



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2021

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Commerce (4CM1/01)

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General

Candidates found the paper accessible and were able to complete it in the given 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 commercial 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 various scenarios throughout the paper are of real-life commercial operations, which perhaps interested the candidates and meant that they were able to relate their comments more easily to the questions.

The mark scheme includes the Assessment Objectives to help in the preparation of candidates for future examinations. Just to reiterate, that all four of the Assessment Objectives (AO's) are covered throughout the paper and the percentage breakdown of each AO can be seen on page 31 in the Specification. Also on page 44 of the Specification, are examples of the command words used. For example in question 2 (g) and 3 (f) the command word is 'Justify' and candidates are asked to write an extended answer, using information provided in order to recommend one of the two options to a commercial operation.

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 multiple choice questions candidates are given the instruction to mark an 'X' in the box. There are some candidates who are using 'ticks' which may not be picked up as the questions are marked by computer.

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.

Report on individual questions

SECTION A

Question 1

In part 1 a – nearly four fifths of the candidates gained the mark for identifying a characteristic of a limited company. Candidates should be reminded that if they do make a mistake when answering a multiple choice question, they should put a line through the wrong answer and an 'X' through the correct response. A candidate that marks two answers will not gain any marks.

In part 1 b – again well answered by the majority of candidates clearly indicating that they understood what describes a business in one country buying raw materials from another country.

In part 1 c – a define question, candidates had to define the term actuaries. Unfortunately, only one twentieth gained the mark for this question which indicates that candidates did not know the terms used within the theme of insurance. From the responses seen a number of candidates, referred to actuaries, as the people who negotiate insurance claims. They have understood where the term has come from but the actual meaning. Candidates should be encouraged to avoid using the term straight from the question when answering as this does not always show a definition.

In part 1 d – again another define question where candidates had to define, capital. This was also not as well answered by candidates with just over half gaining the mark available. From responses seen, candidates mentioned that it was the money/funds that a business earns as opposed to referring to it as money/funds that start a business.

In part 1 e (i) – a calculation question, where candidates had to work out the balance of trade for South Africa from 2018 to 2019. Just under half of the candidates did not gain a mark for this question and a third gained one mark. It is worth reiterating to candidates to get them to show their workings within the box, as they may have the correct formula and figures but did not make the calculation correct. By entering the figures for the calculation, they could have gained a mark.

In part 1 e (ii) - this is the first of the 'State' questions where candidates must relate their response to the scenario. Only a very small amount of the candidates gained the mark available. Although from the responses seen candidates understood the effect of the disadvantage for South African businesses of importing goods, but they did not put it in context and therefore did not gain the mark. Just by putting South Africa in the response

does not guarantee the mark, they need to include an example such as the cost of importing clothes from another country might make them too expensive for locals to purchase.

In part 1 e (iii) – another state question. Candidates had to give an advantage for South Africa of training internationally. Approximately a third of the cohort gained the mark available, again candidates must relate their response to South Africa to gain the mark.

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 a mark on this question on a topic that one would have expected them to have an understanding of. Mail order is widely used by most people around the world, however candidates needed to give one disadvantage of using mail order. A number of candidates may have misread the question and from responses seen gave advantages of using mail order. It is important that candidates read the question carefully before answering. The question asked for one reason as opposed to two, and on this occasion as it is an explain question, the response did not have to be in context.

In part 1 g – candidates were asked to give one advantage for a customer of consumer protection. Over half of the cohort were able to gain one or two marks with only a fifth gaining no marks. Many candidates commented on how they would feel safer buying goods knowing that it was covered from consumer protection with other comments mentioning that if the goods were faulty, they could return them.

In part 1 h – this is the first question in the paper which is marked by levels. Candidates were asked to analyse the impact on Pick n Pay offering its customers a variety of methods of payment. To gain the marks available candidates needed to apply the information and then analyse it. Unfortunately, a large number of candidates responded with comments relating to customers and not on Pick n Pay, which is not answering the question. Some candidates repeated the information from the stem which is also not worthy of a mark. Less than a fifth of the cohort did not gain any marks on this question, showing that the majority of the cohort were able to understand the benefits of having different methods of payment.

Question 2

In part 2 a – a multiple choice question where candidates had to identify which sector a business sell food and drink would be placed. Over three quarters of the cohort gained the mark available.

In part 2 b – a multiple choice question where candidates had to identify the principle of insurance which covers two businesses covering the same risk, again nearly two thirds of the cohort gained the mark available.

In part 2 c (i) – candidates had to look at figure 1 and then identify which age group uses the loyalty programmes the least. The majority of candidates were able to choose the correct group.

