



GCE AS Examiners' Report

Business
AS
Summer 2024

Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.edugas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner Eduqas

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Executive Summary

Both examination papers were of a similar standard to previous examination series. Some areas of content proved more challenging than others, notably:

- Demand and supply diagrams
- Role of ACAS
- Organisational design
- Stock control
- Use of qualitative data
- Factors affecting price equilibrium.

In the main, most candidates were able to show sound knowledge and understanding across the content. However, there was evidence of some lack of clear understanding with candidates being unable to develop their understanding and apply this to the given context. Many candidates fail to show clear understanding of topics, often writing short responses or listing points.

Candidates continue to offer application by simply using the name of the business. This is not application; candidates need to apply their understanding through embedding their response in the given context. The information given in the stem is given for a reason and should be used by candidates as a hook to the question. This information can be used to help the candidate frame their response.

On the whole candidates demonstrated good knowledge and use of a variety of quantitative skills. Though many candidates are making careless calculation errors or not including their workings. Candidates should be encouraged to always show clear workings on their scripts as they could pick up “own figure rule” marks where they make one error in a multi stage calculation.

To reach the higher bands of assessment, candidates need to develop lines of reasoning for AO3 and balanced and developed judgement for evaluation. Many candidates continue to offer superficial or brief evaluation. AO4 also requires a balanced evaluation, many candidates gave one sided evaluation.

Care is needed in reading the question, all too often some candidates miss opportunities to gain marks by not recognising the command word or misreading the content requirements of the question.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Underpinning knowledge and understanding	COMPONENT 1 KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS COMPONENT 2 KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS	A bank of sample knowledge organisers to support the learning of AS Business
Exam technique	EXAM WALK THROUGH	Practical hints and tips on how to effectively approach questions in the examination paper
Developing analysis and evaluation skills	RANGE OF BLENDED LEARNING ACTIVITIES	A set of interactive self-study content covering AS Business content

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COMPONENT 1 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITES

Overview of the Component

Component 1 (AS) was a very accessible paper with the overall standard of response being good. From a holistic viewpoint the knowledge of learners was evident but there were some issues surrounding the level of skill required for a small number of higher level questions where learners tended to list knowledge points as opposed to analyse or evaluate. This may demonstrate a need to focus on developing skills alongside knowledge and the use of command words when responding to a question. Quantitative skills were good overall, and the majority of candidates attempted all questions.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Q.1**
- (a)** Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of market research. Some responses were vague in nature, for example 'to find out trends'. This sort of response in itself was not credited unless combined with the idea of gathering data or information.
 - (b)** Overall, a well answered question. The majority of candidates were able to easily identify different market segments. Some candidates were less able to apply these segments to the specific business context. Some of the context provided was too brief in nature, for example using income as a market segment because 'can afford it'. The 'it' not being enough to warrant context marks.
 - (c)** A question most candidates could access quite easily with knowledge marks easily achieved. However, the analysis of the importance to the local economy was more limited in nature. Candidates could clearly identify the importance of creating employment or paying tax but did not continue to explain how these points impact the local economy. It was typical to award Band 2 for AO1 and Band 1 for AO3.
 - (d)** It was pleasing to see this question was attempted by 100% of candidates. A very accessible question with a mean mark of 6.6. Candidates were able to apply a good level of context and demonstrated a real understanding of the benefits or drawbacks of each location option. However, candidates did not always weigh out the options against each other and sometimes failed to include a justified suggestion as to the most appropriate location. This resulted in a proportion of candidates only achieving Band 2 for AO4. Furthermore, a small number of candidates did make some attempt at providing context, but this was not very well embedded into the response and presented more as an add on to the end of the paragraph.
- Q.2**
- (a)**
 - (i)** The majority of candidates were able to state the formula for revenue with no issue.
 - (ii)** The majority of candidates were able to state the formula for calculating profit.

- (iii) The majority of candidates were able to calculate the current level of profit. A small number of candidates received 1 mark for either the calculation for contribution or total sales revenue but failed to achieve full marks due to the omission of fixed costs from the total costs. A very small number failed to include the pound sign (£).
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to accurately calculate the new break-even output. A small number failed to include units, but this was only very occasionally.
- (c) This was a well attempted question with candidates being asked what qualitative factors to consider when deciding between two options. The layout of the question made it very clear the options being considered and was therefore a well attempted question by the majority of candidates.

