Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International A Level
Business (WBS11 01)

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Report on individual questions

Question 1a

This question was very well answered by most students who demonstrated a good understanding of the term niche market. Most referred to a niche market being a small segment of the market which targets specific customer needs. Some relied on giving examples, but a reminder that examples are not awarded marks in the two-mark definition questions.

Question 1b

The majority of students were able to produce a supply and demand diagram, show the correct shift and label the equilibrium points. Many students were awarded the full 4 marks. Some lost marks for not correctly labelling the equilibrium points on the axis or for showing a shift in demand rather than supply. There are still many examples of students drawing both a shift in demand and a shift in supply. In this instance students are not awarded the application mark for the correct shift or the second analysis mark for the new equilibrium.

Question 1c

This question was poorly answered by many students. Whilst is was evident most students were able to define price elasticity of demand (PED) to gain the two knowledge marks, many were not familiar with the factors that determine PED. Many students wrote about demand factors rather than PED factors and gained no application or analysis marks. Students must be able to distinguish between PED determinants and demand determinants.

Question 1d

It was clear that students understood the term differentiation, and most students used the evidence in the source booklet to give context to their answers. It was also encouraging to see that most students attempted to provide a counter argument to give balance to their answers. However, the counterbalance was typically very generic with many students simply saying differentiation was costly, without expanding on their point to show consequences to the business Oppo. This prevented many students gaining high level three marks.

Question 1e

It was evident that most students had a reasonable understanding of primary research and the advantages it brings to a business. This this question was reasonably well answered with students able to contextualise their analytical points. However, as with 1d, students provided very generic counter-balance. Many students simply wrote that primary research was expensive without expanding on this point to highlight consequences to the business Oppo.

Question 2a

This was well answered with a significant number of candidates gaining the full 2 marks for

defining social media. A reminder once again that marks are not awarded for giving examples.

Question 2b

It was surprising to see that many students gained no marks for this question. Students were required to demonstrate basic quantitative skills using division and multiplication. In line with the specification students should be prepared to apply numerical skills in a range of business contexts.

Question 2c

This question was quite poorly answered by many students. This is the first time this topic has been examined in this 2018 specification and it appeared that many students were unfamiliar with the topic.
Some students wrote about the advantages of collective bargaining for the employees rather than for the business. Students should be reminded to read the question carefully and fully answer the question asked.

Question 2d

There was a varied set of responses to this question. Some students wrote about the advantages of television advertising and applied it well to Deutsch Bank and its promotional campaign . However other simply wrote about the merits of using Laura Decker and her father in the promotional campaign. Again, students must read the question really carefully to assess the topic being examined. Once again, the counterbalance was often weak in terms of context and consequences to the business. Simply stating that TV advertising is expensive is insufficient to gain the higher-level marks.

Question 2e

Many students are familiar with the topic of organisational structures and demonstrated good knowledge of the topic. Generally, these responses however were very generic in nature and simply provided a list of advantages and disadvantages of flat structures. Students should use the evidence provided to provide context to their answers and practice developing coherent chains of reasoning to explain the consequences of organisational structures to specific businesses.

Question 3

The majority of students showed some understanding of training and recruitment methods and were able to access level two marks. Again, as is common with this essay question, many students simply list of advantages and disadvantages without contextualising to a specific business.
It is particularly important that students answer all elements of the question. The question was not just about the merits of training and recruitment methods, it was asking how these methods might help Japan become more competitive in the AI industry. The majority of answers failed to attempt / provide a judgement or recommendation and conclusions simply repeated the points already given. There was no real evidence to suggest that candidates did not have enough time to complete the paper with the majority attempting to answer question 3.

Summary

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

- Students should ensure they spend time providing balance to their answers. The counterarguments should be specific to the business examined and not a generic point of evaluation.
- When constructing a supply and demand diagram students should not show shifts to BOTH demand and supply. Such answers will not be rewarded marks for the shift or the new equilibrium point
- It is important that students read the questions very carefully. Many are writing generic answers which do not fully address the question. Do not simply list everything you know about a topic, read the question carefully and check you are fully answering the question posed.
- Students need to practice quantitative skills. Students should be prepared to apply numerical skills in a range of business contexts.
- Some students are still copying sections form the source booklet to use as application. Do use examples and evidence in the source booklet to illustrate your argument. However, do not simply copy evidence from the source booklet without using this information to explain your answer. Stand-alone evidence will not be rewarded if it does not support the points being made.
- Students are reminded to add a conclusion or recommendation for the longer questions.