GCSE

Applied Business (Double Award)

Report on the Units

June 2007

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GCSE Applied Business (1491)

REPORT ON THE UNITS

Report on the Units taken in June 2007

1491 GCSE in Applied Business

Chief Examiners Report

There is evidence from this session that Centres have made good use of the support offered by OCR to assist in the delivery and assessment of this qualification. Exemplification of the assessment criteria for Units 1 and 2 can be found on the OCR website and this information is vital for new Centres or new assessors within established Centres. INSET courses will run during autumn 2007 and spring 2008 for both new and established Centres. These will provide teachers with useful feedback from the moderation and examination session of June 2007, as well as providing the opportunity to discuss specific issues which may have arisen from teaching and learning within the qualification. Few Centres chose to attend the INSET on offer last year and this may have affected the quality of the assessment of coursework this session.

The main issues from June 2007 which Centres need to consider in preparation for the January 2008 session are as follows:

For the coursework units:

- despite being highlighted in every Principal Moderator's report, some Centres are still not completing the Assessment Recording Sheets fully for each portfolio. Deadlines for submission of marks and sample portfolios are also being missed;
- some candidates are still including class notes, task sheets and research pages in their portfolios, making it difficult to find and check the actual work. This wastes time and must be discouraged;
- whilst work has clearly been done to help stronger candidates to access marks at AO2 and AO3, this has often been to the detriment of work produced for AO1. In some Centres, the quality and quantity of work produced at the lower skill levels was far from acceptable and suggests that some Centres are trying to 'play the system' and abuse the 'determining the mark' grid. This may improve overall results slightly for league tables but it must have a detrimental effect on the teaching and learning experience for the candidates concerned and the balance needs to be redressed.

For the examination:

- whilst each session highlights improved areas of knowledge being demonstrated by candidates, there are still some aspects of the specification which are not being covered fully enough by some Centres;
- where candidates have been taught examination techniques in order to attempt higher level responses, there is a marked increase in the number of higher marks being awarded. This is a practice which needs to be followed by more Centres;
- more candidates are making good use of the context contained within the questions on the paper. This is allowing them to attain higher marks within the mark range;
- there is a marked improvement amongst candidates in accurately recording dates and other easily avoidable errors. Centres are making good use of Principal Examiner reports to identify areas of weakness and develop strategies for improvement.

The following reports give more specific feedback on both the moderation and examination sessions and also offer useful advice on how to improve performance. If Centres address the issues highlighted, and incorporate changes and improvements into their schemes of work, it is expected that candidate performance will be greatly enhanced.

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Principal Moderator's Report 4863 & 4864

General Comments

Administration

Moderators were in agreement that those Centres which followed OCR procedures, adhered to set deadlines and accurately completed documentation enabled the moderation process to progress smoothly. However, many Centres did not adhere to the 15 May deadline for the receipt of the completed MS1 forms by the allocated Moderator and failed to inform OCR or the Moderator of the delay. This did cause difficulty for Moderators in the scheduling of their work. Centres should note that it is their responsibility to forward MS1 forms and candidate work to the allocated Moderator by the set deadlines, eg the sample must be sent within three days of receiving the sample request. Centres should also note that their failure to meet such deadlines could delay the receipt of results for their candidates.

Where there are 10 or fewer candidates for any unit, Centres are required to send the candidate portfolios with the MS1 forms to the Moderator.

Centres must ensure that all sections of the Unit Recording Sheet have been completed accurately, including correct total marks for the unit, candidate number and Centre number, teacher comments and location of evidence, in order to facilitate the moderation process.

Some Centres recorded marks on MS1 forms which were different from those entered on the Unit Recording Sheets. This did cause delays. Centres must ensure the marks on the MS1 form match the marks on the Unit Recording Sheet for each candidate and for each unit.

Centres must ensure that a Centre Authentication Form for Coursework (CCS160) has been signed by the Internal Assessor(s) for each unit and included with the candidate portfolios.

In some instances the packing of parcels was inadequate to protect candidates' work. Sometimes this resulted in damage occurring during transit.

Assessment

Assessors are required to make assessment decisions for each strand within each unit using the Determining the Mark grids for Units 1 and 2 (see attached grids). Some Centres incorrectly allocated marks for each level within a strand and then added these marks up to produce a strand total. This total is often different from the Moderator's total and this can result in the adjustment of a Centre's marks, sometimes positively.

Many Assessors demonstrated good practice by annotating candidate work with assessment criteria references and by giving clear and constructive written feedback which related to the assessment criteria. It is advisable that assessment decisions should only be made when supported by clear evidence within the portfolios – hopefully by using annotation to indicate its location. The teacher comments section of the Unit Recording Sheet enabled Assessors to justify the marks awarded for each strand. Many candidates had been encouraged to present work logically and clearly, strand by strand, using headings, emboldening, page numbers and a contents sheet. It was also helpful when page numbers were included within the location section of the Unit Recording Sheet. However, some Assessors failed to provide written comments or annotate candidate work. In these circumstances it was not clear to the Moderator how assessment decisions had been made.

Some Centres provided copies of internal moderation records, which were most useful and helped the moderation process. Internal moderation is crucial to ensure consistent assessment practice and decisions across Assessors and units within a Centre and is the key to good practice. However, there was, in some cases, limited evidence of internal moderation having taken place.

