GCSE Examiners' Report

Business (New)

GCSE

Summer 2026

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026



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 unit.

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	WJEC 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.wjec.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 WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.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.***

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC 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.wjec.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 WJEC 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 | WJEC

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

Contents

	Page
Executive summary	5
Unit 1: Introduction to the Business World	7
Unit 2: Key Business Considerations	11
Supporting you – useful contacts and links	15

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

Executive Summary

This was the first assessment opportunity for the Unit 1 exam and the Unit 2 externally assessed NEA. For the new unitised GCSE Business this was also the first assessment to take place at the end of year 10.

For the Unit 1 exam, although many candidates showed a good grasp of the content, it was also evident that many lacked the exam techniques to allow them to give effective responses to the set questions.

For AO1, candidates did have some gaps in knowledge, notably the new areas of content added to the new specification and many lacked precision of key terms, giving vague responses and hence not able to gain marks. Centres are encouraged to spend time with learners to acquire and develop core business terminology that is stated in the specification, as this will always be the assessment objective with the highest percentage of marks in the Unit 1 exam, that being 30 of the 60 marks.

AO2, application, will always contribute 20 marks. Many candidates in the first year missed out on these marks by demonstrating limited application skills, often ignoring the given data in the paper and giving generic answers when applied answers were asked for. It was notable that many candidates were unable to develop their responses for questions that were allocated more than a single mark. Centres are encouraged to spend time developing these skills with candidates and to use strategies that allow candidates to develop lines of reasoning and when asked to evaluate, give more than superficial judgements and one-sided responses.

Finally for Unit 1, there were a high number of scripts with ineligible writing. If the examiner can't read the response, then they cannot award any marks. Centres are encouraged to give time to candidates to practice writing for longer periods of time or contact WJEC to apply for Access Arrangements.

Unit 2 was the first time that externally assessed NEA has been used for GCSE Business and it was clear that this proved a challenge to many centres and candidates. The information given in the Unit 2 overview and comments on individual questions gives a breakdown of the issues that need to be addressed for Summer 2027. This advice is crucial to ensure that the correct approach to the NEA is followed, Centres are strongly advised to go through all the points in great detail to learn from the Summer 2026 series.

There were quite a few handwritten reports, which is acceptable, however, quite a few of these were illegible. Centres should consider allowing candidates to produce word processed reports if they are aware of some candidates who are unable to write their reports legibly.

The administration of this unit, especially using the correct declaration forms, including candidate and teacher signed declarations and uploading the work in one PDF or word file was not always good and did hinder the assessment process. As it was the first year, consideration was given to this, however from 2027 onwards centres must follow the instructions for completing the paperwork that accompanies the work and must also upload the work in one file. Some centres included links for the work, which would not work as they were linked to school networks, please do not include any links. Also, some scanned work was uploaded out of order or with pages missing. Centres are responsible for uploading the work in the correct format and failure to do so could result in candidate's work not being assessed. Centres need to allocate suitable time before the 5th May deadline to ensure these errors are eradicated.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

It is very important that from 2027 the correct brief (available from September 2026 on Portal) and declaration form (available from the 1st September on the subject page on the open website) are used.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

BUSINESS

GCSE

Summer 2026

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE BUSINESS WORLD

Overview of the Unit

This was the first series available for the new specification where candidates are entered for the Unit 1 exam whilst they are in year 10. Candidates have 8 main areas to study for the examination.

Candidates are assessed on AO1, AO2 and AO3 on this paper. The questions come from any of the 8 sections from the Unit 1 specification which aim to cover a wide range of topics and include a mix of multiple choice, short and longer responses questions. There is a 50% weighting for AO1, 33% for AO2 and 17% for AO3. Candidates can accumulate marks for AO1 with sound knowledge of the content and centres should encourage candidates to learn the key terms and vocabulary in preparation for the examination. The total mean mark for this paper was 28.5 out of 60.

