



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Business (4BS1) Paper 02

PE REPORT ON GCSE INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS STUDIES 4BS1 02 – 2020

GENERAL COMMENTS

Candidates appeared to have found this paper accessible and were able to complete the paper in the allotted time. For the majority of the questions candidates were well prepared and were able to apply their knowledge, analyse and evaluate to answer the questions. However, a number of candidates struggled with the 'State' questions.

Many candidates had gained a great deal of business understanding from studying the course and this was apparent in the answers given. However, there are a number of candidates who are answering the questions detailing their knowledge of the topic without giving any application, analysis or evaluative comments. This does restrict the candidates' access to the full range of marks. The scenario of Emirates, a real life business, perhaps interested the candidates which meant that they were able to relate their comments to the business.

The mark scheme includes the Assessment Objectives (AO's) to help in the preparation of candidates for future examinations. Just to reiterate, that all four of the Assessment Objectives are covered throughout the paper and the percentage breakdown of each AO can be seen on page 7 of the Getting Started for Teacher's Guide and page 22 in the Specification. Also on page 32 of the Teacher's Guide and page 31 of the Specification, are examples of the command words used that indicate which of the AO's are being tested. For example in question 2 (f) and 3 (e) the command word is 'Justify' and the Assessment Objectives being tested are AO2 – Application, AO3 – Analysis and AO4 – Evaluation. Candidates are asked to write an extended answer, using information provided in order to recommend one of the two options to a business.

It is important that candidates take into account the marks allocated for each question, giving them guidance on the amount of detail they need to answer the question. It is also worth mentioning, that the examination paper is marked using the online 'ePEN' system, therefore candidates must indicate if they have continued their answer somewhere else on the paper or have added additional sheets. Although many candidates did follow this information there were still a number who did not. The examiner may not realise that a candidate has continued writing somewhere else on the paper unless it is made clear. For those candidates that used additional paper, their response to the questions must be clearly identified on the paper. Sufficient lines are given for candidates to answer questions. It is also important that candidates clearly label the additional pages to show which question they are continuing with. Examiners are unable to guess if a candidate has continued the answer somewhere else. Candidates must clearly indicate by using 'continued', 'contd page' or 'see separate sheet'.

There are also some candidates who do not follow the instructions of the examination paper, for the first six questions, are multiple choice and candidates are given the instruction to mark an 'X' in the box. There are some candidates who are using 'ticks'.

Questions can be taken from any part of the specification; therefore centres should ensure that all sections are covered so that they do not disadvantage any candidates. From the work seen it appeared that some candidates had not covered the full specification.

COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

Question 1

The multiple choice questions were answered quite well by the majority of the candidates. Questions 1 (a) (i) and (ii), only half of the cohort gained the mark available, perhaps not fully understanding what applies to a public limited company and which department would send out invoices. Questions 1 (a) (iii) and (iv) over three quarters of the candidates gained the mark available. Question 1 (a) (v) the calculation question more than half of the candidates did not get the calculation correct, perhaps the wrong figures were used in the calculation.

In part 1 b – less than two thirds of the cohort gained the mark available, showing that perhaps candidates were not familiar with the term social enterprise, which comes under specification 1.2.3 different forms of business organisations, some referred to the government owning the businesses.

In part 1 c – another 'Define' question, candidates had to define, globalisation. Four fifths of the candidates did not gain the mark for this question. A number of candidates referred to the world changing. If they had developed this comment further they could have gained the mark available.

In part 1 d – this is the first of the 'State' questions where candidates must relate their response to the business. Only a quarter of the candidates gained the mark available. Although from the responses seen many candidates understood what the term competition pricing meant, but did not relate it to the scenario of Emirates and thus did not gain the mark.

In part 1 e – a calculation question where candidates had to calculate the Net Cash Flow for Emirates. Over half of the cohort did not gain the mark for correctly working the calculation out.

In part 1 f – a question where candidates could have developed their answers more to gain the full 3 marks available. Nearly two thirds of the candidates did not gain any marks on this question. From the responses seen there were a number of blank responses for this question. A quarter of the cohort gained either one or two marks, having an understanding of the Herzberg's motivational theory. A number of candidates confused Herzberg with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which did not answer the question.

In part 1 g – this is the first question in the paper which is marked to levels. Candidates were asked to analyse why Emirates would want to use financial information when making business decisions. To gain the marks available candidates needed to apply the information and then analyse. Unfortunately a large number of candidates gave in depth detail of the documents they could use for financial information but did not apply to Emirates or how they would be used and therefore did not gain the marks available. Some candidates repeated the information from the stem which is not worthy of a mark. A number of candidates gave a list of the documents and what is included in them, without giving reasons as to why the bank would want to look at them. Two thirds of the candidates gained either marks in Level 1 or Level 2. With a fifth of the cohort gaining no marks.

Question 2

In part 2 a – a ‘State’ question where candidates were asked to state one non-financial method to motivate employees. Again as mentioned previously candidates were able to identify a non-financial method but did not relate it to the business and therefore did not gain the mark available.

