

Examiners' Report
June 2014

GCSE Business Studies 5BS04 01

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Introduction

The structure of the paper this year was consistent with previous examination papers. Questions were a mixture of multiple choice, short and extended answers. Sections B and C were based on given scenarios using Transport for London and Marks and Spencer. The aim of these scenarios was to provide information for candidates to use when applying their answers. A large number of candidates failed to recognise this and therefore struggled to answer in context.

Candidate responses continued to show positive signs of improvement particularly when answering levelled questions worth 6, 8 or 10 marks. Increasing numbers of candidates were carrying out greater levels of analysis and there was a noticeable improvement this year in the quality of evaluative comments. This often allowed candidates to be assessed at Level 3 in these questions. It was clear that many centres had spent time developing the techniques of their candidates and as a result there were a greater number of structured answers that matched the requirements specified in the assessment objectives. This was pleasing to see.

However, candidates are still losing marks on 2 and 3 mark questions by not writing their answers in the correct context of the business that the question was based upon. This was particularly evident in 'explain' questions. More able answers were often not scoring full marks because the answers were not correctly applied to the context of the given business. Specific examples are given to demonstrate this within the report to support candidates in developing their technique. Centres are urged to build this into their preparation as it does have a significant impact on candidate performance.

Centres should be aware that the full range of the specification is used to base questions on. This includes questions requiring a definition of a key term. Questions 5(a), 6(a) and 7 all required a knowledge-based definition of terms taken directly from the specification. All three questions were answered poorly. Again, specific examples have been included within the report to highlight this issue.

The aim of this report is to help address some of these issues and to highlight some particular issues experienced on this paper. Exemplar answers are provided to help model technique in future papers.

Question 1 (b)

The aim of this first question was to provide an introduction to the paper with a general question about the importance of communication. 'Outline' questions require candidates to not only give a reason but also to give a development point in order to be awarded the second mark. The majority of candidates did provide a relevant reason but a significant number did not include any appropriate development and therefore failed to achieve the second mark.

Although this resulted in only one mark being dropped, failure to respond to command words in the correct way can be costly if repeated throughout the paper.

(b) Outline **one** reason why good communication is important for a business.

(2)

Good Communication is important because otherwise information being transferred may be misunderstood.



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Examiner Comments

This example shows a candidate who clearly understands the question but fails to respond to the command word. A valid reason is given but it is not developed in any way.

(b) Outline **one** reason why good communication is important for a business.

(2)

If there is bad communication, workers may become confused; they might even do the wrong thing. This results in less productivity because time is wasted.



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Examiner Comments

Although answered from a reverse viewpoint this answer is awarded both marks because not only is a valid reason given – 'may become confused', but there is also some development as they then go on to say 'results in less productivity'.



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Examiner Tip

Make sure you respond to the command word. The mark allocation also gives a guide to the level of detail required in an answer. 2 marks will not be awarded for making one relevant point.

Question 1 (c) (i)

This was another question aimed at easing candidates into the paper and to test their basic knowledge of the communication model. The question was highly accessible to candidates with most scoring both marks. There will always be questions on this paper linked to how the communication model works and is one of the underpinning principles of the specification. Therefore, although it is not common, it is surprising when candidates do not provide the correct answer.

(c) (i) Identify the **two** parties involved in the communication model. (2)

1. Sender

2. Receiver



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Examiner Comments

Both answers correct - 2 marks are awarded.

(c) (i) Identify the **two** parties involved in the communication model. (2)

1. shareholders/employees

2. managers



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Examiner Comments

Candidates who do not have the key, underpinning knowledge of the communication model often give general answers such as this. This was the exception rather than the rule but did happen enough times to be highlighted in this report.

Question 1 (c) (ii)

This was the first 'explain' question on the paper and it should be noted that it has not been asked in the context of a particular business. Therefore no context was required in the answer to score full marks.

Candidates were required to give one valid reason and then develop this reason with two linked strands of explanation. Most candidates did identify a reason why feedback showed that communication had been successful but could not then develop the reason with any further points of explanation. Those that did often applied a structure to their answers using key connective words such as 'this leads to' and 'because'.

(ii) Explain **one** reason why feedback can indicate that communication has been successful. (3)

So that the sender will know that the receiver has understood the message, as the sender



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When responding to 'explain' questions many candidates do not structure answers correctly. They must realise that two of the marks come from explaining why the reason they have given is correct. In this example a valid reason is given but no attempt is made to explain the reason. This results in 1 mark being awarded. In many cases this is not because the candidate is not able to develop an explanation but that they fail to understand how to respond to the command word.

(ii) Explain **one** reason why feedback can indicate that communication has been successful.

(3)

Once the sender sends the information to the receiver, the only way of confirming that the communication was successful is, if the sender receives the feedback. The feedback will confirm that the receiver has got the message, understood it and acted appropriately.



