

Level 3 Examiners' Report

Business (Legacy)

Level 3

Summer 2024

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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.***

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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

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Executive Summary

Exam units

It is essential that on both exam units that candidates recognise that this is an applied qualification, and that many marks are allocated to applying their knowledge and understanding to given contexts. Candidates continue to offer generic responses that will automatically remove them from being able to access marks.

There were some notable gaps in knowledge and centres are reminded to make sure all the content in the specification, that includes the taught content and the exemplification, can be assessed. These gaps in knowledge were evident either through incorrect responses or by too many questions that were not attempted.

Centres should advise candidates to carefully read all questions to fully understand what is being asked and check if any potential answers are excluded from the rewardable answers.

It is also recommended that time is spent focusing on the requirements of different command words, especially effective evaluation to support candidates to achieve higher marks on the higher-tariff questions. When making judgements far too many candidates give brief superficial responses that can only ever access the lower mark bands, if obtain any marks at all.

Far too many candidates give short and vague responses to low tariff questions resulting in zero marks being awarded. Far more precision is needed in demonstrating knowledge of a Level 3 qualification.

NEA Units

On the whole centres approach the NEA well and have taken note of previous reports.

Centres have to follow the set tasks and not make any changes; this can have a detrimental impact on the marks achieved by the candidate.

Centres need to check that the business chosen by the candidate meets the requirements of the task. Centres should also make sure that candidates fully understand the requirements of each task, often parts of tasks are missing, this will reduce the number of marks a candidate can achieve.

This is an applied qualification, far too many candidates give generic responses in their work that are not specifically applied to their chosen business.

Each centre will receive an individual centre report that will give feedback on a number of issues, centres should make sure they read this report carefully and refer to it throughout the year to make sure they address any concerns.

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Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Exam technique	PAST PAPER AND MARK SCHEMES ONLINE EXAM REVIEWS	Used to show how marks are awarded
Knowledge and understanding	CONTENT THEORY COMPANION	Covers all key content needed for the exam units
Understand the requirements of NEA	EXEMPLAR WORK ON PORTAL	Examples of candidate work for Unit 2 and 5

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BUSINESS

Level 3

Summer 2024

UNIT 1: THE ORGANISATION: SURVIVAL AND PROSPERITY

Overview of the Unit

This was the final full sitting of this specification. There were 356 entries which was slightly lower than last year as some centres migrated to the revised specification - 300 English Medium and 56 Welsh Medium. Most candidates attempted all questions in Section A; however, a few candidates left some questions in Section B blank.

The questions focused on a case study about a woodworking furniture business, A Cut Above Ltd which proved an accessible context for candidates. There were no optional questions within this paper.

The performance of candidates across the paper was variable. Most teachers and candidates appeared conscious of the need to read questions carefully, but there was a lack of specific attention to the command words especially explain and evaluate. There was reasonable application of the theoretical content to the organisational context in most candidates' responses, although this continues to be an area that could be developed further. Applying the answers to the context will be particularly important for the revised specification due to the increased emphasis on AO2 (application). Some candidates gave generic answers to the extended response questions, consisting only of theory when they were required to apply their answers fully to the business scenario. These responses could not be awarded marks in the Level 3 mark-band.

Many of the lower tariff questions proved very accessible to candidates. Of the highest tariff questions, Q.4(c) regarding the benefits of on-the-job training proved to be accessible to most candidates with many Level 2 and 3 mark-band responses. The least accessible question to candidates was Q.3(d) which asked candidates to outline two legal factors that would need to be considered by A Cut Above Ltd when using ICT. This question was not attempted by the highest number of candidates and was poorly answered by those who attempted it.

Where continuation pages were used to complete extended response answers, these were generally poorly referenced, making it difficult to mark in some cases.

Comments on individual questions/sections

The questions in both sections were based on the A Cut Above Ltd business scenario outlined in the introduction to the paper.

Section A

Q.1 This question asked candidates to identify the functional area that recruits staff to an organisation. This first question proved accessible to many candidates and eased them into the examination with a mean mark of 0.8 out of 1.

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Q.2 The second question asked candidates to state which topic would not be found in a job description. This question proved accessible to fewer candidates with a greater proportion of incorrect answers and a mean mark of 0.6 out of 1.

