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CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

BUSINESS

05834−05837, 05878

Unit 15 January 2022 series

Contents

Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

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Unit 15 series overview

During this series, examiners have seen candidates engage well with the context of a public sector business. The data in Resources 1 and 2 have been used well by many candidates to contextualise their answers. The majority of candidates demonstrated a broad knowledge of content from the specification and were able to apply that knowledge to the specific issue raised in each question. The best scripts used contextualised analysis as the basis for justified judgements.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
• showed a broad knowledge of the content of the unit • demonstrated an understanding of the relevant resource material by providing contextualised answers • showed an ability to understand how different aspects of change management will impact on a specific business.	• did not recognise the focus of specific questions • were not able to contextualise responses adequately • did not make justified judgements that related to business impact.

This paper contained three high tariff extended response question, each worth 16 marks. Marking of these questions was based on levels of response. Level 1, 1-4 marks, was based on knowledge, Level 2, 5-8 marks, was based on understanding. Level 3, 9-12 marks, was based on analysis and Level 4, 13-16 marks, was based on evaluation. Candidates aiming to achieve the highest marks needed to make sure that their answers developed evaluative points based on sound analysis of the knowledge relevant to the question. A structured approach to responses tended to yield the highest responses, with the majority of successful candidates exploring the topic of each question issue by issue. Selective use of the relevant resource was also key to this success.

Consideration of the impact on a business is necessary to achieve analysis marks
Where candidates are aiming to achieve higher marks on the three high tariff questions, their responses must be analytical. In order to be awarded analysis marks, the responses must consider the impact of an aspect of change management on the business.
Generic phrases such as 'this will save the business money' will not count as analytical without some clear reference to an aspect of the change discussed in the relevant resource material, showing how the aspect of change management being discussed will have that impact.
Directionality is also important. Phrases such as 'this will affect costs' are too vague. Candidates must correctly specify how costs might be affected. For example, for Question 1(c), candidates may have noted that the change in physical resource needs will require the business to buy new equipment such as headsets, leading to an increase in one off costs. This would allow the candidate to access Level 3 marks.

Key point call out

Evaluation marks require a conclusion containing a justified judgement.

While many candidates seem to recognise that they need to sum up their answers in a final paragraph, a number made generic throw away remarks such as 'this will be bad for the business'. This is not sufficient to achieve Level 4 marks. Candidates should use some evidence to justify these judgements. For example, for Question 2(b), candidates may note the difficulty in accessing supervisors to help deal with complaints. They may then link this to the business receiving more complaints to achieve a Level 3 mark. To extend this into a Level 4 answer, candidates would need to explain that a rise in complaints would be bad for the business, as, for example, this may lead to an increase in costs due to the need to devote resources such as staff to dealing with the complaints.

Question 1 (a)

Use the information provided in the **Resource Booklet** to answer the following questions.

1   Refer to **Resource 1**.

    (a) Explain **two** drivers of change at *Rushworth Council.*

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      2 ....

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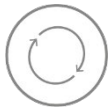
      [4]

Questions 1(a),(b),(c) and (d) in this paper should be answered with reference to Resource 1. This relates to the pre change phase of the Rushworth Council scenario.

This question tested knowledge of drivers of change; it required candidates to identify relevant drivers from the resource material. In this case, there were three possible drivers: changes in technology; reduced budgets and the need to provide a service.

While most candidates seemed able to score 2 marks on this question by identifying relevant drivers to change, few candidates were able to achieve 3 or 4 marks on this question.

Achieving the development marks for each point required candidates to explain the driver of change that they had identified in context. For example, changes in technology had to be linked to the practicality of working from home. Many candidates did not gain extra marks on this question because their development points were generic or not related to the case study.

	AfL	Centres are advised that candidates should be given opportunities to practise writing contextualised responses. These responses should focus on identifying relevant information in data and applying it to short answer questions such as these. For example, looking for a reason why a specific driver of change is relevant to a specific business.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Sam is organising a training course to show the employees in the Customer Contact Centre how to use *Rushworth Council*'s new homeworking software.

Sam is considering the following training options:

Option A	Option B
• A full day, face-to-face meeting at a luxury hotel in a city centre 10 miles from the council offices	• An Internet-based training course, accessed from home, which must be completed within seven days
• Includes one 3-hour presentation delivered by an IT security specialist from the local university, followed by two group workshops	• Includes three pre-recorded presentations produced by Ling
• Includes a buffet lunch	• Requires each worker to complete an online test to check that the training has been completed and understood

Advise Sam which of these two training options is the most suitable. Justify your view.

[16]

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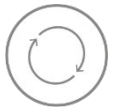

Question 1(b) was the first of three 16 mark questions on this paper. This question was marked using levels of responses.

This question requires candidates to make a choice of the most suitable training option to support a move to homeworking. While there was no overall right choice for the business, the answer given had to draw on the data provided and should make accurate use of business theory.

A Level 1 response requires candidates to identify a benefit or drawback of one of the training options. For example, they may have noted that the luxury hotel option might have made workers feel that management took the change seriously due to making such a big investment in the change. To develop a response to Level 2 and 3, candidates should have considered the impact of this on the council. Developing an advantage to consider an impact of an advantage or disadvantage on council workers was awarded a Level 2 mark.

A response which considered how a benefit or drawback might affect the business was awarded a Level 3 mark. For example, many candidates noted that, while the money spent on the training might have impressed workers, the council has a limited budget and this expensive option will have left them with less money to spend on essential services. A Level 4 mark required a concluding paragraph that noted the overall choice by candidates – why should the council choose one option and why should they reject the other.