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Examiner Comments

Developing an explanation can take many forms. Later in the report examples will be included where this is done in a more structured way. This example has been included to show that even if a candidate struggles with the wording of a question and has a poor structure to their answer, they must aim to add linked strands of explanation. This example scores 3 marks because a valid reason is given in the first sentence but this is then developed with two additional points by saying the receiver 'understood it' and 'acted appropriately'.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates must aim to give two points of explanation in answers once they have identified a reason.

Question 2 (b)

As in previous series, from Question 2 onwards each question was based on a business scenario. Therefore the majority of answers required candidates to apply their knowledge to the business scenario.

Question 2(b) was an excellent example of this. It was an 'outline' question worth 2 marks. 1 mark for identifying a suitable communication method and the second mark for some form of suitable development. However the question this year was based on easyjet and therefore required the knowledge to be applied to the business. Most candidates scored 1 mark on this question, indicating they had the correct knowledge, but less than 3% scored full marks indicating a major problem with being able to apply this knowledge. Application comes from relating the answer specifically to the business in the scenario. In this case the business was easyjet so the context should have made reference to flights, holidays, destinations etc.

(b) Outline **one** method, other than email, *easyjet* could use to communicate details of special offers to new customers.

(2)

Easyjet can use leaflets that would be delivered to past customers. The leaflets would include the special offers that would persuade customers to use EasyJet again.



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This question highlights a candidate making two basic errors. Firstly, as mentioned above, there is no application of knowledge and the answer lacks any reference to easyjet. Therefore the second mark cannot be awarded. Secondly, despite highlighting a suitable communication method, the candidate has not read the question carefully. The answer relates to 'past customers' whilst the question clearly asks for methods relevant to 'new customers'. Therefore 0 marks are awarded.

(b) Outline **one** method, other than email, *easyJet* could use to communicate details of special offers to new customers.

(2)

~~EasyJet could send letters to communicate special deals and offers of flights to past passengers.~~

EasyJet could add flight deals and offers to their website.

As a result, new customers who search for flights can see them easily.



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Examiner Comments

An excellent example to show application of knowledge and writing an answer in context. A suitable method is given - 'website', but the answer is also clearly in context by the reference to 'flights'. Therefore 2 marks are awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates must show application of their knowledge. If a question is based on a specific business then the answer must make some form of specific reference to this business. Please note the actual name of the business is not enough to contextualise an answer.

Question 2 (c)

This was an example of an 'explain' question using the context of a particular business. Candidates were therefore required to give an answer in the context of the business in the question. 'Explain' questions were worth 3 marks but without the use of context answers could only score a maximum of 2 marks.

Assessment Objective 2 - application of knowledge was assessed in 14 questions on the paper, if candidates do not know how to answer a question in context then they lose out on a significant number of marks.

(c) Explain **one** disadvantage to *easyJet* of using email to communicate special offers to past passengers who booked online.

(3)

Some passengers may not look at their emails on a regular basis. This could result in the offer finishing before they see the email. Therefore the email will be a waste of time and money for the business.



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Examiner Comments

This is a well-structured answer. It clearly states a disadvantage and then gives two linked strands of explanation. The candidate obviously understands the question and has the knowledge to answer it. However the answer is not in the context of *easyJet*. It could equally apply to any business which uses email to communicate. Therefore only 2 marks are awarded.

(c) Explain **one** disadvantage to easyJet of using email to communicate special offers to past passengers who booked online.

(3)

One disadvantage of this is that they may have changed their email address since their holiday with easyJet. This is a disadvantage because it means the customer won't receive the offer and therefore easyJet will possibly lose potential business and therefore sales will decrease and profits will decrease as a result.



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Examiner Comments

This is a very similar answer in terms of the structure. There is a disadvantage and two relevant strands of explanation. However simply by referring to holidays the candidate includes context into the answer and is awarded all 3 marks.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should practice looking for context words in their answers by re-reading what they wrote. If they cannot find a specific word or phrase in the answer that is linked to the business then they will not be able to achieve full marks.

Question 2 (d)

'Describe' questions allowed candidates to achieve marks in a number of different ways. This could be done through including different possible methods or giving a method and developing the answer further. The key issue in this question was to describe **how** data could be protected and not describing **why**. Data protection was a topic which caused many issues in previous papers but it was pleasing to see a vast improvement in the level of knowledge this year. However, to gain all 4 marks there must be some reference to the context of the question, this was often the main reason why full marks were not awarded in questions such as this.

easyJet must protect the passenger data it collects when bookings are made on its website.

(d) Describe how *easyJet* can protect the data it collects from its passengers.

(4)

easyJet can protect the data by putting passwords onto where the data is stored so people cannot gain access. Due to the data protection act *easyJet* should encrypt the data they use so people will not be able to see it. Also *easyJet* should use a reliable webhost to store the information received.



