



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
(Short Course)
June 2011**

Business Studies

413013

(Specification 4131)

Business Start Up

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

Centres are to be congratulated on their preparation of students for this paper. Students were able to identify with the scenarios and so were able to answer the questions in context.

This year's paper followed a similar pattern to last year's, with two questions. This two-question approach will continue for the foreseeable future, but there may be adjustments year- by- year as to how many marks the first and second questions carry and how many sub-questions form each part.

Students should be encouraged to take time to read the scenarios and plan carefully how to use the information to illustrate their answers. This will then enable them to apply their knowledge to the context provided and so be awarded the higher level A02 – application marks. In the longer evaluation questions, students should ensure that they offer a judgement, in context, to enable them to achieve the higher level evaluation marks.

Question One

- (a) This question proved to be accessible, with many students scoring both marks. The main issue being students who failed to answer the questions set by stating **how** good customer service could be provided, rather than the benefits of doing so.
- (b) A majority of students were able to calculate the profit correctly. The most common error was from students who merely calculated revenue and failed to go on to deduct costs to arrive at a profit figure. There was some evidence of students not using calculators. Centres are reminded of the need for all students to have access to a calculator whilst sitting this examination.
- (c) Many students scored well as they were able to answer this question in context. A common misconception that spoiled some students' answers was the belief that Debbie's business was still open and Jane would simply be joining an existing business as a partner. Such misconceptions do harm students' performance and highlight the importance of reading the item carefully.

Question Two

- (a) Students showed a good understanding of the ways in which the law can protect employees. Many picked up on the stimulus of minimum wage provided within the scenario, but most were also able to offer a second valid point. It is important to note that examiners were **not** looking for specific acts of parliament, merely general ways in which employees are protected. Different forms of discrimination were treated as separate points.
- (b) Job production proved to be a concept that many students were able to apply well to sandwich-making. This allowed them to gain maximum marks for this question. However, there were a minority of students whose responses showed no understanding of job production as a concept.
- (c) This question worked effectively as a discriminator, with most students able to suggest and explain a method of research. Successful students went on to explain exactly how the method could be used to assess whether sufficient demand existed to launch the sandwich service.

- (d) A number of students failed to show an understanding of the elements of the marketing mix. The best answers chose two elements and focused on how they could be used in context to launch the new sandwich delivery service. The question just asked for two elements of the marketing mix and so there was nothing to gain from working through all 4 Ps, just time to be lost.
- (e) As should be expected, this question proved to be the greatest discriminator on the paper. It is intended that the paper will get gradually tougher question-by-question, although this final question will always be designed to be accessible to all. Successful students used information from the scenario which allowed them to contextualise their answers, such as staff being paid minimum wage and having not had a pay rise for two years. For analysis marks to be awarded, examiners will expect to see a point being argued in context. Therefore, answers that relied heavily on generic arguments about the relative merits of monetary and non-monetary methods of motivation did not score so well. There was no evidence of students running out of time and, as a result, most students were able to produce a conclusion that allowed them to score evaluation marks, even if these were at a low level due to a lack of contextualisation or justification.

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