Where assignments had been used, it was most helpful for copies to be submitted with the actual work. This gave a clear indication of the tasks which were given to candidates. Good practice in assignment design included breaking down the unit into a number of tasks for each strand. OCR training events focus on good practice in delivery, portfolio building and assessment.

Moderation takes place in January and June each year. Centres are advised to use these opportunities, thereby receiving feedback on the quality of assessment throughout the programme. Centres have reported that this practice acts as a motivator for the candidates, as well as providing feedback to Assessors.

Lenient assessment decisions had been made by some Assessors for a variety of reasons. Some leniency was the result of misunderstanding of the assessment criteria, eg Unit 1, C2. Leniency was also apparent where candidates had not applied their knowledge to the business under investigation and had merely regurgitated textbook theory. This is not sufficient. In addition to content coverage, candidates need to demonstrate skills as per the trigger words in the assessment criteria, eg explain, analyse, evaluate. Some Assessors awarded marks for an assessment criterion, eg Unit 1, B3, even though candidates had not evaluated effectiveness. As a consequence, marks from some Centres have been adjusted.

Some Centres awarded quality judgement marks to candidates when the work submitted was quite clearly not of sufficient quality for such marks to be awarded. This lenient practice can easily lead to marks moving out of tolerance and being adjusted. Quality judgement marks should only be awarded where quality is obvious.

It is the responsibility of Assessors to ensure that each candidate has produced authentic/original evidence. A Centre Authentication Form for Coursework must be signed by the Assessor(s) and must accompany the candidates' coursework. Where entire cohorts use the same business(es), there is a tendency for the same inputs to be used in many, if not all, portfolios. It is, therefore, difficult to assess whether work is a candidate's own or is plagiarised/shared/copied. For Unit 1, the model outlined on page 50 of the Guidance for Teachers should be considered.

Where web-based case studies were used, there was a tendency for candidates' work to be very similar to the content of the case study: this was especially true, for example, of the Richer Sounds website. Candidates must interpret the information in their own words rather than merely copying and pasting. They must ensure that sources are correctly attributed. The inclusion of a resource list is deemed to be good practice. Where material is taken directly from the source, candidates must supplement with their own explanation, demonstrating their understanding. Where candidate work contains inaccuracies, Assessors should annotate the work to this effect, thus enhancing the candidate's own learning.

UNIT 1: INVESTIGATING BUSINESS

The banner of the assessment evidence grid requires candidates to investigate two contrasting businesses. In order to facilitate the evidencing of A2, the businesses should ideally have a range of contrasts, eg industrial sector, type of ownership, activities, size (see Guidance for Teachers on page 51).

The general weakness in this unit was the lack of application of theory to the two contrasting businesses. Many candidates have attempted the unit without conducting sufficient research. Some Centres relied on the websites of large organisations, which often contain insufficient information for the Level 2 and Level 3 criteria.

STRAND A

A1   Candidates are required to describe each of the four features of their two chosen businesses. Some candidates produced very brief evidence in a bullet point list. This format <u>identified</u> features rather than <u>described</u> them. Aims and objectives were frequently copied, rather than described in the candidates' own words. Location was the weakest feature with many instances of evidence merely comprising a map and address. Good evidence for location comprised a map showing the location of the business, its address and a description of the factors which affected its location (see What You Need To Learn, page 41). The descriptions of ownership should demonstrate understanding of limited/unlimited liability.

A2   Comparisons of the four features varied greatly. Where the features of the two businesses were similar, eg ownership or activities, candidates struggled to identify differences. Some candidates merely repeated the descriptions provided for A1 but this was insufficient evidence for a comparison. Candidates are required to clearly show the similarities <u>and</u> differences. Many comparisons were weak, with evidence comprising a table which merely repeated the A1 evidence, without highlighting the similarities and differences. A table usually requires additional paragraphs which clearly draw out the similarities and differences of the four features. Terminology indicating comparison may include similarities, differences, both, whereas, however. Candidates may find it helpful to include headings. Examples include:
ownership – liabilities and losses, decision making;
location – closeness to suppliers, skilled labour, transport links.

A3   Candidates are required to suggest and <u>justify</u> <u>realistic</u> changes which each business could make to each of the four features to enable each business to be more effective. Many candidates failed to achieve this criterion as they made suggestions which were unrealistic or lacked justification. Some candidates provided justified suggestions, but then did not show how the changes could enable the business to be more effective. For location, candidates may find it more realistic to suggest and justify improvement to a site rather than relocation, eg improved car parking arrangements, improved access and exit routes, improved signposting.

Some candidates made suggestions and gave the advantages and disadvantages to the businesses. However, they did not give a 'benefits will outweigh costs' conclusion, so it was not clear how the suggestions made the business more effective.

STRAND B

B1   Candidates are required to describe (not list) the type of work carried out by at least three functional areas of <u>one</u> of their chosen businesses. The Guidance for Teachers, page 52, states that human resources <u>and</u> customer service should be excluded as these are covered in detail in Unit 2. Some candidates provided weak evidence which was theoretical and not related to their chosen business and demonstrated limited research. Some candidates used sole traders. This is not to be recommended, as they rarely have operating functional areas. Evidence must be related to the chosen business.