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Examiner Comments

In this example the candidate scores 3 marks by including three different ways in the description - 'passwords', 'encrypt the data' and 'use a reliable webhost'. None of these have been developed further but this is fine in a 'describe' question. Full marks cannot be awarded because there is no context. It is not enough to simply use the name of the business.

Question 3 (b)

Question 3(b) was relatively straight forward and was well accessed by candidates. The one issue of note was that candidates must be careful not to repeat themselves when answering questions. There were a number of examples where candidates basically wrote the same answer twice using slightly different wording. In order to get both marks it was necessary to give two distinct benefits.

Martha's business has a strapline – 'Putting the T in custom'.

(b) Identify **two** benefits to Martha of using a strapline to promote her business.

(2)

- 1 Customers can ^{remember} ~~remember~~ the business when seeing or talking about the strapline.
- 2 They can also remember the logo which eventually leads to the ~~remember name~~ ^{remember name} of the company.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate basically gives the same answer twice and therefore is awarded 1 mark.

Martha's business has a strapline – 'Putting the T in custom'.

(b) Identify **two** benefits to Martha of using a strapline to promote her business.

(2)

- 1 It can create brand recognition.
- 2 people will remember the strapline early and familiarize with her business.



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Examiner Comments

This example shows two distinct benefits and is awarded both marks.



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Examiner Tip

Although it sounds glaringly obvious, candidates must be careful not to repeat themselves. If they have time they should read over their answers to try and avoid this.

Question 3 (c)

Q3(c) was another 'explain' question based on a business scenario. The issues highlighted earlier are therefore just as important in this question. However this question also demonstrated a problem which appears every year - candidates not reading the question carefully. This question clearly asked for a disadvantage to the customer of the business, yet many candidates based their answer on a disadvantage to the business itself (in this case a T-shirt business called TeeMartha).

(c) Explain **one** disadvantage to a customer of having TeeMartha's logo on their T-shirts.

(3)

The customers may not be happy because they didn't ask for it, this may lead to the business not being used ~~more~~, therefore martha's business will earn less because of a lack of customers.



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Examiner Comments

This answer is clearly based on a disadvantage to TeeMartha and is therefore not answering the question. 0 mark is awarded as a result.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates must ensure they establish who the question is related to before they write an answer. Do not skim the question and end up answering the question from the wrong point of view.

Question 3 (d) (i)

A similar issue linked to reading the question occurred in question 3(d)(i). The focus of the question was the importance of setting out a CV clearly, therefore focusing on how the information was presented rather than the specific content. Most candidates did pick up on this and gave good answers. However a significant number gave answers linked to the content of the CV and could not be awarded the available mark.

Martha's business has grown and she needs to recruit more sales staff. As part of her recruitment process she requires all applicants to provide a curriculum vitae (CV).

(d) (i) Identify **one** reason why it is important that an applicant provides a clearly presented CV.

(1)

It shows the person's personalities and also the degree of education.



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Examiner Comments

This answer shows that the candidate understands what a CV is and why it is used. However they have not used the knowledge to answer the question set. The answer refers to the content of the CV rather than the presentation of the information.

Martha's business has grown and she needs to recruit more sales staff. As part of her recruitment process she requires all applicants to provide a curriculum vitae (CV).

(d) (i) Identify **one** reason why it is important that an applicant provides a clearly presented CV.

(1)

It creates a good first impression.



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Examiner Comments

This answer focuses on why it is important to present the information clearly and can therefore be awarded the mark.

Question 3 (d) (ii)

This question is useful in reinforcing the points made earlier in the report when discussing explain style questions.

There must be two points of linked development in an explanation.

Questions based on a specific business must be written in context - the context in this case was either from the nature of a t-shirt business or from working as part of a sales team.

Read the question carefully in order to answer the question set.

(ii) Explain **one** way a CV will help Martha select applicants she wants to interview for her sales team.

the role.

(3)

A CV will narrow down her choice of applicants allowing her to condense all CV's into interviews and so on, by selecting higher qualified applicants and ~~discards~~ discarding less qualified, this saves Martha time and recruitment is quicker.



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Examiner Comments

This is a good answer which meets two of the criteria listed above. It has two linked strands of development in the answer. It also answers the question set. However it cannot be awarded all 3 marks because it is not in context. This is the most common of problems each year with candidate answers.

(ii) Explain **one** way a CV will help Martha select applicants she wants to interview for her sales team.

(3)

She can see if they have what is required to be on a sales team that sell t-shirts. E.g. At least a B in English language so they can communicate better with customers. This will impact on the business as they will have an increase in sales as the sales team are more effective in persuasive. This will lead to an increased revenue which will allow the business to possibly build more shops.

(Total for Question 3 = 10 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This is a good example of clear context in the answer. The candidate has identified that the question is linked to working as part of a sales team. They have then focused their answer on this specific area, therefore showing clear application of their knowledge.

