

Criterion	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total
Marks available	4	6	6	3	3	3	25
Marks awarded	2	2	2	2	1	1	10

## Overall

This commentary could have achieved a higher mark with a relatively small amount of additional work. At times it is stylistically awkward, weakening the overall impact. It also lacks overall clarity. The references to the supporting documents are implicit rather than explicit and their referencing is not always clear. Therefore more direct reference to the supporting documents, and clearer use of evidence drawn from them would have helped the overall focus of the commentary.

The commentary does, as required by the *Business and management guide* (March 2007), refer to a single business organization and does have the potential to be an interesting commentary. The research question is sensibly phrased and suitably focused, though the market they are operating in could be made more evident. The choice of supporting documents is a little narrow with a number of internal company web pages, and this does not invite in-depth analysis of the issue. This affects the performance on both criteria A and C. Where the supporting documents lack breadth and/or depth, it makes it more difficult for the students to analyse the issue in detail. Contrasting approaches to the issue in the supporting documents help raise the level of analysis.

The student attached full versions of the supporting documents to the original commentary but, for copyright reasons, these are not included and web addresses are given in their place in this teacher support material. **Moderators are not expected to find referenced web pages and students are likely to be penalized under criteria A and C if full supporting documents are not presented.**

The lack of headings and effective organization in the commentary has also affected the performance making it difficult for the student to ensure a logical progression and integration of ideas through the commentary.

As specified on page 55 in the guide, “the aim is to find, for each criterion, the descriptor that conveys most adequately the achievement level attained by the student.” “The highest descriptors do not imply faultless performance, but should be achievable by a student.”

## Criterion A—Supporting documents

The commentary was awarded 2 marks under this criterion. The supporting documents are generally relevant, but lack sufficient breadth and in some cases depth. Three of the documents are drawn from the company’s own web site. While the use of internal information is not necessarily a problem, the pages used are fairly brief and essentially descriptive in nature. This makes it more difficult to analyse them in depth and there is limited quantifiable evidence of the issues under consideration in the commentary. Company accounts or historical data on sales would have been more effective in supporting the commentary. The article from *Der Spiegel* appeared to be well chosen, but a limited amount of information from the article was used—could more of the article have been relevant? The student did, as required by the guide, translate the key words here. If more of the article had been used (as perhaps it should have been), it would have been vital to highlight the relevant sections of the article and provide translations of those sections (page 53 in the guide).

The supporting documents, as required by the guide, are of a contemporary nature and were all written within a maximum of two years prior to the submission of the commentary. However, this is not entirely clear from the way the supporting documents are presented. It is recommended that students give precise details: dates of access as well as the dates of publication of the web pages. The student should also have highlighted the relevant sections from the supporting documents.

## **Criterion B—Choice and application of business tools, techniques and theory**

The commentary was awarded 2 marks under this criterion. The theory is superficially applied. The application tends on many occasions to be implicit rather than explicit. For example, on page 4, there is appropriate use of pricing theory, but this lacks some quantification or evidence, and is not related directly to the previous analysis of the marketing mix. This in turn is not really related to the question chosen for the commentary and so the use of theory is not as sophisticated as could have been the case. A supporting document which set out details of pricing for Tyrolit and their competitors may have helped in this regard. The SWOT analysis suffered from some opportunities being misclassified given that they were internal in nature.

## **Criterion C—Use, analysis and synthesis of data**

The commentary was awarded 2 marks under this criterion. It is within this criterion where the most improvement to the commentary could have taken place. The performance under this criterion was adversely affected by the narrow choice of supporting documents. This makes it more difficult to collect together a suitable range of data from the supporting documents. While the level of analysis in the commentary is arguably higher than level 2 in terms of its quality, it does not meet the criterion as specified. Under this criterion the commentary is judged according to the selection of data from the supporting documents. Where the data is drawn from elsewhere, it is impossible to credit.

The mark awarded under this criterion emphasizes the importance of selecting a broad range of supporting documents and highlighting the appropriate parts of them.

## **Criterion D—Conclusions**

The commentary was awarded 2 marks under this criterion. It is fair to say that “some of the conclusions are consistent with the evidence presented” but it would be difficult to argue that this is consistently the case and that the conclusions “... answer the commentary question.” There is new information and analysis added in the conclusion section and this detracts from the performance on this criterion.

## **Criterion E—Evaluation and critical thinking**

The commentary was awarded 1 mark under this criterion. There is “limited evidence of evaluation”. Judgments are simply stated rather than substantiated. This may, once again, be a reflection of a relatively poor choice of supporting documents. As the documents are descriptive, it was difficult for the student to get evidence from the supporting documents to back up their assertions/judgments.

## **Criterion F—Presentation**

The commentary was awarded 1 mark under this criterion. The commentary is “disorganized and lacks structure”. It would have benefited from further headings to create structure. There is some referencing of sources, but the main weakness is the lack of referencing to the supporting documents and no highlighting of the relevant sections of them. This makes it difficult to award a level 2 for this criterion. A bibliography is given, but there is insufficient detail relating to the sources of the supporting documents.