B2   In order to achieve this criterion, candidates must use examples of specific activities within the business to explain how at least three functional areas work together to support the business activity. Frequently, candidates discussed how each functional area supported the business activity, rather than showing the linkages of how the three work together. Those candidates who had carried out detailed research were able to explain, using examples of specific activities or scenarios, how the functional areas worked together, eg opening a new retail outlet, launching a new product, a new marketing campaign. The use of scenarios proved to be a successful approach. However, many candidates only focused on two functional areas, rather than three.

B3   Candidates are required to build on their evidence from B2 to evaluate (make judgements based on research) how <u>effectively</u> the three functional areas work together to achieve the aims and objectives. Candidates should include figures to support judgements, eg profit, sales, market share, customer complaints. Some candidates who were successful in achieving the criterion presented their evidence using headings for each aim and objective described in A1. Under each heading they evaluated the effectiveness of the three functional areas <u>working together</u> to achieve each specific aim and objective.

Many candidates who attempted this criterion failed to evaluate the effectiveness or attempted to evaluate how each individual functional area helped to achieve the aims and objectives, rather than the three working together. There was little evidence that these candidates had any experience of the business studied and so no evidence was collected to support judgements of effectiveness. B3 should be about <u>proving</u> that the functional areas explained in B2 are successfully doing the job they worked on together, eg the new product was launched successfully. This should be supported by evidence, eg sales figures.

STRAND C

C1   Generally, candidates were able to <u>describe</u> the oral, written and ICT methods of communication, using examples from the chosen business. However, some candidates merely listed methods of communication lifted from a textbook, with little reference to the chosen business. Many failed to describe, with examples, how the business uses ICT to <u>operate,</u> eg stock control via the barcode scanning system (EPOS). Where candidates had included the administration/ICT functional area in B1, some of the evidence could be cross referenced to C1. Evidence must be related to the selected business.

C2   Those candidates who were successful in achieving this criterion tended to use headings as per the three bullet points. The layout of evidence tended to impact on candidates' success in achieving C2. They then analysed the effectiveness of the communication methods described in C1 in relation to each of the bullet points. Evidence was strengthened when candidates analysed specific examples of communication within named functional areas or between named functional areas. Candidates could refer back to the three functional areas in B1 and B2 respectively. For example, they could analyse the effectiveness of communication within the finance functional area and the marketing

functional area. They could then analyse the effectiveness of communication between the finance, marketing and ICT functional areas.

Many candidates experienced difficulty in analysing the effectiveness of the business' communication methods; possibly because they had no experience of them. Analysis was weak because of the theoretical nature of most of the work. Some candidates explained why the method was used rather than looking at the effectiveness of methods in terms of communicating intended message/information. Candidates could use a range of criteria to analyse effectiveness of the communication methods used, eg speed, cost, confidentiality, written record.

C3 Candidates are required to build on their analysis in C2 in order to suggest and justify alternative or improved methods of communication in relation to the three bullet points. Again, the use of headings as per the three bullet points proved helpful to candidates.

Candidates frequently suggested improvements which lacked justification or were not always justified in terms of improved communication within the business. Suggestions were not always realistic, were not based on the analysis in C2 or did not relate to the three bullet points. In these circumstances, the criterion had not been achieved. Some candidates' suggestions were already in existence, eg Sainsbury's online shopping. Candidates must make realistic suggestions for alternative or improved methods of communication, based on the analysis in C2, which are not currently being carried out within the business. This criterion requires detail, which was lacking in many portfolios.

STRAND D

D1 The majority of candidates were able to identify the main external influences, ie competitors and economic conditions for each of the two chosen businesses. Candidates often described the influences in some depth, as preparation for D2. However, many candidates have difficulty in relating environmental constraints to their chosen businesses (see What You Need To Learn, page 47). Assessors must ensure that weaker candidates clearly identify the competitors of each business. Location is not a requirement of D1 as this is evidenced in A1.

D2 In order to achieve D2, candidates must state a change for each of the external influences for each business and then explain the <u>impact</u> which these changes would have on the two chosen businesses. For example, if interest rates were to rise, it could mean that fewer people would purchase their products as they had less disposable income. It could also mean that any plans for further expansion which required external borrowing would have to be put on hold for the immediate future. Many candidates failed to explain the <u>impact</u> of changes on environmental constraints. For competitors, a change a competitor has made is needed rather than changes which the chosen businesses have made and how they have affected competitors. An example would be the impact on the chosen business if a competitor reduced its prices. For environmental constraints the use of scenarios may be helpful to candidates, eg what would happen if the government changed the legislation on recycling, pollution, congestion charges.

D3 Candidates must achieve D2 before proceeding to D3. In order to achieve D3, candidates are required to suggest and <u>justify</u> realistic ways in which the two chosen businesses could respond to the changes explained in D2. They must link their evidence to the changes and impact explained in D2. Weaker candidates put forward unjustified or unconvincing suggestions and failed to differentiate between the businesses. Some candidates gave suggestions which reflected what the business had already done; not what it should do in response to the changes explained in D2. Some candidates linked the D2/D3 evidence for each external influence for each business, eg change, impact, response, reasons.

UNIT 2: PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

STRAND A

A1   The majority of candidates were able to identify the stakeholders in their chosen business. Many candidates described the stakeholders in preparation for evidencing A2. However, some candidates gave generic lists which did not specifically relate to the chosen business.