Question 4 (b)

This question was answered very well with candidates displaying sound knowledge of features that required testing on a website. Any issues that did occur often arose because candidates did not name a specific feature of the website. General answers such as 'if it works' or 'the lay-out' are not specific features and therefore were not awarded.

(b) Identify **two** features of Geoff's website that would require testing.

- 1 Has he used someone else's design and ~~does~~^{is} it protected by copyright
- 2 Once the website is set up does it all work.



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Examiner Comments

This type of answer is indicative of vague, general answers that do not name a specific feature of the website. No mark is awarded.

(b) Identify **two** features of Geoff's website that would require testing.

- 1 If any hyperlinks/web pages work when clicked
- 2 That photographs are uploaded correctly and that the public can see them clearly.



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Examiner Comments

In this answer two specific features are identified - 'hyperlinks' and 'photographs'. 2 marks awarded although it should be noted that there is no need to answer this type of question using full sentences. It is acceptable to give one word answers if relevant, therefore saving time for later in the paper.



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Examiner Tip

Even in short questions it is necessary to give specific answers and avoid providing vague, general answers. Remember that in 'identify' or 'state' questions there is no need to write in full sentences.

Question 4 (c)

Question 4(c) was well accessed by candidates. Most were able to identify a clear advantage - usually linked to widening the audience of the business. The developed explanations also usually added value to most answers. However the average mark of the question was 2 rather than 3 because of poor application of knowledge. The scenario for the question contained specific reference to paintings that were only displayed in limited areas - small art galleries and music festivals. This gave a perfect opportunity to provide context into this answer but this was only done by a minority of candidates.

(c) Explain **one** advantage to Geoff of creating a website to display his paintings.

(3)

He can communicate with a wider range of an audience which could get him more customers, since a lot more people are on the internet, globally.



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The question is clearly understood and the candidate demonstrates a good structure to the answer but it is not applied to the business in the question. If an answer can be applied to any business but isn't, which is the case here, then the answer is not specific enough and candidate knowledge is not being applied. 2 marks are awarded.

(c) Explain **one** advantage to Geoff of creating a website to display his paintings.

(3)

A lot of people don't have much ~~sp~~ free time to go to galleries or concerts. If Geoff creates a web to display his ~~the~~ paintings, ~~a lot~~ many people can view his paintings because it is convenient ~~#~~ to go on the internet. This allows more people to enjoy the portraits and make Geoff more famous.



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When we compare the previous answer to this one it is clear this answer could only be related to the business in the question. References to 'galleries' and 'concerts' clearly link the answer to this business rather than any other. Even the final sentence includes references to 'portraits' and 'make Geoff more famous', both of which place the answer in the context of an artist. 3 marks are therefore be awarded as opposed to 2 in the previous answer.

Question 4 (d)

Question 4(d) was the first question on the paper to be assessed using levels. In these questions, marks were awarded based on assessing which level the answer is in, ranging from Level 1 up to Level 3. As mentioned in the introduction candidates were responding much better to these levelled questions resulting in far more answers showing sound structure and detail. Centres are clearly helping to develop candidate technique, in particular the quality of evaluative content in answers, and as a result far more responses were being assessed in Level 3.

In order to get into Level 3 both evaluation and context were needed. Evaluation could be seen where a candidate offered balance in their answer and considered both the positive and negative aspects of their opinion or judgement. Context had already been explained within the paper but also needed to be present in order to be judged a Level 3 answer.

One area that could have been improved further was the use of conclusions in answers. Outstanding answers always included some sort of conclusion that added value to the answer. This was not simply a closing sentence which identified the best option but it drew on the key factor(s) that allowed this opinion to be arrived at.

(d) Geoff has arranged a meeting with a website designer who will create his website. At the meeting Geoff will give a presentation to communicate his ideas. He has two options when preparing the presentation.

Option 1: Use a flipchart.

Option 2: Use presentational software.

Assess which of these options would be the more effective for Geoff.

(6)

Using a flipchart would be effective because he will be able to draw on ideas as well as being able to prepare the presentation. This means that he would be more able to communicate with the designer and allow him to feel involved. Which would result in the communication being successful. However, using presentational software would also be effective as he would be able to present the information in a more professional way. But changes may be harder to make due to the presentation being technology based, even though this might be the better option. I think that it would be more effective for Geoff to use a flipchart as he appears to be a man not completely confident with technology. In addition, the

presentation will be easier to prepare and carry out which would mean that the communication of ideas are more likely to be successful. (Total for Question 4 = 12 marks)



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This answer is given full marks because of three key features to the answer:

- it is written in the context of the business
- there is clear evaluative comment shown through considering both the reasons for and against using a certain option
- the conclusion adds value and refers to a key point that has allowed a decision to be made - 'a man not completely comfortable with technology'.

6 marks are awarded.