⟳	**AfL**	Centres are advised that candidates should practise extended response questions where a choice between contrasting options is required.
		Candidates should practise making a justified choice of one options over the other.
		Evidence from the relevant resource material should be used to support this response.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Kofi has been considering how *Rushworth Council*'s resource needs for property, equipment and other physical resources will change once Customer Contact Centre employees are working from home.

Evaluate how the introduction of homeworking for Customer Contact Centre employees is likely to impact on *Rushworth Council*'s physical resource needs.

[16]

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This question required candidates to evaluate the impact of the change to home working on physical resource needs. A common mistake made by candidates was to confuse physical resources with other types of resource such as financial or human resources. In those cases, answers were not relevant and candidates were not able to achieve any marks.

This question allowed candidates to take three approaches: that there would be a positive change, e.g. the cost of renting a car park would not be required; a negative change, e.g. that the business would need to acquire extra resources such as headsets and laptops, or that there would be no change, for example that the business would still need stationery, but would need to send this to employees homes instead of their offices.

Candidates who performed well on this question tended to weight up three or more changes in resource needs and these were linked to a clear impact on the business. For example, the closure of the customer contact centre, which the business owned, would allow this asset to be sold, reducing the impact of the cut in government funding.

?	**Misconception**	Many candidates confused physical resource needs with other type of resources or tried to contrast changes in physical resources with other types of resource. Candidates should be reminded to read questions carefully and make sure that they are clear about the focus of each question.

Question 1 (d)

(d) Identify **two** barriers to change at *Rushworth Council*.

1 ....

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2 ....

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[2]

This question required candidates to select two barriers to change from the data in Resource 1. Most candidates were able to correctly identify two barriers to change. Based on the data, from examples such as stakeholder fear and the failure of a previous change.

A minority of candidates confused barriers to change with drivers of change, giving answers such as budget cuts.

?	**Misconception**	Candidates should be prepared to differentiate between barriers to change and drivers of change. In particular, they should be given opportunities to practise locating evidence of different drivers of and barriers to change in a resource document. It is possible that not all of the barriers and drivers from the specification will be relevant to every scenario.

Question 2 (a)

2   Refer to **Resource 2**.

(a) Explain **one** reason why *Rushworth Council* needs to monitor its change management process.

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.... **[2]**

Question 2(a), (b) and (c) all related to the post change phase of the Rushworth Council scenario.

Question 2(a) required candidates to give a reason why the Rushworth Council change management program needed to be monitored. Most candidates were able to give a valid reason for monitoring the change such as ensuring that it is successful. Few candidates were able to achieve a second mark for this item, as they did not contextualise their responses. Most candidates gave a generic development of their point such as ensuring that the change is successful so that business goals are achieved. In order to achieve a second mark, responses needed to be linked to the context of a council that is changing to a homeworking model.

| ? | **Misconception** | Candidates should be aware that a 2 mark question requiring an explanation of one point will only be awarded a second mark if there is evidence of contextualised development. |
| | | Opportunities to practise this type of response and exemplification of good contextualised development would help candidates gain extra marks on this type of item. |

Question 2 (b)

(b) Using **Resource 2**, analyse the unresolved issues *Rushworth Council* needs to address to keep its change management process on track.

Which of these issues is the most important? Justify your answer.

[16]

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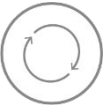
This was the final extended response item on this paper. On the whole, candidates gave good answers, correctly identifying a range of unresolved issues from the Resource 2 data. Issues such as reductions in productivity and increases in time taken to locate a supervisor were accurately identified for Level 1 marks, supported with relevant evidence from data form Level 2 marks and linked to business impacts, such as increases in the number of complaints for Level 3 marks. Level 3 responses required evidence of analysis, showing a cause and effect relationship between the unresolved issue and a business impact for the council. For example, there would need to be a clear link drawn between calls being cut off an increase in customer complaints.

Level 4 marks were awarded to candidates who made a justified judgement about which unresolved issue was the most significant. Many candidates were unable to achieve a Level 4 mark because they simply ranked the unresolved issues or picked one as being the most significant without any supporting evidence to back up their judgement.

| ↻ | **AfL** | Centres are advised that candidates should be given opportunities to practise selecting evidence from a relevant resource and using it to support a justified judgement. |
| | | Ranking issues with reasons given for decisions would be a good practice exercise that would help candidates prepare to access Level 4 marks on this type of question. |

Question 2 (c)

(c) *Rushworth Council's* Planning Department has been selected as the next department to be required to work from home.

Identify **two** soft elements of McKinsey's 7-S model of change management. In each case, give an example of an appropriate action that *Rushworth Council* could take to support the success of this change.

Soft element 1 ....

Action ....

....

....

Soft element 2 ....

Action ....

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[4]

Overall, this question was well answered; most candidates were able to name one, and in many cases two, soft elements of the 7-S model. Answers such as Skills and Shared Values were especially popular.

Very few candidates achieved 3 or 4 marks for this question. Many responses simply explained what the chosen element of the model meant without making any link to the context. For example, generic descriptions of what skills means, for example that is the competencies of workers within the business, was not sufficient to achieve a second mark as there was not link to the context of Rushworth Council. Expanding this point to relate it to the skills needed for homeworking, for example, would have been enough to achieve an additional mark.

	AfL	Where a question asks for a response related to a specific business, candidates should be prepared to give an explanation that is related explicitly to that business or its stakeholders, depending on the focus of the question. Candidates should be given opportunities to practise questions such as this.

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