A2   Candidates are required to explain the nature of stakeholders' interests. For example, employees would be interested in their rates of pay, how much profit the business was making, possible plans for expansion or a reduction in the workforce. Customers would be interested in the price of the products, when the business was open, when the service was available, after-sales service, etc. Some candidates explained their role in the business rather than what they wanted from the business. Other candidates explained why the business was interested in them rather than their interest in the business. A paragraph could be produced on each stakeholder, eg customers expect … ; employees expect … ; shareholders expect … .

A3   Many candidates experienced difficulty in evaluating (judgement based on research) the extent to which each stakeholder has an influence on the business and how <u>it operates</u>. Candidates must show how likely it is that each stakeholder can cause the business to change, relative to other stakeholders. Many candidates did not show the extent to which one stakeholder is more powerful or more likely than the others to cause change in the business. One particularly successful approach was the use of a series of scenarios related to the business, eg deciding whether to stop selling a product or service. The candidates then had to rank the stakeholders in the order of the likelihood of their views being taken into account. Candidates then justified their ranking decisions using evidence gained from the study of their chosen business. Candidates must evaluate the influence, ie the order of importance of the stakeholders' influence.

STRAND B

B1   Candidates tended to briefly describe the roles of three people in the business, ie what they actually do. Frequently, there was little differentiation of levels of responsibility. For example, they would describe a till operator, a shelf stacker and a cleaner rather than a manager, a supervisor and operative. Assessors should refer to page 76 of the Guidance for Teachers. Candidates must explain key responsibilities; tasks/activities; job security; decision-making and problem solving; skills, qualifications and personal qualities required; related pay and benefits.

B2   Candidates are required to <u>explain</u> the content of the contract of employment <u>for one of the three people described in B1</u>. However, many candidates gave generic explanations and did not relate the contract to one of the three people described in B1. Conversely, many candidates submitted a completed contract without <u>explaining</u> it. In order to achieve B2, candidates must explain each section of the contract of employment. It would be helpful if candidates included a copy of the contract of employment with their explanations.

B3   The evaluation of the contract tended to be seen only from the employee's standpoint. Candidates failed to evaluate how well the contract met the needs of the business. Changes to the contract of employment were suggested but not justified. Candidates should clearly explain the purpose of the changes and how they would help the employee <u>and</u> the business. Many candidates who attempted an evaluation tended to describe how the contract was perfect and then recommended changes which contradicted this view.

Candidates should give positive and negative features for the business and the employees, eg ways in which the contract is good/not helpful to the business/employees; ways in which the contract could be improved with reasons.

STRAND C

C1 Candidates were able to clearly describe the rights of employees but often failed to use examples from the selected business. A description of the rights of employers was frequently omitted. Weaker candidates produced generic descriptions, with no reference to the selected business or listed rather than described. A useful format is:
employers should … this means that … for example …
employees should …this means that … for example …

C2 The evidence for this criterion was generally weak. The grievance procedure was often included but not clearly explained in the selected business, nor the influences of trade unions and ACAS. Some candidates provided generic explanations or the procedures used to resolve disagreements were outside the context of their selected business. Where procedures were explained for resolving disagreements, candidates usually neglected to use <u>examples</u> from the business to show how these worked in practice. The use of scenarios could help candidates to achieve this criterion, eg pay, equal opportunities issues, lateness to work, bullying. The inclusion of a flowchart would support the explanation.

C3 Candidates experienced difficulty in evaluating the extent to which their business ensures good working relationships; possibly because they had limited observations and information to which they could refer to. Some candidates outlined how different employers looked after their employees, but forgot to evaluate – why do they do it and what does it achieve in the long run?

Working relationships proved to be a difficult concept for some candidates who discussed rather than evaluated relationships in a broader way than was asked for in C3. Often candidates described what the employers did in order to try to establish good working relationships. They rarely evaluated these actions, eg using a survey to find out whether they worked. Issues could include absenteeism, staff turnover, pay, working conditions, fringe benefits, regular training, regular appraisals, detailed contracts, bonuses, company pension schemes, discounts, free admission, clear grievance procedure, no records of ACAS involvement, suggestion boxes.

STRAND D

D1 Many candidates produced flowcharts with no description of what happened at each stage. Many candidates who did describe the recruitment process failed to describe the selection process. Some candidates produced textbook theory, with very little application to the selected business.

D2 Those candidates, who described in detail the recruitment and selection process for the selected business in D1, were able to explain why the business used the procedures, together with relevant legislation. Candidates must explain why each stage of the process is used by the selected business, eg why Sainsburys does this, how does the business carry out this part of the process.

D3 Many candidates struggled to evaluate the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process. They suggested improvements to procedures but tended not to recommend improvements to documentation. The inclusion of copies of recruitment documentation

would facilitate the evaluation and suggested improvements. Few candidates gave evidence to support evaluation such as turnover of staff, number of people responding to advertisements, number of vacancies, on-line application forms.

STRAND E

E1 Many candidates did not demonstrate an understanding of the training and appraisal processes related to the selected business and generic descriptions were frequently provided. Candidates should have described the process that their chosen business follows for each of the five bullet points - not merely stating why training and appraisals are carried out in the business. Many candidates only covered one or two of the bullet points, demonstrating very little understanding of how training and appraisal were conducted within their chosen business.