(d) Geoff has arranged a meeting with a website designer who will create his website. At the meeting Geoff will give a presentation to communicate his ideas. He has two options when preparing the presentation.

Option 1: Use a flipchart.

Option 2: Use presentational software.

Assess which of these options would be the more effective for Geoff.

(6)

Using a Presentational software would be more effective because its purely appropriate for the purpose of presentation. The structure of the presentation as in colour, font size will stand out therefore people will be interested. Each slides could be used for each ideas. He could include images of his arts within the presentation. Will be easier to communicate because it will all be there in front of him. so if he struggles to say anything then he could refer to the slide. Presentation will give a clear clear understanding to what his ideas

are and how his website/ what it will consist of.



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Examiner Comments

On the other hand this answer can only be awarded 4 marks because it lacks any evaluative content. The answer is one sided and only refers to the positives of using presentational software. This keeps the answer in Level 2 even though the answer is in context.



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Examiner Tip

When answering levelled questions it is useful to keep in mind a mini-checklist of things to include in the answer. As well as explaining reasons for a particular option candidates should always check if they have included:

- context
- evaluation
- conclusion.

Building a structure to answers is useful practice when preparing for examinations.

Question 5 (a)

There was a poor response to the three questions that required definitions this year. This type of question appeared on all papers and the terms used in the question were taken straight from the specification. Therefore if candidates had not developed adequate knowledge of the terms then they would lose valuable marks.

Another key point noted was that these questions were worth 2 marks. To achieve both marks the definition should have been perfect, often requiring two distinct points within the definition. Answers that showed some understanding of the term but were not written in a totally accurate way were awarded 1 mark.

Question 5(a) required candidates to demonstrate their understanding of a mission statement. Most candidates scored at least 1 mark by knowing that it referred to the aims or objectives of a business.

Very few answers were extended to 2 marks.

5 (a) What is meant by the term **mission statement**?

(2)

it states the objective of a company to stakeholders.



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Examiner Comments

This is typical of many answers in that the definition achieves 1 mark but is not specific enough to achieve 2. This could be done through reference to that a mission statement is simple or concise. Alternatively the second mark can be achieved by giving a relevant example.

Question 5 (b)

Q5(b) was another 'explain with context' question. Candidates applied their knowledge far better in this question and far more context was seen in answers to this question. As a result far more candidates scored all 3 marks. The most common reason why candidates did not score full marks was because answers were only supported by one strand of explanation. Even though an answer may have been written in context candidates still needed to give two strands of explanation in their answers.

(b) Explain **one** disadvantage to TfL of using posters to communicate this information to customers.

(3)

People in London are usually very busy. This means a lot of people do not have the time to stop and read a poster or even take any notice to one.



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Examiner Comments

In this example the candidate has written the answer in context by making reference to London but then only adds one point of explanation. An additional point needs to be made in order to be awarded 3 marks.

(b) Explain **one** disadvantage to TfL of using posters to communicate this information to customers.

(3)

Posters may be damaged or graffitied so the message is not as clear. This means that less people will receive the information on the posters. ~~leading to~~ ^{which could lead} the effects of boosting security on the public transport being ruined.



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Examiner Comments

This answer scores 3 marks because of its simple, yet effective structure. A disadvantage is given at the start of the answer - 'damaged or graffitied'. There are then two clear points of explanation to say why this is a disadvantage - 'less people will receive the information' and 'effects of boosting security on public transport being missed'. References to security and public transport give context to the answer therefore all 3 marks are awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Develop a structure for answering explain questions. An easy starting point is to always write three sentences for these questions.

Question 5 (c)

This was the second 'explain with context' question in Q5. Again, there was a noticeable improvement in the use of context but many candidates did not fully understand this question. The use of stakeholder logos on the posters was to stress the importance of the campaign yet some candidates saw the term logo and made a default link to promotion and advertising. The stakeholders referred to in the question were the police and a trade union. It was unrealistic to suggest that they added their logos in order to advertise and sell more products. It was important that candidates could adapt their knowledge to the given scenario and not simply give default answers when they see certain key terms.

(c) Explain **one** possible reason why TfL has included the logos of other stakeholder groups on the posters.

(3)

because they could be a sponsor for the train company, or they could just be paying them to advertise for them.



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This is an unrealistic answer and would not be the reason why the logos were used in the campaign. It should be noted that unrealistic answers will not be given credit and as a result answers such as this score 0 marks.

(c) Explain **one** possible reason why TfL has included the logos of other stakeholder groups on the posters.

(3)

Because customers will recognise these logos if they are from London. This will lead to them feeling safe and reassured that the police are involved. As a result of this customers will continue to use public transport.



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This example shows a relevant and realistic reason which is then well explained in order to gain all 3 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates must make sure they give realistic answers that take into consideration the business scenario described in the question.