The awarded marks for this question were more limited due to the candidates understanding of 'qualitative factors'. Several candidates approached this question from a quantitative perspective often quoting the price change as a consideration. This is deemed to be a quantitative factor and was therefore not awarded. This was a point marked question where context and analysis were built upon the factor given.

When awarded, the AO2 was well applied with most candidates providing thoughtful considerations about the option being discussed. The mean mark was 3.4.

- Q.3**
- (a) This question was well attempted by candidates with some good responses. Few lacked clear reasons for protection, but overall the responses were reasonable.
 - (b) The calculation required proved more difficult with many candidates not being awarded the mark. A good majority misread the requirement to be to reduce the given sales revenue by 25%. Instead, the requirement is to find the original amount of revenue before the 25% increase.
 - (c) Attempted by 84.4% of candidates, this question proved a bit difficult. Most were able to recognise this question as requiring factors that impact supply and demand and explain how this effects the price equilibrium. Many candidates would refer to the term 'price' and this was not awarded. Most candidates did provide factors that impacted supply and/or demand but a large number of these did not include the impact on the price equilibrium or how these factors lead to an increase or decrease in price. The vast majority of candidates also failed to note the command word to evaluate and were therefore limited in the marks received with no conditional factors provided and no judgments made. The mean mark for this question was 2.4.
 - (d) Attempted by the majority of candidates, this question was mostly answered well. A few candidates may have misread the question as limited liability which limited marks.

- (e) A large proportion of candidates attempted this question (93.5%). Most of these showed good knowledge of legal structures with some analysis of the appropriateness however, the analysis tended to be uneven with only a limited number of issues. Higher ability candidates were able to weigh the options against each other as opposed to lower ability candidates who gave more generic advantages and disadvantages for each option or listed their points as opposed to developing them.

A good proportion of candidates were able to use the context given with consistent reference made throughout the response, but some only stated data with no further analysis provided.

A small minority of candidates achieved top marks for AO4 which required a well-balanced evaluation of the key issues surrounding sole traders versus partnerships. Most candidates lacked reasoned judgements and balance with very few offering key depends on factors. The mean for this question was 2.8.

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COMPONENT 2 BUSINESS FUNCTIONS

Overview of the Component

Component 2 (AS) was well attempted with over 90% of candidates attempting all questions. The higher tariff questions were well attempted with 96% and above making attempts. There is potential evidence for slight timing issues with a few candidates presenting inconsistent approaches to the essay portion. For some, the larger essay question was brief suggesting they may have run out of time.

Overall, Component 2 was another very accessible paper with the overall standard of response being good. Knowledge was fairly sound in most areas with future areas of focus needing to shift to keeping responses in context and ensuring balance when evaluating.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Q.1**
- (a)** Attempted by 100% of candidates. There were some limited responses that showed only a limited understanding of recruitment with the responses being too brief or only referring to 'hiring' a new worker.
 - (b)** The majority of candidates did show the quantitative skills necessary however some unfortunately misread the question and did not provide the correct answer. The question needed the amount of stamp duty as opposed to the total amount being paid. Those who did not show their workings unfortunately missed out on this mark.
 - (c)** Whilst well attempted, some candidates were either unable to complete the diagram due to lack of knowledge or mixed up the supply and demand curves. Where both lines were shifted the AO2 mark was withheld. For most the labelling and follow on description was well attempted and mostly accurate. This was attempted by 96% with a mean score of 2.4.
 - (d)** The vast majority of candidates were able to correctly identify two external stakeholders. Only a small few included internal which limited the marks received. The area most limited was context (AO2) where a large number of candidates failed to reference both of the government changes – instead just focusing on the restrictions to advertising. To achieve band 2 for AO2, reference needed to also be made to the limitations on 'buy one get one free'.
 - (e)** Another well attempted question with 97.4% responding. Similar to question 1(d) there was limitation with the marks awarded due to candidates not referencing both of the government changes. This would limit AO2 and AO1 marks to band 1, however band 2 for AO4 could still be achieved. Even so, some candidates were limited with their evaluation only providing partial judgments or not justifying points made. The mean for this question was 3.6.