E2 As a result of the weak evidence for E1, E2 evidence was generally poor. Many candidates only commented on how training helped people work more effectively and not how it helped maintain a safe and secure working environment. Generic explanations were frequently produced, rather than an analysis of the effectiveness of procedures. An effective approach was to use headings, eg appraisal and performance review – advantages and disadvantages. Another approach is to use headings as per the five bullet points and analyse under subheadings, eg how this helps people to do their jobs better; how this helps people to do their jobs more safely.

E3 Where E1 and E2 evidence was weak, candidates did not provide sufficient evidence for E3. They struggled to improve on the training procedures because they had often covered all possibilities in their textbook responses to E1. In some Centres, candidates tended to include the same improvements. Generally, suggestions were not built on the analysis in E2 or were not justified. Alternative or additional procedures were required which might improve the effectiveness of employees and the safety of the working environment. Unrealistic suggestions were made by some candidates.

STRAND F

F1 Generally, candidates provided a great deal of evidence to describe the rights of customers under consumer law, but failed to identify the features within their chosen business which contributed towards good customer service. Some candidates identified the features within the business which contributed towards good customer service but failed to describe the rights of customers under consumer law. Both sections of this criterion must be evidenced.

F2 Many candidates did not identify the needs and expectations of the customers. They, therefore, could not analyse how effectively needs and expectations were being met by the customer service provision. Some candidates who were successful analysed the results of their questionnaires. Others awarded marks out of ten for a range of features, based on their own experiences of/visit to the business.

F3 Candidates must build on their analysis in F2 to suggest and justify ways in which the customer service provision could be improved to further meet the needs and expectations of customers. Insufficient knowledge of the business prevented some candidates from suggesting improvements to customer service, except in a generic way. Frequently, suggestions made were not linked to improving the ability of the business to meet the needs and expectations of customers. Some candidates visited competitors of the business to obtain ideas for improvement.

Recommendations to Centres

- Please adhere to deadlines for submitting MS1 forms and candidate work to the appointed Moderator.

- Please ensure that a completed Centre Authentication Form, CCS160, is included with candidate portfolios for each of units 4863 and 4864.

- Please ensure that marks entered on MS1 forms match the marks awarded on the Unit Recording Sheet.

- Please ensure that the total marks for all strands of a unit are correctly totalled on the Unit Recording Sheet.

- Please ensure that all sections of the Unit Recording Sheet have been completed accurately including candidate number, Centre number, teacher comments and the location of evidence.

- Where there are 10 or fewer candidates for any unit, send all the candidate portfolios with the MS1 forms to the Moderator.

- Where assignments are used, please ensure that they meet the requirements of the banner and the assessment criteria for the unit.

- If used, please include copies of assignment briefs with the candidate work.

- Please ensure that the businesses being investigated enable candidates to achieve the requirements of all the assessment criteria within a unit.

- Assessment decisions for each strand within each unit must be made using the Determining the Mark grids (see attached).

- Care must be taken during assessment to ensure that evidence comprises theoretical concepts applied to the business being investigated. Textbook theory alone does not constitute evidence.

- Assessors and candidates must fully understand the meaning and use of the trigger words within the assessment criteria, eg identify, describe, explain, compare, analyse and evaluate.

- Assessors should provide clear written feedback to candidates, including what has and what has not been achieved, additional evidence requirements and a submission date.

- Candidates should be encouraged to adopt a structured approach to their work and present evidence clearly, eg use of headings, page numbers and a contents sheet.

- Please include page numbers within the location section of the Unit Recording Sheet.

- Please encourage the use of Assessor annotation of candidate work.

- Please ensure that Assessors check the authenticity of the evidence. Pages downloaded from the Internet do not constitute evidence.

- Ensure that internal moderation is carried out prior to external moderation.

Specification: GCSE in Applied Business (1491)
Unit 4863 – Investigating businesses Determining the mark

Criterion	**Breadth of coverage**										Depth of coverage	
a1	1	Candidate *describes* **one** feature for **each** chosen business or *describes* **two** features for **one** chosen business	2	Candidate *describes* **two** features for **each** chosen business or *describes* **four** features for **one** chosen business	3	Candidate *describes* **three/four** features for **each** chosen business					4	Qualitative judgement mark
a2	5	Candidate *compares* **one/two** features of their chosen businesses	6	Candidate *compares* **three/four** features of their chosen business							7	Qualitative judgement mark
a3	8	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* changes that **both** businesses could made in relation to **one/two** features or **one** business could make in relation to **four** features in order to be more effective	9	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* changes that **both** businesses could make in relation to **three/four** features in order to be more effective							10	Qualitative judgement mark
b1	1	Candidate *describes* work carried out by **one** functional area of **one** of their chosen businesses or *lists* the work carried out by two/three functional areas.	2	Candidate *describes* work carried out by **two** functional areas of the **same** chosen business	3	Candidate *describes* work carried out by **three** functional areas of the **same** chosen business					4, 5, 6	Qualitative judgement marks
b2	7	Candidate *explains*, using examples, how **two** of the functional areas work together within the chosen business.	8	Candidate *explains*, using specific examples, how **three** of the functional areas work together within the chosen business							9, 10	Qualitative judgement marks
b3	11	Candidate *evaluates* effectiveness of **two** functional areas **working together** in achieving business aims and objectives	12	Candidate *evaluates* effectiveness of **three** functional areas **working together** in achieving business aims and objectives							13	Qualitative judgement mark
c1	1	Candidate *describes* **one** feature of **one** of their chosen businesses (written/oral/ICT communicate/ICT operate)	2	Candidate *describes* **two** features of the **same** chosen business	3	Candidate *describes* **three** features of the **same** chosen business	4	Candidate *describes* **four** features of the **same** chosen business			5, 6, 7	Qualitative judgement marks
c2	8	Candidate *analyses* communication methods used by their chosen business in relation to **one** stated bullet point (within a functional area, between functional areas and external) or looks at **three** stated bullet points from a purely generic perspective	9	Candidate *analyses* communication methods used by their chosen business in relation to **two** stated bullet points	10	Candidate *analyses* communication methods used by their chosen business in relation to **three** stated bullet points					11 12	Qualitative judgement marks
c3	13	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* alternatives in relation to **one** stated bullet point	14	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* alternatives in relation to **two/three** stated bullet points							15	Qualitative judgement mark

