Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2020

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary in Business (WBS11/01)

Paper 01 Marketing and People

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Introduction

Question 1a There was a mixture of responses with many students only gaining 1 mark Some student confused risk with uncertainty. Many referred to external factors affecting decisions, rather than the fact uncertainty is about being unable to foresee/predict future events/outcomes.

Question 1b Most students were able to produce a supply and demand diagram. Many students were awarded the full 4 marks. Some lost marks for not correctly labelling the equilibrium points on the axis or for showing a shift in demand rather than supply. Some students showed both a shift in demand and a shift in supply, and therefore were not awarded the application mark for the correct shift.

Question 1c There were some good answers with students showing knowledge of entrepreneurial characteristics and applying the theory well to Rossi Mitova. However, many students did not develop their answers to explain how this characteristic helped to make the business a success and as such did not get the analysis marks.

Question 1d Students generally showed good awareness of the advantages and disadvantages on online retailing. However, many answers were simply a list of points which were not contextualised and extremely generic in nature.

Question 1e There was a notable lack of knowledge of trade-off in some centres. Whilst some candidates answered this well and were able to show a good understanding of the trade-off between social objectives and profit, other students simply wrote about the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing social objectives. Due to this many students scored low on this question because they were not in fact answering the question.

Question 2a This was well answered with a significant number of candidates gaining the full 2 marks. A limited number confused primary and secondary research.

Question 2b Many students answered this question well and were able to calculate the percentage change. However, some candidates lost marks for either not showing the % sign or not rounding to 2 decimal places as requested in the question.

Question 2c In the main this was quite poorly answered. The question asked specifically about focus groups and many students simply wrote about the advantages of using primary research. Students should be reminded to read the question carefully and fully answer the question asked, rather than referring to generic points about the topic. Some students gained no marks as they did not write specifically about the advantages of using focus groups.

Question 2d A very mixed set of responses to this question, with many students showing good understanding of product life cycle. However, many failed to provide a balanced argument and an awareness of competing arguments. A small number of students simply drew the product life cycle diagram and gave a description of what it is. Other students confused Boston Matrix with product life cycle and gained no marks.

Question 2e It was encouraging that the majority of students understood the term 'centralised structure'. Generally, this question was answered well with students able to contextualise their answers and provide a balance argument. A few, but a limited number confused decentralised with centralised or simply wrote about tall structures.

Question 3 The majority of students showed some understanding of a flexible workforce and were able to access some marks. Many however simply provided a list of advantages and disadvantages of flexible arrangements without contextualising to Nestle. Many students wrote about the impact on workers rather than the impact on Nestle and did not therefore fully answer the question asked. The majority of answers failed to attempt / provide a judgement or recommendation and simply repeated the points given in their answer. There was no real evidence to suggest that candidates did not have enough time to complete the paper with the majority attempting to answer question 3.

Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

• It is important that the students read the questions carefully. Many are writing generic answers which do not fully address the question. Question 2c in this series is a typical example of this. Do not simply list everything you know about a topic, read the question carefully to determine the specific area of the topic you are asked to write about.
• Ensure percentage calculations show a percentage sign to gain full marks
• Many students are still copying sections form the source booklet to use as application. Do use examples and evidence in the source booklet to illustrate your argument.   However, do not simply copy evidence from the source booklet without using this information to explain your answer. Stand-alone evidence will not be rewarded if it does not support the points being made.
• Do add a conclusion or recommendation for the longer questions.