- Q.2**
- (a)** One of the lesser attempted questions at 90.8%. Of the candidates who did respond, responses were more on the limited side. For some, generic reference to 'advising people who lost their jobs' was made but was not awarded if not coupled with employment law or disputes, etc.
 - (b)** Overall, a good question. Candidates showed a good understanding of the benefits of off-the-job training. Some care should be taken to ensure the actual question is answered – it asked for the benefits and not the limitations. Marks were occasionally withheld from AO3 due to not providing a full impact of the benefit.
 - (c)** A good question with most candidates understanding the differences between tall, flat and matrix structures along with the advantages of each. The main issue with responses was the failure to include balance within their arguments and/or not including any depends on factors. The best responses did provide arguments as to whether the change was 'the best way' with statements to support their points. This was attempted by 96% with a mean score of 3.6.
- Q.3**
- (a)**
 - (i)** A well answered question with 100% of candidates attempting. Only a small few lost a context mark for not adding a pound sign.
 - (ii)** Attempted by 98.7% of candidates, most demonstrated good knowledge of ways to add value and were able to provide at least one of them in context. Some marks were lost due to limited explanations or only explaining how one way added value.
 - (b)**
 - (i)** Well responded to with the vast majority of candidates demonstrating the correct calculation.
 - (ii)** Well responded to with the vast majority of candidates demonstrating the correct calculation.
 - (c)** One of the lower responses with 96% attempting. For the most part there was good use of the data for AO2. Most candidates would refer to the budget with some also including information from the extract. To achieve band 3 for context, continuous reference needed to be made with both parts being fully included. There were a large portion of marks lost within the analysis (AO3) due to a misread of the question where candidates would analyse the budget itself as opposed to use of budgets or the budgeting skill. This would reduce the AO3 to band 1, however there was opportunity to achieve band 2 if loose referencing to decision making was made. Due to the misread, AO4 would also be impacted with candidates not able to achieve band 3 due to failure to evaluate the use of or skills. Furthermore, where the AO2 was limited to only the budget numbers and not the context, responses again would be limited to Band 2. The mean score was 4.9.
- Q.4**
- (a)** An underperforming question with only 7.9% selecting this essay. Of the few who attempted this question, there was some understanding of stock control systems however some of these candidates failed to include the necessary context for AO2 marks.
 - (b)** Candidates who attempted this question had a clear understanding of stakeholders and were able to provide some explanation around holding incorrect stock levels, but the analysis lacked detail. The responses in whole were undeveloped and lacked higher level skills to achieve above band 2.

- Q.5 (a)** The preferred of the essay questions with 54% attempting. The question required a diagram and there was a small percentage to who failed to include this. However, most showed a good understanding of the product life cycle and how this might impact marketing decisions. The best responses tended to systematically include elements product, price, promotion and place that were well linked to mass market computer games. Some candidates approached this more as an analysis of cash flow however marks were still awarded where linked to marketing decisions.
- (b)** With 52% of candidates attempting this question, there is perhaps a small amount of evidence to suggest issues with timing. The key to success is the reference to how internal and external sources of finance can be used for developing new products. The strongest candidates understood that it was dependent on the position of the business and/or the type of product as to whether internal or external was preferable – and they weighed this out. The analysis was fairly balanced in most responses and some more abled candidate provided excellent evaluation with clear judgements that were well justified. Overall, good responses were provided.
- Q.6 (a)** 31.6% attempted this question with good responses. Most had a clear understanding of leadership styles, however, some were not able to provide adequate context to ‘working from home’ to warrant marks above band 1. Some made reference to McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y and this was acceptable as a leadership style.
- (b)** Interestingly 34.2% attempted this question - a few had left part (a) blank which could further evident some potential timing issues. Overall, this question was well responded to with many of the candidates recognising at least 2 motivational theorists, in particular Taylor and Mayo. The responses were well analysed with the best responses including balance and conditional factors to round the responses out. Some candidates however would only focus on one side or failed to support the judgements made with qualifying statements. This would limit the higher order marks achieved. A small majority would stray from ‘money being the motivator’ and instead weighed out the motivational theorists. When Taylor was included with piece rate pay, marks were still accessible however AO3 and AO4 were likely limited to band 2.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 029 2240 4257

Email: business@eduqas.co.uk

Qualification webpage: [AS and A Level Business | Eduqas](#)

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | Eduqas](#)

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