Q.3 The third question was another multiple-choice question which asked candidates to state why a business may use a curriculum vitae (CV). This question proved more accessible with a greater proportion of correct answers.

Q.4 The final multiple-choice question asked candidate for a likely consequence to a business of mis-communicating its objectives to its workforce. This proved the least accessible of all of the multiple-choice questions with a number of incorrect responses and a mean mark of 0.4 out of 1.

Q.5 This question required candidates to identify the sector of the UK economy that A Cut Above Ltd's manufacturing activities would be associated with. Many candidates struggled with this question with several incorrect answers (mean mark of 0.3 out of 1). Many candidates incorrectly stated private or public sector.

Q.6 Candidates had to classify four stakeholders of A Cut Above Ltd as either private or public sector organisations. This was an accessible question with most candidates able to correctly identify at least three of the sectors.

Q.7 This question required candidates to identify the business term/phrase described by five definitions. This question proved accessible to many candidates as most were able to correctly identify most of the terms/phrases accurately. Shareholder was particularly well understood. Some candidates incorrectly stated business aims rather than SMART objectives for the final definition (specific and measurable results businesses hope to maintain as they grow).

Q.8 Candidates were asked to suggest and explain two reasons why the business may have changed its legal status from a partnership to a private limited company. Many candidates were able to score one or two marks for this question. Some candidates confused unlimited and limited liability. Some candidates misread the question and compared partnerships to a public limited company. Other candidates identified two reasons but did not go onto to explain either point which restricted the mark that could be awarded.

Q.9 For the final question in this section candidates were asked to explain one difference between a private limited company and a public limited company. Most candidates could write a simple explanation that focused on one of the types of ownership. For the full two marks candidates had to offer a comparison of private and public limited companies. The mean mark was 1)

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Section B

Each of the four questions in Section B developed the business scenario given in the introduction. Additional context showed the development of the organisation.

Q.1 **(a)** This question asked candidates to explain two reasons why an individual may wish to set up their own business. This question was generic and not linked to A Cut Above Ltd, although candidates could refer to the context in their answer. Many candidates could identify two reasons, but less were able to explain them. Some candidates identified more than two reasons, but they were capped to two marks as the question only required two reasons. The mean mark was 2.4 out of 4.

(b) Candidates were asked to explain the value of a business plan in supporting A Cut Above Ltd.'s expansion plans. Many candidates struggled to reach Level 2 or Level 3 with a mean mark of 2.3 out of 6.

(c) The final part of this question asked candidates to discuss whether A Cut Above Ltd should expand as a franchisor. Many candidates wrote generic answers about business expansion which could not extend beyond Level 1. The best answers used business terminology relating to franchises such as franchisor/franchisee and reference to royalty fees. Answers had to be balanced and fully applied to the context to get into Level 3. The mean mark for this question was a disappointing 3 out of 10.

Q.2 **(a)** This was an inaccessible question (mean mark of 1 out of 4) as many candidates had limited knowledge of tall organisational structures. Use of business terminology was limited and many candidates offering vague answers that could apply to any type of structure, for instance answers about employees being promoted could not be rewarded unless it emphasised that tall structures offer 'more' promotion opportunities. All organisation structures offer promotion opportunities, however, there are typically more available in a tall structure due to the number of layers in the hierarchy.

(b) This question appeared straightforward, but candidate performance was mixed. Candidates were required to state two functional areas of A Cut Above Ltd and describe the role that each of these areas will have in contributing towards achieving its objectives. In several cases only two marks were awarded for identifying an appropriate functional area. Many candidates were able to describe the tasks carried out by at least one function, however, many struggled to offer a clear link to the achievement of an appropriate objective.

(c) Candidates were asked to outline the purpose of a mission statement to a business. Some candidates appeared to confuse a mission statement with marketing materials as some answers focused on promoting products.

(d) This question asked candidates to describe the term total quality management. Many candidates offered a link to the quality of output. The best answers emphasised that quality is part of the business culture.

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(e) The final part of Q.2 required candidates to assess the view that in today's competitive business environment, A Cut Above Ltd.'s choice to act in an ethical way will only have a negative impact on the business. This question was not accessible to candidates and many answers focused on environmental issues rather than ethical issues. The mean mark was 1.7 out of 6.

