

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
Cambridge International Diploma Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME for the October 2012 series

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS

5172 Effective Business Communication, maximum mark 100

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge is publishing the mark schemes for the October 2012 series for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level components and some Ordinary Level components.

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1 With a worldwide business, David Chui is concerned that communication is extremely important for the staff, customers and other stakeholders.

(a) Explain four consequences of poor internal communications between NORDIC Beijing and the Head Office in Oslo. [4 × 2 = 8]

A breakdown in communications will result in the following;

1. Lack of understanding of the message
2. Relationships fail
3. The slowing down of business and not meeting business targets
4. It will be difficult to get decisions made
5. Miscommunication may result in misinformation
6. Customers/suppliers may experience difficulties as a result of slow action
7. Impact on motivations and morale, accept also demotivation

2 marks per point up to 8 marks

(b) Your main responsibility is to update the NORDIC website. List six criteria you would use to evaluate the effectiveness of the current website for the departmental heads meeting on the 6 November. [6 × 1 = 6]

Navigation
Transaction capability
Organisational relevance of information
Accessibility
Usability
Transparency
General attractiveness and presentation of the website
Accept feedback but not cost effectiveness

1 mark for any of the above = 6 marks

(c) The Board of Directors' meeting will involve both verbal and non-verbal language. Explain the meaning of each of the following. Give one example of each.

(i) paralanguage [3]

(ii) oral [3]

Paralanguage: how to use gestures, glances, slight changes in tone of voice, and other auxiliary communication devices to alter or emphasize what we say and do. Paralanguage is often more important in communication than what is actually being said orally. It has been suggested that as much as 70% of what we communicate when talking directly with others is through paralanguage.

Oral: Oral communication describes any type of inter-action that makes use of spoken words, and it is a vital, integral part of the modern business world

2 marks for explanation and 1 mark for example

[Total: 20]

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2 You have been asked to prepare for the Board of Directors' Meeting.

- (a) Write a letter to Yuen Chen, asking him to attend the meeting. You will need to add any other necessary information. [12]**

The letter should conform to the following format:

- Logo and letterhead of the company (1)
- Date and letter heading – Meeting etc (1)
- Address of company (1)
- Address of Yuen Chen (1)
- Appropriate salutation Dear Mr Chen/ or Dear Yuen (1)
- The body/content of the letter – present at the Board of Directors Meeting.(1)
- Will need to arrive the day before and stay for the week and the arrangements made (2)
- Explanation of the meeting (1) and Agenda enclosed (1)
- Appropriate closure (1)
- Signature and position David Chui (1)
- Response mechanism (1)

6 marks for layout

6 marks for content

- (b) Write an email to all the Heads of Department in Oslo, asking them to attend the meeting on 6 November at 3pm. [8]**

To (1)

From (1)

Date (1)

Heading (1)

Content – date and time of meeting (1). Attendance and a reply is expected (1)

Appropriate closure including signature (1)

Agenda Attached (1)

4 marks for layout and 4 marks for content.

[Total: 20]

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3 Preparations are now being made for the Board of Directors meeting on 5 November.

(a) Explain the role of the Chairperson before the meeting. [4]

An agenda to be prepared and who should be invited to the meeting and their role in the meeting

A notice of the meeting sent out

To book venue and order catering if required

Collect all papers and documents required for the meeting and photocopy sufficient copies

Print off previous meeting minutes

(b) Explain the role of the Chairperson during the meeting. [6]

To chair the meeting and keep order

Allow attendees to give their opinion

Ensure minutes are taken with any actions to be completed

Check that actions from previous minutes have been completed

Keep within time frame

Time and location for next meeting decided

Prioritising Agenda items

1 mark for any of the above

(c) Explain how the following technology could be used to support the staff at the new store in Beijing and also the suppliers who have to meet the delivery deadlines. Give two advantages of each type of technology.

(i) intranet for employee communication [5]

(ii) extranet for communication with the suppliers [5]

Intranet holds information which is accessible for all employees – password protected information

In all sections/offices/locations (worldwide) of the organisation

Advantage – easy for staff to access a large range of current information

Quick for staff to access information and update details

3 marks for the explanation and 1 mark for each advantage up to 2 marks

Extranet – password protected area of the Intranet which retailers/suppliers can access, which allows suppliers to update their stock levels and check sales.