AO2 is explain and apply in the new specification. This is still an area where candidates would benefit from more practice and the use of real business examples in the classroom. Many candidates still struggle to apply their knowledge to the businesses in the questions on the paper. Applying knowledge in context could include the size and scale of the business, whether it is new or established, the type of business and the industry it is in along with any other features given in the case study such as whether they are in a competitive market or if there have been any particular successes or challenges faced by the business or any other relevant points from the information provided.

AO3 answers still lacked development for the majority of questions on the paper. Candidates should be encouraged to develop points. For example, an increase in customers could lead to an increase in revenue and potentially profits, which would provide financial resources to help the business grow. This can then be further developed by acknowledging any negatives that may occur with the actions and decisions a business is considering. Understanding that the majority of questions are not marked for the number of points a candidate makes in an answer will help to focus on depth rather than quantity.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Question:

Q.1 Identifying the market described as a seasonal market was statistically the easiest question for candidates to answer. All candidates attempted the question and 97% gave the correct answer.

Q.2 Identifying decreased international trade as a feature of deglobalisation was statistically the second most accessible for question for candidates. 89.6% of all candidates gave the correct answer.

Q.3 Of all the multiple-choice questions, identifying steel producer as a business in the manufacturing sector was the most difficult with only 74.4% of candidates giving the correct answer.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

Q.4 (a) The majority of candidates scored 1 mark out of 2 for describing is meant by the term sustainability. Candidates wrote brief answers without an attempt to describe sustainability. Development could have been achieved from a more in-depth description or the use of an appropriate example. The best answers were where candidates referred to actions in the present not having an impact on meeting the needs of the future.

(b) Only 91.7% of candidates provided an answer to this question. The mean mark for this question was 1.3 out of 2. Many candidates were able to correctly give one of the three pillars of sustainability. A frequent incorrect answer given was 'ethical'.

Q.5 (a) 96.2% of candidates attempted to outline what is meant by the term unlimited liability. The mean mark awarded was 0.9 out of 2 demonstrating that candidates were able to offer a basic outline, but answers lacked development. Many candidates offered vague answers and were not specific to the owners of a business. For example, 'you could lose personal possessions' was seen frequently with no reference to who and in which situations this could occur. It was pleasing to see some answers that referred to the owners and business having a separate legal identity and some explained this was a feature of a sole trader or partnership.

(b) The mean mark for this question was 2.1 out of 4. This was due to either candidates only describing one advantage of being a sole trader or correctly identifying two advantages but not describing them for additional marks for development. Candidates that performed well on this question developed answers by explaining there were no other owners to have to agree decisions with or share profits with. Many candidates offered answers where the terminology used was vague. For example, 'they keep all the money' is too vague and not correct.

Q.6 (a) 97.5% of candidates attempted this question but it was statistically one of the least accessible questions on the paper. Many candidates offered a vague or simplistic answer such as 'the money made'. Marks were awarded where candidates correctly identified that revenue is made from sales.

(b) 95.7% of candidates attempted this question but the mean mark was 0.9 out of 2. Many candidates stated that a fixed cost is one that doesn't change but they were not awarded any marks unless they established it was a cost that didn't change with the level of output. Candidates need to be more explicit in their answer and not assume brief answers will gain marks. Many candidates were awarded a mark for giving a correct example of a fixed cost such as rent.

(c) 97% of candidates attempted this question with a mean mark of 1.4 out of 2. Candidates who showed their workings and how they correctly calculated the total costs were able to gain a mark even if they didn't get the final answer correct. Centres should encourage candidates to show workings for this reason.

Q.7 **(a)(i)** and **Q.7(a)(ii)** These two questions were in the top four questions for accessibility. Candidates showed a good understanding of stakeholders. Candidates who did not provide a correct answer, typically identified a stakeholder but not correctly as internal or external.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

(b) This was the third least accessible question for candidates on the paper. The mean mark was 1.7 out of 6. Candidates did not use the source material in the question effectively with many offering generic impacts of stakeholders on a business. Answers lacked development for AO3 marks with many responses being a brief identification of an impact such as increase or decrease in sales and no further development of the impact. Many candidates answered the impact Hotel Chocolat has on stakeholders and were not awarded any marks.