Q.3 **(a)** This question was not accessible with many incorrect answers. A few candidates did not attempt this question. This question had the lowest facility factor (the mean mark as a percentage of the maximum mark) on the paper and a mean mark of 0.1 out of 1.

(b) **(i)** Most candidates attempted this question. Social media is a topic that candidates were familiar with. Most candidates identified a benefit to A Cut Above Ltd of using the Internet and social media to communicate with its customers. Popular responses focused on the cost benefits, ability to target customers and update information quickly. Vague answers such as 'easier' were not rewarded. The mean mark was 3.1 out of 6.

(ii) The next question asked candidates to explain two ways in which A Cut Above Ltd could analyse the effectiveness of using the Internet and social media to communicate with its customers. Popular responses included analysing feedback/comments from customers and how the number of sales change. The mean mark was 1.8 out of 4.

(c) **(i)** Most candidates identified databases or spreadsheets as suitable software to manage customer and/or stock information. Some incorrect answers stated Word.

(ii) This part of the question was less accessible to candidates, with a mean mark of 1.1 out of 4. Some candidates gave vague answers such as 'easy to use' which were not rewardable. Candidates appear to have limited understanding of some of the ICT topics in the specification.

(d) Many candidates were unable to outline two legal factors that would need to be considered by A Cut Above Ltd when using ICT. The best answers considered specific legal issues such as data protection. Many answers were vague. A number of candidates did not attempt this question, having the lowest attempt rate on the paper of 94%. The mean mark was 0.9 out of 4.

Q.4 **(a)** For this question candidates were asked to state two stages in the recruitment process. Most candidates gained at least one mark for this question. Common incorrect responses included selection, recruitment and tests. Even so, the mean mark was only 1 out of 2.

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(b) For this question candidates described two characteristics of an effective interview. Many candidates struggled with this question, although a wide range of responses were credited. Answers needed to focus on actions that the interviewer could take to make the interview process effective, such as giving the interviewee the opportunity to ask question or hold the interview in a quiet/private location. Many candidates gave vague answers about how the interviewee might respond to questions asked. Another disappointing low mean mark of 0.7 out of 4.

(c) This question was accessible to candidates, and many demonstrated reasonable knowledge of on-the-job training. It was a levels-based question, and most candidates achieved the two Level 1 marks by identifying suitable benefits such as it being cost effective or helping the employee meet colleagues that they will work with. The mean mark was 2.9 out of 6.

(d) The final question of the paper asked candidates to evaluate the decision to introduce a bonus scheme for the employees with reference to a motivational theory. Some candidates did not attempt to include a motivational theory in their answer and so did not get outside of Level 1. Answers in Level 3 were balanced with reference to both the advantages and disadvantages, ending with a clear judgement. The mean mark was 2.6 out of 8.

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BUSINESS

LEVEL 3

SUMMER 2024

UNIT 2: ACTIVE MARKETING

Overview of the Unit

Candidates were required to present the following:

Task 1

Select two organisations, one is to operate in the locality only, and the second should also operate in their locality, but also on a National and/or Global market.

Task 2

Candidates needed to analyse the market research undertaken by ONE of their organisations.

Task 3

Candidates were required to analyse the nature of the 7P's of the marketing mix within the context of their chosen organisation, as well as examining the function played by each of the 7P's. Lastly, they needed to analyse 3 of the 7P's in further detail.

The majority of the work uploaded this series met the WJEC administration requirements. These are:

- a document of administration that includes the authenticated mark record sheet and time sheet (PDF or Word doc)
- a single annotated document of the candidate report with appendices (Word or PDF doc).

There were some issues found i.e.:

- Some centres failed to use the controlled assessments found in the Sample Assessment materials document as required.
- Some centres sent a 'clean copy' of the candidate work which did not show the moderator where/why the assessor feels marks should be awarded. Centres are advised to show where assessment criteria (ACs) have been awarded by the assessor as this greatly helps the moderation process.
- Some centres uploaded as many as 12 documents for one candidate. This creates a very labour-intensive process for the moderator. We strongly advise scanning and uploading one PDF document per candidate, including the relevant documentation (Marksheets, timesheets, declarations) as per the instructions.
- Many centres uploaded PDF documents that were scanned upside down. This may seem trivial, however, collectively this can ensure a lengthy process for the moderator concerned.

