

Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2009

IGCSE

IGCSE Commerce (4340) Paper 03

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There were just 43 candidates, a large increase on previous years. The scores were polarised at each end of the range but went from 3 to 39.

Question 1 -this required students to demonstrate basic understanding using the scenario. Their task was to decide which of the aids to exporting was the most useful. The majority gained 2 marks.

Question 2 - candidates needed to show understanding of 4 terms in the sources in part a) whilst part b) sought interpretation of some Balance of Payments data. The latter proved much more demanding. Most recognised that trade had increased but very few identified a deficit that was worsening.

Question 3 -- part a) asked for a simple calculation to show a basic understanding of exchange rates and was well answered by nearly everyone. However, part b) considering the effects of exchange rate changes on import costs and selling prices differentiated effectively between candidates with deep and shallow understanding.

Question 4- in choosing various export aids, students had to apply commercial ideas and knowledge in outlining the advantages and disadvantages of each aid. Unfortunately, some weaker answers featured general things that help exporters such as advertising, banking rather than the specific ones given in the scenario. The answers using the aids provided tended to fall into 2 categories: strong answers giving 3 or 4 points with some balance (securing at least 12 marks) and weaker scripts providing little detail and not much development (scoring typically less than 6). The final part required evaluation but it was done in a disappointing way by most. Many concentrated on just the advantages of their chosen aid. In addition very few gave any emphasis to the new market aspect of the question. Another failing was the lack of recognition that direct comparisons between the chosen aid and the other possible alternatives was needed in order to make a thoughtful assessment.

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