In part 2 b – another ‘State’ question, candidates were asked to state one reason for having a loyalty programme for its passengers. Candidates were able to give some valid reasons but again did not relate it to Emirates, with less than two thirds of gaining candidates not gaining the mark available. On these type of questions candidates should be encouraged to ensure that it is related to the scenario of the paper, to enable them to gain the marks available. For example, ‘ensuring that passengers travel with Emirates rather than another airline’. By just mentioning Emirates would not gain them a mark as the business is mentioned in the question.

In part 2 c – for this question candidates were asked to give one benefit of having full-time employees, and as the question is ‘explain’ they did not need to put it in context, although a large number did and are not penalised for doing this. Nearly half of the candidates did not gain a mark on this question. For some candidates there was confusion between full-time and part-time staff, and an understanding of what the difference is between the two. A number of candidates were able to given a detailed benefit of having full-time staff, showing clear understanding of the benefits to the business.

In part 2 d – nearly half of the cohort did not gain any marks on this question. As it was another ‘explain’ question candidates did not have to put it in context. From the responses seen some candidates appeared to be confused as to why seasonal staff are employed. A number of candidates mentioned that it allows other staff to go on holiday or have a break, which may be correct but is not a reason for a business using seasonal staff. A number of candidates understood the reason for hiring this type of staff during busy times, such as Christmas, but then did not develop their answers and gain the all marks available.

In part 2 e – nearly a third of the candidates did not understand why health and safety training is undertaken as part of an induction programme. From the responses seen most candidates were able to identify that having this training would help reduce accidents/injuries for employees but then did not develop their comments.

In part 2 f – candidates had to choose between the two methods of market research. Most candidates understood that they had to justify why they had chosen which option. However, a large number of candidates gave very detailed descriptions of the option chosen, which was knowledge and therefore not worthy of any marks. Most candidates identified the differences between the two methods of market research, although there was some confusion as the cost of each method to the business. Focus groups, was less well answered than questionnaires. For candidates to gain the higher levels they need to draw conclusions or make evaluative comments as to why they have made their choice, or perhaps why they have chosen one option as opposed to the other.

Question 3

In part 3 a – not well answered by the majority of candidates with over four fifths of the cohort not gaining the mark. From the responses seen most candidates made reference to the power certain people had, or that people from the top tell people at the bottom what to do, both are not actual definitions of what the term actually means.

In part 3 b – again this question seemed to challenge candidates with over three quarters of the cohort not gaining a mark. Candidates had to outline one reason for Emirates having a short chain of command. A number of candidates described what a short chain of command was, but then did not relate it back to Emirates and therefore did not gain the marks available.

In part 3 c – candidates should be encouraged to show their workings as advised in the question, as they could gain a mark for the formula, even if the actual answer is wrong. Four fifths of the cohort gained the full marks available for the question, however, nearly a third did not gain any marks. From the responses seen a number of candidates did not attempt the question.

In part 3 d – this question asked candidates to analyse why Emirates would want to be more environmentally friendly. From the responses seen a number of candidates misread the question and referred to Emirates being friendlier with its customers. Others mentioned that Emirates wanted to be more hygienic. Less than a fifth of the candidates gained no marks for this question. With half of the candidates gaining a Level 1 or bottom of Level 2 mark.

In part 3 e – again another option question where candidates have to justify which one of the two options would be more suitable to Emirates. As in question 2 many candidates described both methods of promotion giving the advantages and disadvantages. As mentioned previously there are no knowledge marks available for this type of question. Most candidates were able to apply the two options with over half of the cohort gaining either the top of Level 1 or a Level 2 mark. A number of candidates identified how Emirates could use the options but then did not evaluate their comments to gain the higher level.

Question 4

In part 4 a – this question was well answered by over two thirds of the cohort gaining the marks available, showing clear understanding of the calculation required. Again candidates should be encouraged to include their workings.

In part 4 b – most candidates were able to gain some marks on this question, with only just under a fifth of the cohort gaining no marks at all. As previously mentioned and indicated in the 'Getting Started Booklet', page 32, an analyse question is looking for application and analysis of why a business would interview pilots. Some candidates referred checking qualifications and experience, which would be carried prior to the interview. Half of the candidates gained a Level 1 mark. This could be because candidates have not yet experienced an interview for a job.

In part 4 c – It is worth pointing out to candidates that this question does carry the most marks and they should allow sufficient time to answer it with all four of the Assessment Objectives being tested. A number of candidates only completed a few lines and therefore did not gain many of the marks available. Some candidates are using bullet points or numbered format, this will not allow them to gain the higher level marks because they may not have analysed or evaluated the points made.

Candidates were asked to evaluate the changes in consumer spending and competition on Emirates. A variety of valid comments were made by candidates, such as mentioning the situation the world is in at the moment with the virus and how this has affected consumer spending, also more competition with cheaper airlines entering the market. However they then failed to develop these points and justify their decisions to enable them to gain the higher level marks. The majority of the cohort gained either Level 1 or the middle of Level 2. To gain the higher levels candidates must draw conclusions and justify the comments made.

Some candidates continued on additional paper, which is acceptable, Candidates must let the examiner know that they have continued their answer, simply by adding the word 'continued', or 'contd' or something similar is acceptable.