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Tasks

Comments on tasks/questions relating to candidate performance/meeting assessment criteria

Task 1

In Task 1b some candidates confused marketing goals with marketing functions. Others used general business aims or goals rather than marketing goals. Please ensure that candidates clearly identify and relate to marketing goals in their report e.g., identifying consumer needs, effective liaison with customers and offering marketable products as shown (specification page 27).

Task 2

For Task 2a candidates must analyse the market research being undertaken by one of the organisations. The work presented by some candidates was mostly generic and could have applied to any business. Please ensure that the work is firmly in the context of the business chosen as a lack of relevant examples limits the mark that can be awarded (iSAM page 24).

Task 3

For Tasks 3a and 3b some candidates failed to address all 7P's as required. Please ensure candidates consider all 7P's for one organisation.

For Task 3c candidates must assess the contribution made by any three of the 7P's in helping this organisation achieve its marketing goals through creating an effective marketing mix. This means that after they have completed their tasks on the 7P's they must select three of these, and to gain the higher marks justify this selection and evaluate the contribution they make to the marketing mix. Please ensure candidates follow this instruction otherwise the marks that can be awarded are limited.

Task marking
Comments on approaches to internal marking

- Assessors should be aware that candidates should undertake primary and secondary research for **one** chosen organisation, and secondary research only for the other chosen organisation. A range of research techniques should be used.
- Candidates should fully understand the command words used in assessment. A glossary of command words can be found at: https://resource.download.wjec.co.uk/vtc/2016-17/16-17_3-18/eng/command-word-glossary.html
- Please show the breakdown of marks awarded for each sub-task on the mark record sheet rather than by assessment criteria (AC) i.e. 1a, 1b, 1c (each out of 8 marks); 2a and 2b (each out of 12 marks); 3a, 3b and 3c (each out of 8 marks). Guidance can be found in the Sample Assessment Materials – Internal, pages 22-26.
- The unit is marked using performance bands. Each band of the mark scheme contains a descriptor. These descriptors should be read and applied as a whole. Centres are reminded that the descriptor for each mark band describes work at the middle of the band.

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- Annotation of the synoptic links throughout the work is also highly recommended as the higher mark bands require the candidate to show knowledge, skills from unit 1 to gain marks in the higher mark bands.
  Marks were not always allocated appropriately on the mark sheet for each assessment criteria. For example, nine marks were awarded for AC1.2 on some occasions, whereas there are only eight marks available. It was not always apparent exactly how the marks had been split for AC1.1 Tasks a, b and c.

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BUSINESS

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Summer 2024

UNIT 3: ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES AND DECISION MAKING

Overview of the Unit

Summer 2024 was the fifth sitting of the unit 3 examination.

Marginally more candidates sat the examination than the previous two summers.

64% of entered candidates sat the examination in English. While the remaining 36% sat the examination in Welsh, up 8% from the Summer 2023 sitting.

Cymru Crisps was the examination paper's featured business. A manufacturer of hand-cooked crisps. Rather expectantly, as a popular snack, crisps proved familiar to candidates.

Overall candidate unit 3 examination performance proved comparable to previous sittings.

Index numbers and SWOT analysis were specification areas that had been learnt well by most candidates. However, this learning did not extend to the difference between profit and profitability, and breakeven analysis generally. Constructing a breakeven chart proved beyond the capabilities of many candidates, with some candidates not even attempting to do so.

Once more, the marketing route proved the preferred optional route for most candidates. Yet the minority of candidates that chose the financial route performed well, especially in answering the cash flow forecast calculation question worth 8 marks.

All examinations scripts were readable by examiners. Though, some candidates handwriting posed a challenge for examiners to read.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Q.1-Q.4 [budgeting / mark-up / solvency]

The multiple-choice questions proved accessible. Candidates who performed best carefully read the questions, then used the process of eliminating the incorrect answers to arrive at the correct answer.

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Q.5 [organisational strategy]

Q.5(c) proved the most accessible (mean mark of 1.5 out of 2) of the three questions to candidates – most candidates knowing how Cymru Crisps could gain competitive advantages as a manufacturer of hand-cooked crisps. Q.5(a) proved a less accessible question with a mean mark of 1.2 out of 3), as many candidates did not make use of Cymru Crisps' mission statement in their responses or only partially did so. Q.5(b) proved the least accessible of the organisational strategy questions with a mean mark of 1.1 out of 4. Some candidates misread the word 'interdependent' as 'independent': resulting in largely irrelevant responses.