Q.8 The mean mark for this question was 1.3 out if 2 with the features of a charity correctly identified. A common wrong answer was 'they do not make a profit'. Candidates should develop their skills in writing definitions that are clear and accurate.

Q.9 (a) Candidates attempting this question was 93.8% with a mean mark of 0.6 out of 1. Common errors were when candidates attempted to explain e-commerce as a business without a physical store or giving a definition of m-commerce.

(b) 97% of candidates attempted to answer this question. The mean mark was 1.5 out of 4. Candidates attempted to apply their answers to Trigwell Cosmetics, but many did not develop their analysis for the AO3 marks. Many candidates offered answers that are generic business challenges and did not link them to operating at a larger scale. Examples included customers not liking their products or generic distribution issues that could be a challenge at any scale.

Q.10 (a) Statistically, this was the fourth least accessible question on the paper. The majority of candidates correctly identified an increase in profit and revenue as an advantage to VW being a multinational business. Candidates struggled to find a second correct advantage. Answers were generally brief and lacked the development of an explanation on the context of VW to access the AO2 marks.

(b) The mean mark for this question was 0.7 out of 2 demonstrating that candidates were unable to identify the stages of the supply chain. Many candidates incorrectly answered manufacturing.

(c) All 6 marks on this question were AO2 marks requiring an explanation of the importance of an effective supply chain in the context of car manufacturing. The mean mark for this question was 1.6 out of 6. Generic answers not relating to car manufactures were not awarded marks. A range of basic explanations were awarded the lowest band marks as the top bands were only awarded for good and very good responses. This is something centres should focus on as a wide range of limited points are still only limited. Candidates need to give depth to their answers to access the higher mark bands.

Q.11 (a) The mean mark for this question was 1.1 out of 2 with 98.7% of candidates attempting to answer. The majority of candidates gave the answer 'he spotted a gap in the market' but most were unable to develop this for the full 2 marks. Development is possible if they explored that there was opportunity to provide a wider range at lower prices or he could take advantage of the gap to create wealth for himself.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

(b) Only 89.6% of candidates attempted this question with a mean mark of 0.6 out of 2. This was the second least accessible question on the paper. Many candidates did not answer with innovation relating to new ideas. Whilst development could have included the need for new ideas in a dynamic environment, many candidates gave an answer that described a dynamic environment without reference to innovation. Defining key terms and explaining what they mean is an area centres should look to develop for future series.

Q.12 (a) The mean mark for this question was 0.6 out of 1. Many candidates confused the scale of the business with the sector they operate within or gave vague answers such as 'large.'

(b) This was the fourth most accessible question on the paper. Candidates gave a wide range of responses to identifying business aims other than profit. Candidates should be encouraged to be clear in answers such as increase market share and not just state market share.

(c) 98.4% of candidates attempted this question which is encouraging as it was the question with the highest possible marks of 8. The mean mark was 4 out of 8. Candidates were able to offer their view on which site Gregg's should choose, but answers were brief and not developed. Many candidates attempted to use the source material but stated information from it rather than develop it for the AO2 marks. Recognising the sort of premises Greggs would need will enable candidates to reach the higher mark bands. AO3 marks were also basic with many one-sided arguments given that lacked reasoning. Candidates should focus on a smaller number of points with greater depth and application to access the highest mark bands as a wide number of limited points that lack depth will not obtain good development.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

BUSINESS

GCSE

Summer 2026

UNIT 2: KEY BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

Overview of the Unit

This was the first series the Unit 2 NEA was made available to candidates. All candidates entered were in year 10 at the time of submission.

Candidates are assessed across AO2, AO3 and AO4. Each task focuses on an individual Assessment Objective. As AO1 is not assessed in this unit, no marks are given for generic business knowledge that is not applied, analysed or evaluated.

The majority of centres uploaded the work on time with the appropriate cover sheets and declarations. There were a number of centres where the incorrect declaration forms were submitted. From 2027, centres who use the wrong declaration form are at risk of not having the work marked. Centres should check the GCSE Business page on the website and WJEC Portal for any updates and the correct forms. All declarations need to be signed by the candidate and the teacher.