d1	1	Candidate *identifies* the main external influences on **both** chosen businesses in relation to **one** aspect or *identifies* the main external influences on **one** chosen business in relation to **two** aspects	2	Candidate *identifies* the main external influences on **both** chosen businesses in relation to **two** aspects or *identifies* the main external influences on **one** chosen business in relation to **three** aspects	3	Candidate *identifies* the main external influences on **both** chosen businesses in relation to **three** aspects	4, 5	Qualitative judgement marks
d2	6	Candidate *explains* impact of change on **both** chosen businesses in relation to **one** aspect or *explains* the impact of change on **one** chosen business in relation to **two** aspects	7	Candidate *explains* impact of change on **both** chosen businesses in relation to **two** aspects or *explains* the impact of change on **one** chosen business in relation to **three** aspects	8	Candidate *explains* impact of change on **both** chosen businesses in relation to **three** aspects	9	Qualitative judgement mark
d3	10	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* responses to changes in external influences for **both** chosen business in relation to **one/two** aspects or *suggests* **AND** *justifies* changes in external influences for **one** chosen business in relation to **three** aspects	11	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* responses to changes in external influences for **both** chosen businesses in relation to **three** aspects			12	Qualitative judgement mark

Specification: GCSE in Applied Business (1491)
Unit 4864 – People in Business <u>Determining the mark</u>

Criterion	Breadth of coverage								Depth of coverage	
a1	1	Candidate *identifies* at least **three** relevant stakeholders in the chosen business	2	Candidate *identifies* at least **six** relevant stakeholders in the chosen business					3	Qualitative judgement mark
a2	4	Candidate *explains* the nature of the interest that at least **three** stakeholders have in the chosen business	5	Candidate *explains* the nature of the interest that at least **six** stakeholders have in the chosen business						
a3	6	Candidate *evaluates* the extent to which at least **three** stakeholders have an influence on the chosen business and how it operates	7	Candidate *evaluates* the extent to which at least **six** stakeholders have an influence on the chosen business and how it operates						
b1	1	Candidate *describes* the role(s) of **one** person within their chosen business	2	Candidate *describes* the role(s) of **two** people within their chosen business	3	Candidate *describes* the role(s) of **three** people within their chosen business			4	Qualitative judgement mark
b2	5	Candidate *explains* the content of the contract of employment for **one** person within the chosen business in relation to **BOTH** terms and conditions **AND** working arrangements							6	Qualitative judgement mark
b3	7	Candidate *evaluates*, using examples, how well the Contract of Employment meets the needs of both the chosen business and the employee **AND** *recommends* and *justifies* suitable changes to the Contract of Employment							8	Qualitative judgement mark
c1	1	Candidate *describes* the employment rights in a generic context	2	Candidate *describes, using examples*, the rights of the employer **OR** the employee within the chosen business	3	Candidate *describes, **using examples**,* the rights of the employer **AND** the employee within the chosen business			4	Qualitative judgement mark
c2	5	Candidate *explains,* **with examples***,* how the chosen business resolves disagreements with its employees in relation to **EITHER** employment rights **OR** working conditions							6/7	Qualitative judgement marks
c3	8	Candidate *evaluates* the extent to which the chosen business ensures a good working relationship between the employer and the employee							9	Qualitative judgement mark
d1	1	Candidate *describes* **EITHER** the recruitment **OR** selection process used within the chosen business **OR** generic response on both	2	Candidate *describes* the recruitment **AND** selection process used within the chosen business					3	Qualitative judgement mark
d2	4	Candidate *explains* why the chosen business uses a recruitment and selection process to meet its staffing needs							5/6	Qualitative judgement marks
d3	7	Candidate *evaluates* the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process used within the business **AND** suggests and evaluates **one** improvement to the documentation **AND** procedures used within the business for recruitment and selection	8	Candidate *evaluates* the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process used within the business **AND** suggests improvements to the documentation **AND** procedures used within the business for recruitment and selection						
e1	1	Candidate *describes* the procedure(s) that the chosen business uses for **one/two** aspects. Also three aspects described generically	2	Candidate *describes* the procedure(s) that the chosen business uses for **three** aspects. Also all five described generically.	3	Candidate *describes* the procedure(s) that the chosen business uses for **four** aspects	4	Candidate *describes* the procedure(s) that the chosen business uses for **all five** aspects		

