simple ideas have been expressed in an appropriate context. There are likely to be some errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar of which some may be noticeable and intrusive. Some knowledge of quality methods. Some simple ideas have been expressed. There will be some errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar which will be noticeable and intrusive. Writing may also lack legibility.	(3-1)	Mark	Poor QWC cannot prevent a candidate from accessing any level, but within any individual level QWC can affect the final mark given by a maximum of 2 marks.
				[20]	

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