Question 5 (d)

This question required candidates to 'state' an advantage/disadvantage and then explain it. The stated advantage scored 1 mark and the subsequent explanation a further 3 marks. The explanation must have a strand of development that was in context and no further credit was awarded in the explanation section if the candidate re-stated their chosen 'advantage'. This method of awarding marks was repeated for the 'disadvantage' part of the question.

This question was accessible to most candidates with the average mark being 5/8. The stumbling block tended to be either insufficient strands of development and/or lack of contextualisation in one of the strands of explanation.

TfL is a very large organisation. It employs approximately 19,000 people and each year carries over 1.1 billion passengers. TfL's organisational structure is hierarchical.

(d) State **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage to TfL of a hierarchical organisational structure. For each, explain the likely impact on business communication.

(8)

Advantage

The ~~roles of~~ ^{job titles and} ~~of the jobs~~ ^{are} ~~to~~ ^{roles are} clearly defined.

Explanation

Through using a hierarchical organisational structure the employees of TfL are likely to be able to clearly identify where they stand in the business, who they should report to, who ~~the~~ they are responsible for and their job role and title. By doing so the employees of TfL are able to know who to contact with in the case of issues or problems. So it is likely that the business communication will take place efficiently which will promote TfL and allow the firm to benefit ^{through} improved efficiency and productivity.

Disadvantage

~~depends~~ The levels of hierarchy can slow down communication.

Explanation

Employing 19,000 people means that in TfL's organisational chart there are likely to be many layers of hierarchy making the chain of command long. When this ~~mess~~ happens, since messages have to be passed along a number of layers of hierarchy it is likely that the message is likely to be ~~misinterpreted~~ affected and also it will take a long time for the message to pass through. This will slow down business communication, ~~especially~~ ^{and cause} conflict especially in decision making throughout.



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Examiner Comments

The explanation section contains three linked strands of explanation but none of the strands are in the context of the question so only 2 marks are awarded.

The candidate receives $1+2+1+3 = 7$ marks for their answer.

The stated 'disadvantage' is valid and scores 1 mark.

The explanation section contains three linked strands of explanation but this time adds context to the answer by supporting the disadvantage of slow communication with reference to 19000 employees at TFL.

The stated 'advantage' is valid and scores 1 mark.

Question 6 (a)

A sizable proportion of the cohort did not attempt this question.

6 (a) What is meant by the term **social credentials**?

Through social networking sites, brands can advertise and mention their goods, which is done through social credentials. (2)



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Examiner Comments

The candidates who attempted this question but clearly do not understand the term 'social credentials.' This often involves candidates simply re-writing the term in the answer or, as this candidate does, take an educated guess by focusing on the word 'social' and then linking it to social networking. This is a valiant attempt but incorrect resulting in 0 marks.

6 (a) What is meant by the term **social credentials**?

Social credentials are the aspects of a organisation that pay attention to social issues with the general public and how highly regarded and approved that business is in doing so. (2)



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Examiner Comments

This example is successful in that it provides a definition that gives two key points about social credentials - 'pay attention to social issues' and 'how highly regarded and approved that business is in doing so'. 2 marks are awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Create a glossary of terms listed in the specification to help prepare for the definition questions.

Question 6 (b)

Question 6(b) was a straight forward question that most candidates got right. The small number that did not answer question correctly usually did not read the question carefully and did not give a paper-based method. The most common wrong answers were 'email' and 'fax' - both of which are classed as electronic methods of communication in the specifications.

(b) Identify **one** paper-based method, other than posters, that TFL could use to communicate with its stakeholders.

(1)

Letters.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

A letter is an example of a paper based method of communication. 1 mark is awarded.

(b) Identify **one** paper-based method, other than posters, that TFL could use to communicate with its stakeholders.

(1)

TFL could use email to communicate with its stakeholders.



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Examiner Comments

An email is an electronic form of communication therefore 0 mark is awarded.

Question 6 (c)

This question was another good example of an explain question where a significant number of candidates did not read the question carefully enough. The question clearly asked for a benefit to the tourists of using a mobile phone app. Those candidates who focused on this performed well on this question but there were a number who explained a benefit to the business (TFL) or employee of the business. As these candidates did not answer the question set they were awarded 0 marks.

Many tourists use public transport in London. There are a number of mobile phone applications (apps) that can be downloaded from the internet. One of these apps lets tourists enter a start and end point of a journey. The app then shows them the quickest route using public transport.

(c) Explain **one** benefit to tourists of using this mobile phone app.

(3)

More tourists understand where they
are going so more customers



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Examiner Comments

This is a less able answer which is not developed in terms of explanation. It also shows that the candidate, like many others, focused on a benefit to the business by giving the benefit as 'more customers'. 0 mark is awarded.