A wide range of businesses were used for the completion of reports. The selection of a suitable business is essential to enable candidates to access the full range of marks available. Where candidates are given a free choice, teachers should give clear guidance as to what would be appropriate. There was evidence of candidates selecting a charity and this led to marks being restricted in some tasks as not all criteria could be appropriately applied. Centres are also reminded that selecting large scale, national and global businesses is acceptable, but they need to have a presence in the candidate's local area, and the report must focus on the national business in the local area and not nationally.

Centres need to be reminded that all tasks in the assessment are to be completed independently. There was evidence where teachers had provided templates for research and the written tasks. This prevents candidates from accessing the higher marks and should not be done in future series. Where candidates were given unauthorised help, their marks were restricted.

The majority of candidates labelled tasks clearly. This help assessors to allocate marks where achieved. There were, however, a large number of reports where there was a lack of headings for tasks and this made marking more challenging especially when tasks had not been presented in order. Going forward, please ensure candidates clearly label the task and do not combine the tasks.

The research is Task 1 in the assessment. This does not need to be presented as an appendix at the end of the report. It should be included at the start of the report where tasks can be labelled and presented for assessment in numerical order. See below for more specific guidance.

The written report should follow the task order and each task labelled clearly. Where appropriate reference should be made to the research completed in Task 1. This helps the candidate access the highest mark bands.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

Candidates should take care to read the task and include appropriate content in their report. Reports should focus on specific tasks in the context of their chosen business and avoid generic answers. When the task requires analysis, candidates should attempt to look for a balance on their arguments as many tasks were completed from a positive point of view and did not consider any challenges or negatives. Make sure the candidate are aware of the command word per task as this guides what the candidates need to do.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Task:

(1a) The mean mark for this task was 4.1 out of 8. Most candidates included their research but, in many cases, this was a basic response. Candidates who performed well on this task were able to present a wide range of primary and secondary research that provided them with the information they required to answer Task 2 and 3 or 4.

Secondary information can be taken from a wide range of sources such as company websites, local and national news reports, government statistics, local authority web pages and any other suitable sources. Many candidates presented a limited range of sources with an attempt to find suitable information for some of the tasks.

Primary information was less appropriate in a wide range of candidates. Centres need to be explicit in the guidance as to the information that should be collected. Some candidates devised and collected surveys on customer opinions. This is not the most appropriate source for the tasks required and therefore limited the relevance of the research. Candidate's time would be more effectively spent interviewing staff or owners of the business they are studying to gain first-hand information on the business operations, the impact society has on it, the impact they have on society and the more specific details required for task 3 or 4.

This is an individual task where collaboration is not allowed. Centres need to make sure that candidates are provided with an opportunity to collect the information themselves. There were some centres where a collective list of questions was sent to a business and the business sent back detailed responses. The same research was included for all candidates and therefore marks were restricted as assessors are unable to validate the work completed by the candidate. The more appropriate collection of primary research was where candidates completed all the research independently which was clear with a wide range of individual businesses used by a centre or when a representative from a business spoke to a whole class, but candidates had clearly written up the answers provided independently of others.

Observations and photographs were also included in primary research. To be relevant, candidates need to label images and information clearly for the assessors to judge the appropriateness.

The highest mark bands were achieved where candidates presented a range of research that was appropriate to the tasks and included primary and secondary research from a range of sources. To reach mark band 4, candidates need to include quantitative and qualitative data.

By not collecting appropriate data for Task 1, many candidates restricted their ability to give appropriate and meaningful responses in their report.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

(1b) This task focussed on the presentation of the research. The mean mark awarded was 3.9 out of 8. The majority of candidates presented data in a basic format and somewhat disorganised manner. There were a number of centres where it was obvious candidates had been given a template to complete. This restricted the marks awarded to band 2 and a maximum of 4 marks.

A large number of candidates included images that recorded their observations during visits to the business. This need to be labelled and should be relevant for the tasks in the assessment. Many included images that had nothing to do with the set tasks.