Q.6 [index numbers]

Candidate performance in these questions was reasonable. Good use of the potato and frying oil index number tables provided were made, in most instances. It is recommended that centres give candidates plenty of opportunities to practice calculating index number changes to learn index numbers.

Section B

Q.1 [SWOT analysis]

Candidate performance in these questions was good. Most candidates were able to produce a SWOT analysis for Cymru Crisps using the internal and external data given. However, it was apparent that some candidates had not read the internal and external data provided relating to Cymru Crisps. The mean mark for Q.1(b) was 3.7 out of 4.

Q.2 [breakeven analysis]

Most candidates understood fixed costs and variable costs, although this understanding did not extend to semi-variable costs and stepped costs. Surprisingly, not many candidates were able to correctly construct a breakeven chart using the data provided. The understanding of the limitations of breakeven analysis was patchy, many candidates struggled to develop the limitations identified from points into analysis. Other candidates saw the 6 marks allocation of Q.2(d) and automatically proceeded to focus their response on value and limitations, however, the focus of the question was limitations of breakeven analysis. This emphasises the importance of reading questions carefully. The mean mark for Q.2(d) was 1.9 out of 6.

Q.3 [profitability]

Generally, the difference between profit and profitability was only understood by some candidates. Most candidates showed some understanding of the importance of profitability to Cymru Crisps.

Q.4 [economies of scale]

Candidate performance in the 6 marker external economies question was reasonable, with a mean mark of 2.5 out of 6. Most candidates attempted to use the data provided in their responses. However, some candidates did not know the difference between internal and external economies of scale, with some candidates not understanding how economies of scale benefit businesses at all.

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Section C – Finance Route

Q.1 [financial statements]

Neither the purpose of different financial statements nor accounting concepts that underpin their construction was well understood by most candidates. The best candidate responses comprehended the purpose of an income statement (profit and loss account) only.

Q.2 [cash flow]

Candidates found the cash flow questions accessible. Some candidates confused cash flow with profit.

Q.3 [costing]

Many candidates did not demonstrate any understanding of absorption costing nor marginal costing methods. A possible lack of revision by candidates of this area of the specification. It should be remembered that any area of the specification may be examined in the examination.

Q.4 [investment appraisal]

Neither the accounting rate of return calculations nor value and limitations of the investment appraisal methods were well understood by most candidates. Although the responses were of a better quality than those to Q.1 and Q.3 of Section C**.**

Section D – Marketing Route

Q.1 [BCG Matrix]

Candidate understanding of the BCG Matrix was reasonable. Some candidates were unable to turn their points as to the value and limitation of the BCG Matrix into explanation. The better candidate responses applied their identified value and limitation of the BCG Matrix to Cymru Crisps and its crisps product range.

Q.2 [sales forecasting and digital marketing]

Candidates performed better in the difference between question surveys and test marketing and digital marketing questions. Having said that, it was surprising how many candidates did not understand the digital marketing method of online display. It being something any user of the web will have come across on websites. The sampling questions proved inaccessible to many candidates, due to a lack of knowledge.

Q.3 [Porter's five forces framework]

Candidate understanding of Porter's five forces framework was mixed. The purpose of which eluded some candidates. Generally, candidates performed better on assessing Cymru Crisps' decision to enter the popcorn market. There was some good use of the data provided by candidates: it combined understanding of the marketing model with that of data about Cymru Crisps new popcorn product and the features of the popcorn market.

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BUSINESS

Level 3

Summer 2024

UNIT 5: MARKETS AND CUSTOMERS

Overview of the Unit

Candidates were required to research and set up a business as a sole trader in their local area. Their plan needed to be realistic and concise in the form of a report. They were required to do the following:

Task 1
Show their understanding of the nature and importance of customers to their chosen business idea.

Task 2
Explain how they will focus on these customers in order to establish a market-oriented relationship with them.

Task 3
Analyse how customers' wants, needs and expectations are likely to influence their business activity.

Task 4
Evaluate the importance of offering good customer service in making their business a success.