e2	5	Candidate *analyses* how the given procedures enable people within the chosen business to perform their jobs well **OR** in a safe environment			6	Candidate *analyses* how the given procedures enable people within the chosen business to perform their jobs well **AND** in a safe environment			7	Qualitative judgement mark
e3	8	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* alternative or additional procedures which might improve the effectiveness of employees **OR** the safety of the working environment within the chosen business			9	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* alternative or additional procedures which might improve the effectiveness of employees **AND** the safety of the working environment within the chosen business				
f1	1	Candidate *describes* the rights of customers under consumer law **OR** *identifies* at **least three** features within the chosen business which contributes towards good customer service	2	Candidate *describes* the rights of customers under consumer law **AND** *identifies* at **least three** features within the chosen business which contributes towards good customer service	3	Candidate *describes* the rights of customers under consumer law **AND** *identifies* at **least five** features within the chosen business which contributes towards good customer service			4	Qualitative judgement mark
f2	5	Candidate *analyses* how **one** aspect of customer service provision within the chosen business meets the needs and expectations of its customers			6	Candidate analyses how **two and above** aspects of customer service provision within the chosen business meets the needs and expectations of its customers			7	Qualitative judgement mark
f3	8	Candidate *suggests* **AND** *justifies* ways in which the customer service provision within the chosen business could be improved to further meet the needs and expectations of its customers							9	Qualitative judgement mark

PER 4865 GCSE in Applied Business June 2007

General comments

Most candidates made an attempt at all the questions on the paper and there were some very confident answers. There was clear evidence that most Centres are familiar with the specification and have prepared their candidates fully; however, some candidates had clearly entered the examination room without pens or calculators. Centres need to ensure that all candidates are suitably equipped to enable them to reach their highest potential.

Whilst the majority of candidates related their answers to the context of the questions, Centres still need to do a lot of work to prepare candidates to more effectively answer the longer questions which are assessed using a level of response within the mark scheme. There was evidence that some Centres have done this and the structure and style of candidate responses allowed them to attain the higher marks. Candidates must be reminded to make good use of the stimulus material which is provided within the question paper, either within the text boxes themselves or as bullet points within the question. This information has been provided for the purpose of aiding weaker candidates to tackle questions requiring them to demonstrate the higher level skills of analysis, evaluation and supported judgement. Some weaker candidates are still using bullet-pointed lists which, in the main, cannot be awarded marks as they do not **describe** or **explain** as required by the stem of the question.

In general the practical questions were handled well, especially the cashflow forecast. Fewer candidates were able to complete the profit and loss statement accurately but most knew the correct process and picked up own figure rule marks. The break-even formula was very well calculated with a high proportion of candidates scoring full marks. However, the majority of candidates are still unable to **interpret** what they have calculated. Most are able to pick out the key trends from documents but are then unable to develop their analysis. Many Centres are teaching 'key phrases' for candidates to use which are often helpful but occasionally misused by weaker candidates and there is evidence that these can sometimes restrict the development of independent analysis within the given context. The question on budgets highlighted a marked improvement of knowledge in most cases which was pleasing to see, but balance sheets remain a mystery to the majority of candidates. Once again the ICT question generated mainly generic answers which were not rewarded in the mark scheme as fewer marks than usual were available and the question required an 'applied' response.

Performance overall was similar to previous sessions but there is clearly some outstandingly good work being done in Centres and this is to be applauded.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

The purchase order form was completed to a high degree of accuracy and there was much less evidence of incorrect dates or misuse of the £ and pence columns. Part (b) often generated a simple response that 'e-mail is faster or cheaper than post', whereas the better candidates recognised that the order would be processed and delivered more quickly. There were still a number of 'quick and easy' responses which need nipping in the bud once and for all.

Question 2

In this question the errors on the sales invoice were given and candidates merely had to explain the consequences. This was clearly an area where a lot preparation has taken place in helping candidates to structure an answer which included error, then effect, then consequence. Unfortunately, the majority of candidates failed to recognise that an invoice is sent after the

goods have already been received and most answers assumed that the incorrect quantity of fish kettles would mean that the business received fewer than required. Marks were awarded more often for consequences relating to the incorrect value on the invoice and the incorrect reference number rather than the quantity. The flow of documents in part (b) was not well answered despite it being present in one form or another on every past paper. The question specifically excluded a goods received note but a number of candidates did not read this or ignored the advice. Most candidates were able to insert the names of source documents correctly but not always accurately in terms of the usual order of flow. Some lost valuable marks by failing to indicate the direction of flow with arrows.

> **Tip for teachers:**
> Ensure your candidates know the correct order of flow of documents, as well as being able to name them accurately. A simple activity involving pieces of card with the document names on them could be used in a variety of ways, especially as a revision aid, and a fun way to remember them.

Question 3

Most candidates attempted part (a) and offered generic features of using cheques which for the most part were rewarded. Better candidates were able to apply the use of cheques to paying suppliers and these responses gained full marks. Part (b) was attempted by most candidates, although few were able to offer anything more than generic advantages and disadvantages of using cash. Many thought that it was an underhand method of paying wages, meaning that tax would not be paid and no records would be kept. However, most candidates were able to pick up a reasonable number of marks as they did refer to the advantages and disadvantages as prompted by the question. Part (c) was particularly well answered by almost all candidates who gained full marks for the completion of the direct debit mandate.