Advantage – builds trust and support for the suppliers and ensures that stock levels are kept high to meet the sales demands

3 marks for the explanation and 1 mark for each advantage up to 2 marks

[Total: 20]

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4 Anna Lee has contacted you to ask you to draw up a recruitment procedure for the new store.

(a) Prepare five instruction points that should be followed in order to ensure that the recruitment interviews are successful.

Plan the interview – short list using selection criteria (person specification) (1)
 Who is going to be involved, location, timing, structure (1)
 Preparation of questions – open, closed, scenario based etc.(2)
 – two way communication (1)
 Set criteria and structure the opening, body and close of the interview and set appropriate timings (2)
 Recording mechanisms and the use of selection criteria for each interview to ensure unbiased decisions for recruitment interviews (2)
 How to determine who to accept for the role and how to write acceptance and rejection letters appropriately (1)

Level 1: Demonstrates a limited knowledge and understanding (1-3 marks)
 Level 2: Demonstrates a clearer understanding of the planning stages (4-7 marks)
 Level 3: Demonstrates a full and detailed analysis of the stages (8-10 marks)

[5 × 2 = 10]

(b) Apart from recruitment interviews identify and explain three other types of interviews.

[3 × 2 = 6]

Performance appraisal review – is a meeting with a line manager to discuss performance and goals

Counselling - Counselling interviews are used where a change of attitude or behaviour is required.

Discipline – deals with unacceptable behaviour by an employee. May lead to the dismissal of the employee

Exit / Termination interviews - Exit interviews are seen as good employment practice, giving employees an opportunity for closure and employers a chance to gain valuable feedback on their organisation.

Medical Interviews / Return to work interviews – where the employee has been off sick. Can the company support etc.

No marks for **Induction interviews**

(c) Explain two different types of question which can be used in a recruitment interview.

Closed questions (usually requires one specific answer)
 Use of leading questions (generally leads the interviewee in a particular fashion)
 Use of open questions (allows interviewee to open up and allow maximum freedom to answer and respond)
 Hypothetical questions (setting a scenario in which the interviewee has to assume what they would do if the scenario situation prevailed)
 1 mark for identification 1 mark for definition

[2 × 2 = 4]

[Total: 20]

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- 5 (a) **Yuen Chen will be expected to complete a monthly report. Identify the report structure and briefly explain what the content of the report might include.** [10]

Report Headings

To/From

Date

Terms of reference

Body of report – would be under headings for example staff (this would include sickness levels) Sales and costs per day (including staff costs). Security level of theft/shrinkage. Could include training courses. Any problems with the building etc.

Conclusion

Recommendations

Appendix

Bibliography

7 marks for each of the report headings and three marks for an overview of the content

Needs to include Title and Contents Page but not necessarily an introduction

- (b) **David Chui has asked you to prepare a graphical presentation for the Board of Directors showing the sales of the five best performing stores in the group. Suggest the best type of graph for use as a visual aid. Provide one advantage and one disadvantage of this graph.** [5]

Bar Chart; bars have an individual identity either by name or with use of a key; possible use of three dimensions and colour to enhance visual impact.

Advantages

- show each data category in a frequency distribution
- display relative numbers or proportions of multiple categories
- summarise a large data set in visual form
- clarify trends better than do tables
- estimate key values at a glance
- permit a visual check of the accuracy and reasonableness of calculations
- be easily understood due to widespread use in business and the media

Disadvantages

- require additional explanation
- be easily manipulated to yield false impressions
- fail to reveal key assumptions, causes, effects, or patterns

- (c) **Explain the use of Gantt charts and how they can help in planning complex events such as opening a new store.** [5]

A Gantt chart lets you see immediately what should have been achieved at any point in time. A Gantt chart lets you see how remedial action may bring the project back on course. Most Gantt charts include "milestones" which are technically not available on Gantt charts. However, for representing deadlines and other significant events, it is very useful to include this feature on a Gantt chart.

[Total: 20]