Task 5
Explain how they plan to develop and then initially market their product (good or service), particularly in terms of their plans concerning pricing and promotions.

Task 6
Evaluate the competition they expect to face in their market.
The majority of the work uploaded this series met the WJEC administration requirements. These are:

- A document of administration that includes the authenticated mark record sheet and time sheet (PDF or Word doc)
- A single annotated document of the candidate report with appendices (PDF or Word doc) There were some issues:
- Some centres failed to use the Learner Assignment Brief (iSAM pages 27-34) as required, and candidates did not set their work out under the task headings as specified. All candidates should use this brief, and the only changes allowed are the choice of business idea for Part A and the selection of an organisation for Part B. (iSAM page 38).
- Some assessor marks were shown by assessment criteria (AC) rather than by task as required.
- Some centres sent a 'clean copy' of the candidate work which did not show the moderator where/why the assessor feels marks should be awarded. Centres are advised to show where assessment criteria (ACs) have been awarded by the assessor as this greatly helps the moderation process and support centre marks.

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- Some centres uploaded as many as 12 documents for one candidate. This creates a very labour-intensive process for the moderator. We strongly advise scanning and uploading one PDF document per candidate, including the relevant documentation (Marksheets, timesheets, declarations).
- Many centres uploaded PDF documents that were scanned upside down. This may seem trivial, however, collectively this can result a lengthy process for the moderator concerned.

Tasks

Comments on tasks/questions relating to candidate performance/meeting assessment criteria

Many candidates had excellent contextualisation in their reports. All work was word-processed, and communication was good with some use of specialist vocabulary. Some candidates wrote in continuous prose rather than splitting their work into paragraphs which would have made it easier to follow.

There was evidence of some thorough primary and secondary research, and many candidates made good use of appendices to support their report. Some candidates incorrectly placed their research throughout the work rather than at the end. Some candidates placed an appendix at the end of Part A and the results/findings were referenced throughout this section of the report, but no references were found for Part B. Centres are responsible for checking that the work produced is the work of the candidate and that no data is copied from the Internet into the report. The work in the report should be all the candidates own work and the data collected should be in the appendix.

Part A

Candidates are tasked to carry out background research into a business idea for a sole trader, use the results of this research as appendix information and give a summary of this research at the beginning of the plan. Many appropriate and realistic business ideas were chosen, but many candidates wrote in great detail about their research. This detail is not required.

Please ensure that the report itself briefly introduces the business they are setting up, its product, and its proposed customers then addresses the six tasks on customers and customer service shown on the Learner Assignment Brief (iSAM page 30). The candidate must then apply their work for each task in context to the business and the type of customer it wants to attract.

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Part B

Many candidates chose an appropriate global business and carried out primary and/or secondary research into both the UK-based and the overseas operations of their chosen organisation, but some chose an organisation without a substantial presence in the UK in terms of market and location. This is important as the candidate is required to focus on the operations of the chosen business in the UK domestic market, and show knowledge of e.g., how the UK government and other agencies support domestic and global organisations, evaluate the benefits of their global operations, and clearly explain the influence of trade blocs and other organisations on the UK operations of the business.

Task marking
Comments on approaches to internal marking

Part A: The Learner Assignment Brief states that the plan should be concise, be business-like in presentation, the sections must be in the form of a report, and it should have no more than 12 A4 pages excluding appendices (iSAM page 27).

- The report must contain ALL the work for assessment, and the results of candidate research should be included as appendix information, not in the body of the report. Appendices must contain supporting work only – there should be no need for cross-referencing (iSAM page 28).
- Part B: Check that the global organisation chosen by the candidate is suitable to allow them to obtain better quality and more relevant information to utilise. A synopsis of the operations of this business is required as an introduction only rather than pages of background and history.
- Theory is not required in any part of the work, all work submitted should be in context.
- Candidates should use paragraphs when writing reports to make the information accessible to the reader and proof-read their work to prevent errors in spelling and grammar.
- Candidates should fully understand the command words used in assessment. A glossary of command words can be found at https://resource.download.wjec.co.uk/vtc/2016-17/16-17_3-18/eng/command-word-glossary.html
- To achieve higher marks candidates will have made use of their knowledge, skills and understanding from Units 1-3. Annotation of these synoptic links throughout the work was not always found.

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Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

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