Question 6 (d)

This was the second question in the examination paper to use a 'levels of response' mark scheme. For the vast majority of candidates the question appeared to be more accessible than the equivalent question which appeared in last year's paper. Most candidates were able to access at least Level 2, with a significant number accessing Level 3. To enter Level 3, candidates had to have sufficient development in their response and then also provide evidence of balance and contextualisation. Once the response was placed into Level 3, the quality of the evaluation and the conclusion determined whether it was awarded 6, 7 or 8 marks.

Since this question was asterisked, the Quality of Written Communication (QWC) was also considered by examiners. However, the response was placed in a mark scheme level according to whether the correct blend of written skills had been provided. If QWC was poor an adjustment may then be made within that level.

TfL customer service staff can also provide tourists with route information about travelling around London.

*(d) Assess whether this face-to-face communication will be more effective than a mobile phone app in providing tourists with travel information.

(8)

Face-to-face communication allows for Q&A. This means that tourists can ask questions that they have instantly. Because of this the communication will be more effective as the tourists will be more likely to be clear on e.g. where to get off the bus. However, to engage in face-to-face communication the tourist will have to locate and go to a customer service staff of TfL. This means that face-to-face would be inconvenient compared to an app as it is time wasting. Because of this tourists could get frustrated and get a bad image of TfL if they can't find staff. Overall, face-to-face is more effective in communicating travel information however, its effectiveness depends on if staff are abundant and readily available. If that is not the case an app would be more effective as it is faster.

(Total for Question 6 = 14 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This is an excellent example which scores the full 8 marks. The answer is balanced in that it considers both the advantages and disadvantages of face-to-face communication before making a decision on which is best. The reference to 'get off the bus' also adds context to the answer.

A key feature to this answer which allows 8 marks to be awarded is the quality of the conclusion. It identifies the key factor in making the decision using what is called the 'it depends' rule. The candidate is therefore demonstrating that they recognise that both methods have their merits but the decision would depend on a variable that could differ depending on circumstances. In this case that is the availability of staff.

Question 7

Q7 was the best answered of the three definition questions. Most candidates knew that the meeting discussed financial matters relating to a business but very few also said that the meeting was for shareholders. As a result very few candidates scored 2 marks. Less able candidates simply gave an answer relating to what happened in any type of meeting, e.g. 'discuss things that can be improved'. This type of answer scored 0 marks.

7 What is an **annual general meeting (AGM)**?

A yearly meeting, where they talk about sales figures and trading figures.



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Examiner Comments

This example answer is common for this question. No marks are awarded for saying that the meeting is held every year but 1 mark is awarded for identifying that the meeting 'talks about sales figures and trading figures'.

7 What is an **annual general meeting (AGM)**?

A yearly meeting with shareholders of a business discussing the revenue, ~~and~~ expenses and profits for that year.



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Examiner Comments

This answer not only identifies that the meeting discusses financial information but also includes that the meeting is for shareholders. Therefore 2 marks are awarded.

Question 8

Q8 requested candidates to name two pieces of legislation that must be followed when selling products via a website. This included both website specific acts, such as the Data Protection Act, as well as acts covering selling goods in general such as the Trade Description Act. It was not necessary to use the word 'act' at the end of the answer but the specific wording was expected. The year of the act was also not required in this type of question.

Many candidates described the acts and did not name them. This was not what the question asked and therefore scored 0 marks.

8 Identify **two** pieces of legislation that M&S must follow when selling products on its website.

1 That Customer details will be kept safe and protected.

2 That the Customer get their shopping when the company has said it will be delivered.

(Total for Question 8 = 2 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This is an example where the candidate describes the acts rather than name them. The first answer relates to the Data Protection Act and the second to the Supply of Goods and Services Act. However because the actual legislation is not identified then no marks can be awarded.

8 Identify **two** pieces of legislation that M&S must follow when selling products on its website.

1 disability discrimination act

2 data protection act



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Examiner Comments

In this answer two specific examples are identified and therefore 2 marks are awarded. Note that the Disability Discrimination Act is allowed in that accessibility would be something that would need to be followed when selling products from a website.

Question 9

A major issue with Q9 was that candidates did not respond to the command word in the question. This was a 'discuss' style question which required candidates to consider both sides of an issue in the answer. The question asked for candidates to discuss the benefits of TV advertising. The majority of candidates therefore only described the positive aspects of TV advertising for Marks and Spencer. In order to access Level 3 they should have also considered possible negative aspects in order to make a judgement as to how much of a benefit TV advertising is to a business such as Marks and Spencer. This could be done through considering the cost of TV advertising or the possible negative association that can come through celebrity endorsement.

Where candidates only considered the positives of TV advertising then they could score no higher than 4 marks which was the modal mark for this question.