In part 2 c (ii) – again candidates had to refer to figure 1 and identify the age group that used the loyalty programmes with 69% and again the majority of candidates were able to choose the correct group.

In part 2 d – a define question where candidates were asked to define Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS). Nearly three quarters of the candidates gained the mark for this question, showing a clear understanding of what the term meant.

In part 2 e – this question was 'explain' hence candidates did not need to put it in context. The majority of candidates were not able to gain marks on this question, with over two thirds gaining either one or two marks, justifying why retailers offer self-service in its stores.

In part 2 f – nearly a quarter of the cohort did not gain a mark on this question. As it was another 'explain' question candidates did not have to put it in context. From the responses seen some candidates understood the principle of indemnity, but then did not develop the benefit to gain the marks available. A third of the cohort gained two marks.

In part 2 g – again this is a question that is marked by levels. Candidates had to choose between the two strategies that Kyra should consider when dealing with faulty goods. 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 two options, which was knowledge and therefore they did not gain any marks, this accounted for less than a quarter of cohort who gained no marks. This was also a question where a number of candidates continued on an additional sheet. Perhaps if they had not included details descriptions of why refunding the money or issuing a credit note they would probably have answered the question in the space provided. Some candidates made some very valid comments, but then did not develop them to gain the analyse and evaluate marks available.

SECTION B

Question 3

In part 3 a – another multiple choice question where the majority of the candidates gained the mark for a characteristic of a franchise.

In part 3 b – on this multiple choice question, four fifths of the candidates identified what would provide a product with a visual identity.

In part 3 c – a state question where candidates had to give an advantage of ecommerce for Ajkerdeal customers. Again, as mentioned earlier, from the responses seen, a number of candidates gave a valid answer but did not relate it back to Ajkerdeal, and therefore did not gain the marks available. Nearly a fifth of the candidates gained the mark. Even if the candidate mentions Ajkerdeal but did not put the response in context they would not gain the mark. An example where a candidate's response would not gain the mark. 'time is saved because browsing can be done via online searches in comparison to browsing store isles and departments'. The response is correct but not in context, for the candidate to gain the mark they could have added, 'to see the shoes available'.

In part 3 d – candidates were asked to give one reason why Ajkerdeal offers its customers an after sales service. Nearly three quarters of the cohort did not gain a mark on this question. Again, from the responses seen a number of candidates gave more than one reason, which is a pity. A number of responses included comments relating to repairing damaged products, comments on the warranty of goods, which were not answering the actual question.

In part 3 e – candidates were asked to analyse why Ajkerdeal holds seasonal sales at certain times of the year. Most candidates gained either the top of Level 2 or the bottom of Level 1 with just under a third of the candidates not gaining a mark. Candidates may have commented on why Ajkerdeal had sales but did not analyse the reasons of reducing seasonal stock such as summer shoes in the winter, so that more shoes could be added.

In part 3 f – again another option question where candidates had to justify which one of the two options would be more suitable for Ajkdeal from either buying from new suppliers in Bangladesh or buying from suppliers in different countries. As in question 2 many candidates described both methods of buying supplies giving the advantages and disadvantages. Again there are no knowledge marks available for this type of question. From the responses seen a number of candidates confused the two methods of where Ajkdeal should purchase the supplies from, which was a great pity. Over half of the cohort gained either the top of Level 1 mark and the bottom of Level 2. Candidates should be encouraged to analyse and evaluate the two options to enable them to gain the higher marks. There is no right or wrong answer on this type of question, the candidates can justify either one.

SECTION C

Question 4

In part 4 a - 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. Also as mentioned earlier candidates need to take care when writing their figures in the box, for some candidates it is difficult for the examiner to read, for example, if they have written a 4 or 9. However, nearly half of the candidates gained the two marks available.

In part 4 b – nearly half of the cohort did not gain any marks for this question. As previously mentioned, this is an analyse question, which is looking for application and analysis of why The Diskery would take out insurance on its premises. A number of candidates referred to customers stealing records, records getting damage while customers are shopping, are not related to the actual premises. Again, candidates had not fully read the question. It is important to reread the question perhaps three times to ensure that candidates answer what is being asked.

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 covered. 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 why The Diskery maintains a person service for its customers. A variety of valid comments were made by candidates, such as it gives the business a good reputation, customer satisfaction increases sales and many other relevant comments. However, they then failed to develop these points and justify their decisions to enable them to gain the higher level marks. Over half of the candidates only achieved a Level 1 mark for this question.

Some candidates continued on additional paper, which is acceptable, but if there is no indication on the examination paper that they have done so, valuable marks could be lost. 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.