Candidates accessing the highest bands presented the research in a structured and consistent manner. Side headings should be used to label research findings to indicate the task the information and data will be used for. Higher marks were awarded where there was clear structure to the presentation of information, side headings were used and there was a consistent approach to the formatting of text and images. If a research log is used, this should be created by the candidates and not given to them. Common headings may be used but it should be the candidate who decides what to include and the layout of any tables.

(2a) This was the most accessible task in the assessment with a mean mark of 3.5 out of 6. Candidates are given 8 bullet points to include in the summary of their chosen business. They are not required to write a paragraph on each point as this is a summary of the business operations of a range of points.

Candidates who accessed the highest marks addressed all points required in the context of their chosen business. All marks for this question are AO2 so the need to write in context is important. The highest marks were awarded when candidates were able to explain the operations specifically to the business chosen. There was a clear understanding of the business activity and explained using appropriate business vocabulary in the answers accessing the highest marks. Candidates need to ensure that when discussing location, they explain the location of the individual store/branch they have focussed their investigation on. Similarly, candidates should select a range of key stakeholders for their chosen business and their relevance to the business operations.

(2b) The mean mark for this task was 1.7 out of 4. All marks on the task are for AO2 and therefore the explanation of the impact society has on the business needs to be specific to the chosen business. Many candidates wrote generic responses of how society can impact a business. To access the highest marks, candidates need to use the findings from research to explain how society will impact the business' decisions on how they operate. The highest marks were awarded where candidates gave specific and relevant examples of actions the business has taken in response to society. A good example of this is where a candidate explained how a business changed their menu due to the increasing demand for vegetarian and vegan products which in turn had a positive impact on the number of customers and sales revenue. Detailed research on the business can support explanations showing the importance to plan the content in Task 1.

(2c) This was the second least accessible task on the assessment with a mean mark of 2.8 out of 8. Candidates generally described, and not analysed, how a business impacts society in a generic manner and not specific to their chosen business. Candidates need to provide specific examples of how the business activity/operations impacts society. Answers need to be developed to provide analysis of specific activities. The highest mark bands were awarded when candidates gave specific examples of the impact an action from the business had on society, but they developed the example analysing the positive and/or negative impacts this has on the business. For example, introducing the vegan and vegetarian options to meet customer needs and wants will attract customers, but may also increase costs to purchase additional equipment where ingredients need to be prepared and stored,

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

using equipment that is not used for meat and dairy, to prevent cross-contamination. It was evident that for many candidates, the quality and type of the research carried out limited the responses for this task.

(3a/4a) The mean mark for this task was 2.8 out of 6. All marks are awarded for AO2. Candidates are required to summarise the business actions focussing this series on either ethical or sustainable activities. Many candidates offered answers on how a business could act ethically or sustainably. To access the higher marks, candidates need to provide clear examples, supported by their research, on what the business actually does. Candidates that scored highest on this section, focussed on a few examples and covered them in detail using information from their research. This was more effective than candidates who try to cover all of the suggested points with little detail and generic in their response. The guidance in the task grid – " this could include", is only guidance and candidates do not need to cover them all, just the ones relevant to the business they are investigating.

(3b/4b) This was the least accessible task in the assessment. The mean mark for this task was 2.5 out of 8. Candidates are required to evaluate the impact of the business' ethical or sustainable activities. To access the higher bands, candidates need to focus on specific examples found from their research. Many answers were generic and could be applied to any business as they lacked the support from research and real examples of what the business is actually doing. As with the previous task, candidates who focus on balance and depth in their answers can access higher mark bands than those who attempt to explore a wide range of activities. For the highest mark bands, candidates need to evaluate by giving both advantages and disadvantages of the business ethical or sustainable activities.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026

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 2040 4257
Email: business@wjec.co.uk
Qualification webpage: GCSE Business | Made for Wales

See other useful contacts here: Useful Contacts | WJEC

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/

WJEC Qualifications

As Wales' largest awarding body, WJEC supports its education community by providing trusted bilingual qualifications, specialist support, and reliable assessment to schools and colleges across the country. This allows our learners to reach their full potential.

With more than 70 years' experience, we are also amongst the leading providers in both England and Northern Ireland.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2026