^{-wide audience}
^{-5 minutes}
*9 Discuss **two** benefits to M&S of using television adverts to promote its products.
Television adverts can last up to around 5 minutes. Although it may be expensive, money would not be a massive issue for one of the UK's leading retailers. M&S could create an advert for 5 minutes which would ~~allow~~ create a large impression on the audience. It would also allow them to advertise a vast array of products.
A People of any age + style can watch TV which creates a wide audience base. M&S could have many different adverts for different things such as kids wear and adults wear.
This would allow them **(Total for Question 9 = 6 marks)** to hit their target audience ~~and~~ ^{with} a wide range of customers at once. However it could also allow them to make it specific as to who they were aiming for as their target audience.



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This example not only discusses the benefits of TV advertising but also considers the other side of the argument by recognising the expense of advertising on TV. This shows the candidate has responded to the command word and has moved into Level 3.

The candidate also writes the answer in the context of Marks and Spencer meaning the answer is awarded full marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always respond to the command word. Candidates should make sure they understand what each command word requires them to do and then include this in the answer. Mark schemes remain constant in the expectations from each command word and could be used to help gain further understanding.

*9 Discuss **two** benefits to M&S of using television adverts to promote its products.

One benefit is that they can pin point the market that they are reaching out to by using spots to advertise on certain channels at certain times and fit them around certain programmes, this allows the to advertise to there chosen



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has only focuses on the benefits of TV advertising. The answer talks about two benefits - 'pin point the market' and 'creating brand awareness'. Both of these are suitable benefits but the answer is not balanced and therefore cannot be placed into Level 3. 4 marks are awarded.

Question 10

*10 Using your knowledge of business communication, assess the importance to M&S of using new technology to communicate with its customers.

It is important for M&S to use new technology to communicate with its customers because, more and more people are using technology. This means that, if M&S were to use Facebook to communicate with its customers, not only would they receive feedback, they could also advertise to millions of potential customers, this will lead to thousands of new customers and as a result, M&S would get much more profit ~~which~~ which results in a better net cash flow and them being more competitive with other leading supermarkets. Another reason for M&S to use new technology is, they could receive more feedback from customers, and if they receive ~~and~~ ~~and~~ a similar complaint from multiple customers, they could make the decision to change it, which lead to a higher rate of customer loyalty and as a result, M&S would receive more profit and gain a better net cash flow.

(Total for Question 10 = 10 marks)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Despite this question being worth 10 marks the principles of answering it are the same as explained earlier in Q4(d) and Q6(d). The command word is 'assess' so a balanced answer is expected which is written in the context of Marks and Spencer.

This example is typical of many able candidates who clearly have a good understanding of the question and make relevant points. However the answer only considers one side of the argument and does not make a balanced judgement. The candidate has only concentrated on the positives of communication via new technology and has not considered any potential negatives. This confines the answer to Level 2. 6 marks are awarded.

An important point ~~is~~ for M&S using new technology to communicate with customers such as social media is it allows younger generations to be aware of the store. As the trading figures of M&S are the lowest they've been in 3 years, the business needs to expand advertising techniques. The new technology use shows customers that M&S can move with modern ideas, which as a result creates a better public view of M&S. This can lead to more shopping at M&S and the businesses sales increasing.

However the ~~is~~ new technology communication with M&S customers may be unpopular with some, because a lot of the older generation like M&S but don't have access to new technology. So M&S could be breaking down the communication with loyal customers. As a result customers will no longer want to shop at M&S due to their changing priorities. Resulting in the sales falling even lower in the next 3 years.

In conclusion new technology is important for M&S to communicate with the younger customers yet the business needs to continue with ~~more~~ more old fashioned methods also to make sure loyal customers

don't feel alienated and the break down of good communication doesn't occur.

(Total for Question 10 = 10 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 20 MARKS

TOTAL FOR PAPER = 90 MARKS



When compared to the first example this answer displays a far more balanced assessment. The candidate considers both sides to the argument before arriving at a conclusion. This is what examiners are looking for when assessing evaluation.

9 marks are awarded. It is not given all 10 marks because of the quality of the conclusion. The conclusion does add value to the answer and therefore moves the mark from 8 to 9 within Level 3. However to get 10 there needs to be some focus on the key criteria that influences a decision. This can best be done using the 'it depends' rule where the candidate identifies a key factor that could influence the decision one way or the other.

The 'it depends' rule is a very useful tool in writing conclusions. It helps candidates to move away from simply repeating points they have made earlier in the answer.

Paper Summary

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

- The full range of the specification is used to base questions on, make sure you are familiar with the content
- Create a glossary of terms listed in the specification to help prepare for the definition questions.
- Respond to command words in the correct way:
 - Describe** = give details of how something can be achieved. The answer can be developed to give further information.
 - Name** = give a named example not a generic one
 - Explain** = develop the reason/method/advantage/disadvantage with two relevant points of explanation.
 - Assess/Evaluate** = look at both sides and positives/negatives for higher marks
- Question 2 onwards are based on a business scenario. Therefore the majority of answers will require you to apply your knowledge to the business scenario. This is known as answering the question in context.

Grade Boundaries

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