Question 4

The majority of candidates were able to distinguish between start-up and running costs and the table in part (a) was completed accurately, with few losing more than one mark. Part (b) was more challenging as the question may have led weaker candidates to try to support the argument. Those who decided that the start-up costs were a better idea for Huw were able to develop a reasonable argument and gain the higher marks. Most candidates were able to access some marks for demonstrating knowledge of start-up and running costs. Few candidates were able to give a full enough analysis to be awarded top marks.

Question 5

This question involved a mixture of budgets, ICT and break-even and it produced some very mixed responses and demonstrated widely varying levels of knowledge. The layout of the paper was not very helpful as the budget was printed on the previous page and the majority of candidates failed to make use of it when responding to part (a). Most candidates were comfortable with the concept of an expenses budget but many did not apply their answers to the given context in the question. The ICT question was rarely answered effectively in terms of the context and few candidates explained how or why work is more professional looking, more accurate or faster than manual methods.

> **Tip for teachers:**
> Candidates must learn to develop their answers to ICT-based questions in order to explain what it is about using a computer which improves an organisation's performance or efficiency. Get them to create a cashflow forecast on the computer using formulae and then change some figures for 'what if' scenarios so that they can experience for themselves how useful it is. They could then delete the figures (keeping the formulae) and turn it into a template to use again.

> **Tip for teachers:**
> Give your candidates a head-start by trying to ensure that they enter the exam room with pens, pencils, ruler and calculator.

Question 6

The vast majority of candidates made a successful attempt at the cashflow forecast which reflects how well it has been taught in Centres. The opening balance line continues to be the main problem area as fewer candidates this session had problems calculating the simple additions. Part (b) was not well-answered with £19 500 being a common but inaccurate response. As this was often left blank it may have been the layout of the question paper which caused candidates to 'overlook' this part of the question. The profit and loss statement required candidates to extract totals from the cashflow forecast and most acknowledged this as they correctly picked up the six-monthly sales figure. However, the cost of sales was rarely understood to be the raw materials figure with only a minority calculating the net profit accurately. Own figure rule allowances did enable those who attempted it to pick up some marks. Part (d) with eight marks required candidates to develop levels of response to include analysis and then supporting a judgement with the outcomes of their analysis. Whilst the majority of candidates were able to pick out the main features or trends of the cashflow forecast and profit and loss statement; but, fewer were able to explain what this meant in terms of the financial position of the venture and fewer still were able to support their judgement (yes, he should invest or no, he should not) on the basis of their analysis. Those candidates who used the given bullet points effectively picked up marks to the top of Level 2 (six marks), although these were often not used to support judgement and, therefore, hit the Level 3 mark range.

> **Tip for teachers:**
> Candidates need to learn how to structure an answer which takes knowledge, applies it to a given context, analyses information (usually numerical data) and forms a judgement or evaluates a likely outcome based on their analysis. It is also very good practice to summarise the outcome using terms such as, 'therefore, I conclude that they should go ahead because…, I think it will be successful because…, if X does decide to go ahead it is likely to be successful but there is always the possibility that…'. Such practice is far more likely to aid candidates to develop a response which hits the Level 3 and, therefore, the highest possible mark range.

Question 7

Balance sheets are still a difficult aspect of the specification for candidates to understand, although many did a great job of classifying them for part (a). Common misconceptions here were that cash in hand and overdraft go in the 'financed by' section. Some candidates did not have any idea at all however, and made a brave attempt to use common sense, with varying degrees of success. The final part produced a mixed response as some candidates had a fair idea of what a balance sheet is and, therefore, how it might be useful. A pleasing number of candidates were able to identify that there were no current liabilities meaning that the business did not owe anyone anything and that, therefore, the bank manager is likely to consider granting a loan. Weaker candidates referred to profits and losses and also made reference to the cashflow forecast results in the absence of any knowledge of balance sheets.

Tip for teachers:
Think of a revision-style activity which could make good use of ICT to draw together a number of topics within the specification. Allow candidates to use ICT to create graphs, memos, internet research, cashflow, etc. and discuss with them how useful it is to be able to use computers in business. If time allows, it would be invaluable for them to gain an insight into a real business (or even your Centre) and how it makes use of ICT on a day to day basis. The examination will always include an ICT-based question and it will always be written in context, requiring more than just a generic response.

General Certificate of Secondary Education
Applied Business (Double Award) 1491
June 2007 Assessment Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
4863	Raw	50	47	41	34	28	23	18	13	8	0
	UMS	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0
4864	Raw	50	47	41	35	29	24	19	14	9	0
	UMS	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0
4865	Raw	100	85	76	65	54	47	40	33	26	0
	UMS	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

Entry Information

Unit	Total Entry
4863	4937
4864	5773
4865	4816

Specification Aggregation Results

GRADE	A*A*	AA	BB	CC	DD	EE	FF	GG	UU
UMS	270	240	210	180	150	120	90	60	0
Cum %	1.45	8.27	24.63	49.19	62.44	73.72	84.13	92.69	100

6196 candidates were entered for aggregation this series.

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam_system/understand_ums.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication