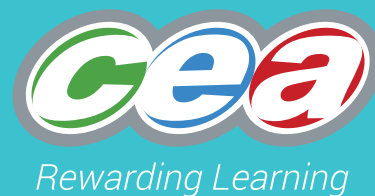


GCSE



**Chief Examiner's and  
Principal Moderator's Report  
Business Studies**

Summer Series 2023





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2023 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# GCSE BUSINESS STUDIES

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Assessment Unit 1

### Starting a Business

#### Overview

The overall performance was found to be comparable to that of previous years. The paper proved to have very accessible language that allowed many candidates to show their knowledge and understanding of subject content. The timing of the paper seemed to be sufficient to allow candidates to attempt to complete all questions. Examination technique seems to be improving with evidence of many candidates taking time to underline command words and business terms.

#### Q1 Creating a Business

The first question was well answered with many candidates showing detailed subject knowledge. The initial parts of the question were all well answered with many achieving full marks. Knowledge of different sizes of businesses, types of business ownership, public sector and business resources was excellent and most candidates scored well in providing examples when required. Some marks were lost on the ethical issues associated with business aims question as candidates appeared confused with the points identified on the specification. Most candidates were able to identify two stakeholders but struggled with discussing how the aims of these stakeholders may differ.

#### Q2 Marketing

Many candidates scored well on the explanation of the term marketing, identifying three stages of the product life cycle, describing two methods of market sampling, identifying a method of market research, discussing two reasons why this method of market research would be most appropriate and analysing the results of market research from the graph for Bertha in Pampered Poooch. However, some candidates did not score well when evaluating public relations (PR) as a method of promotion for Pampered Poooch. In addition, the final part of this question was answered poorly by a number of candidates who found it difficult to analyse the factors affecting price (need to make a profit and demand) for Pampered Poooch and therefore lost marks in this levelled response.

#### Q3 Business Operations

Many candidates found this area of the course accessible. Most were able to explain flow manufacturing and quality assurance but struggled with batch inventory control and Investors in People. The majority of candidates were able to identify and explain the type of production and discuss one reason for the changing trends across the types of production. Identifying the method of manufacturing used by Pampered Poooch and analysing one advantage of using this method of manufacturing did not prove difficult for most. The responsibilities of an employer around health and safety were identified well by the candidates, as was their discussion of two responsibilities of the employees at Pampered Poooch. However, some candidates found it difficult to explain two roles of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

## Assessment Unit 2      Developing a Business

The paper generally proved to have accessible language that allowed candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject content with many benefiting from the inbuilt scaffolding to support their answers. The timing of the paper seemed to be sufficient to allow candidates to complete all questions. Examination technique, with reference to the amount of detail on the answers, is improving and most questions proved to be accessible to all levels of ability, however, evaluation skills still need to be worked on. There was an improvement in Question 3 with many pupils attempting to answer most, if not all, the questions.

### Q1 Human Resources

The first question was reasonably well answered with many candidates showing good subject knowledge and understanding of the areas examined from the specification however, fringe benefits and profit sharing rarely scored full marks and these proved to be discriminator questions. Candidates used the space provided in the examination paper appropriately, providing good application to TopCat in their answers. Responses for Parts 1 (b)(i) and (d) showed some candidates had skim read the question and as a result did not fully explain the purpose of a person specification nor the role of social media with reference to recruitment.

### Q2 Business Growth

Candidates provided excellent knowledge in their responses to the questions on signs of success and failure, internal growth, takeover and disadvantages of growth. Parts 2(c)(i) and (ii) were attempted by most candidates, but many explained bulk buying and not economies of scale and, whilst nearly all attempted to identify the type of economy of scale, it was generally not well answered.

Part 2(g) proved to be another discriminator question with some very detailed analysis but other candidates answered ethics in general and did not specifically relate to the ethics connected to growth of the business (TopCat) which impacted on their level achieved.

### Q3 Finance

Most candidates answered this question well and it was completed to a high standard. Questions on retained profits, external sources of finance, labelling the breakeven graph, identifying breakeven output and sales revenue were very well answered. As for the question on Income Statement, most candidates could calculate the Cost of Sales, but some struggled to work out the correct figure for rates. Gross profit percentage was easily calculated, and most candidates could comment on the difference from the previous year. Total assets figure on the Statement of Financial Position was easily calculated but some candidates struggled with calculating Total Equity, as they failed to minus the Drawings figure. ROCE was easily calculated but some candidates lost a valuable mark by not including the percentage sign. Most candidates attempted to explain the ratio and comment on the success for Gordon Greer but there was evidence of candidates confusing it with the Net Profit percentage.



## Principal Moderator's Report

### Assessment Unit 3      Planning a Business

As in previous years, the team of Business Studies moderators was very impressed with the high standard of work submitted for the GCSE Business Studies Controlled Assessment Task, Unit 3: Planning a Business.

#### **Booklet A:                      Planning**

##### **Criteria 1:      Aim and specialist business terms (Assessment of AO1)**

The moderating team noted that a large majority of candidates had made excellent use of appropriate specialist business terms throughout their Controlled Assessment task and were accordingly awarded the three marks for this criteria. Some candidates had used a number of appropriate specialist business terms and achieved Band two marks. It is important to note that the aim should be clearly stated, ensuring that all areas of the specification identified on the cover of Booklet A have been clearly referenced in this section. This was not the case for some of the candidates.

##### **Criteria 2.1:    Action Plan (Assessment of AO2)**

Appropriate and detailed action plans were produced by quite a large majority of candidates, which included more than three specific actions relating to the aim of the task. The moderators noted that some candidates produced simple action plans which were quite short and fairly limited in detail. They also noted that some candidates referred to what they 'did' rather than what they were 'going to do' in the 'Actions' column. It is recommended that the 'Actions' column should commence with "I" to indicate that this is the candidate's own work. As these are planned actions, i.e. what the candidate intends to do, then obviously they should be written in the future tense. Personal target dates were sometimes not in chronological order and in some cases omitted from the candidates' work. The 'working log of progress,' should then reflect what happened when the candidate completed these actions and therefore these should be documented in the past tense.

##### **Criteria 2.2:    Primary Research (Assessment of AO2)**

Those candidates who produced well-designed primary research with good consideration of the research aim achieved the full three marks for this criteria. However, it must be duly noted that candidates should not be provided with the same photocopied set of results (collated answers and graphs) and interview responses to questions. Moderators remarked that business representatives who were interviewed in many of the centres provided photocopied pages of questions and answers and hence these were inserted into the candidates' portfolio without any analysis of these answers being provided by the candidates themselves. It must be emphasised that candidates are required to re-write this photocopied material in their own individual style and subsequently write up their own set of results. If designing a questionnaire or preparing interview questions, candidates should follow the following procedure:

1.      Initially candidates should produce evidence of their own set of questions.
2.      Following class discussion and sharing these questions, a decision can then be made on the actual questions that are to be included in the candidates' work. This can take the form of collaborative class work.
3.      Having carried out the interview or completed the questionnaire, the candidates should then create a collated set of results, which each candidate will carry out individually.

All candidates should ensure that they have documented clear application to the business in this section of the Controlled Assessment.

Each of the above steps should be appended to Booklet A. It is important to note that when a candidate is presenting their results from their primary research, they should include an explanation of their meaning/relevance to the business, as this will be helpful to them when they are completing Booklet B.

### **Criteria 2.3: Secondary Research (Assessment of AO2)**

As in previous years, the majority of candidates carried out thorough and relevant secondary research with good consideration of the research aim and hence were awarded full marks for this criteria. On the other hand, the moderating team pointed out that teachers in some of the centres provided their candidates with photocopied material that the candidates used to answer their questions in Booklet B. This can be seen as over-direction by the teacher and is against the criteria set for carrying out the Controlled Assessment. It is of vital importance that teachers encourage each of their candidates to carry out their own secondary research in an independent manner instead of providing them with pre-printed material in order to accumulate research evidence. Under Section 5 in Booklet A, candidates must include evidence of research from a range of sources, ensuring that all sources are clearly documented.

This section should summarise information sourced from any relevant sources; and for example, may include any of the following: the internet (world wide web), social media, textbooks, class notes, newspapers, television/radio programmes, etc.

It must be emphasised that three different sources must be used for each of the aims and one source provided for the finance section.

All of the above should be appended to Booklet A. When a candidate is presenting their results from the research, they should include a brief explanation of their meaning/relevance, as this will be helpful to them when completing Booklet B.

### **Criteria 3: Research Findings (Assessment of AO3)**

This section of Booklet A is used to provide a record of information that candidates will require in order to complete their research. Each of these sources should be documented by the candidates. It is important to ensure that website addresses are clearly documented if using web site sources. The moderating team noted that the majority of candidates demonstrated an ability to present their findings in a highly effective way. The research was appended at the back of Booklet A and a range of presentation methods were used which were appropriate to the aim of the task, thus gaining full marks for this criteria. Those candidates who demonstrated an ability to present their findings in an appropriate manner achieved the marks in Band 2.

It is of the utmost importance that all of the above is appended to Booklet A. When a candidate is presenting their results from the research, they should include a brief explanation of their meaning/relevance, as this will be helpful to them when completing Booklet B.

It is recommended that the research for both primary and secondary sources are placed together for each aim if possible, in order to facilitate not only marking by the teacher, but also ease of moderation.

## **Booklet B: Communicate Findings**

The moderating team noted that many candidates provided high quality responses to the questions asked.

- Q1** Quite a large majority of candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of the three aims that James would need to set for the development of Kelly Feeds and applied this in an excellent manner. As in previous years, candidates were not required to use their research material for this question.
- Q2** The moderators remarked that this question was very well answered by a large number of candidates who demonstrated an excellent understanding of two advantages of using M-business in Kelly Feeds with excellent reference to their research from Booklet A. These candidates provided an excellent analysis of using M-business in Kelly Feeds and also made excellent use of specialist business terms. Their Quality of Written Communication was also excellent. Quite a number of candidates demonstrated a limited understanding of one or two advantages of using M-business in Kelly Feeds and made little or no reference to their research from Booklet A, thus they were only awarded 1 to 4 marks.
- Q3 (a)** A large majority of candidates accurately completed the Projected Income Statement for Kelly Feeds and were awarded the full five marks for this part of the question. Centres need to ensure the correct application of Own Figure Rule (OFR), as there appeared to be a misunderstanding in some centres as to how this should be correctly applied, and marks awarded inappropriately in some cases.
- (b)** The Projected Statement of Financial Position for Kelly Feeds was well answered by the majority of candidates. Again, the application of the Own Figure Rule (OFR), applied to the calculation in this question. It was noted that the majority of candidates were awarded the full five marks when answering this question.
- Q4** The moderating team remarked that quite a large number of candidates answered this question very well and were awarded the marks from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Level of Response in the mark scheme. These candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of one impact of technology on manufacturing in Kelly Feeds with excellent reference to their research from Booklet A. They made an excellent evaluation of one impact of technology and drew a suitable conclusion. It was also noted that they made excellent use of specialist terms in their answer. On this point, it is worthy to point out that an evaluation question requires the candidate to draw a conclusion to their answer as stated in the mark scheme. Some candidates were unable to provide this and hence could not access marks from the top level of response.

It is important to note that there were instances when responses to questions in Booklet B made little or no reference to the research material gathered in Booklet A. Candidates must be aware that this referencing is important if high levels of responses are to be awarded and teachers must emphasise this for future submissions so that their candidates can improve on their performance and thus achieve the highest mark possible. Those candidates who failed to provide any supporting evidence that they were using their research were unable to achieve marks from the higher bands. Candidates should be encouraged to begin sentences with the words "From my primary research" or "From my secondary research", depending on the area of research they are providing evidence from. Unfortunately, this is where many candidates lost marks in Booklet B.

Moderators also made reference to the fact that some centres are submitting work where Booklet A is not presented in the same folder as Booklet B. By submitting both booklets in the same folder it undoubtedly leads to an ease of cross-referencing, with Booklet A appearing before Booklet B. It is important that all teachers ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements set out in the Guidance on Controlled Assessment Section of the Specification (Section 6).

It is of paramount importance to note that annotation still remains, a very important aspect of the moderation process. Assessment decisions for most centres were supported by annotation throughout the booklets, which undoubtedly was of great benefit to the moderation process. Some centres submitted samples of work with absolutely no annotation whatsoever, either in the form of written comments throughout the work or identification in various paragraphs where assessment objectives had been met by candidates. Constructive meaningful comments for each candidate made by teachers on the eCandidate Record Sheet certainly help to justify why marks are being awarded. It is a pleasure to moderate work where it is evident that teachers had given of their time to provide constructive comments throughout the work of the candidates, thus allowing the moderation process to function smoothly.

**The moderating team noted the importance of attending the Agreement Trials. Teachers who attend Agreement Trials – especially with this new Specification - can apply the information they gain from these meetings, as well as taking part in meaningful discussion and undoubtedly the practicalities of engaging in trial marking of exemplar material.**

Teachers should pay particular attention to all guidelines provided in the 'Instructions to Teachers' booklet regarding the submission of the candidates' work. The samples requested should be placed in order of merit, starting with the candidate with the highest mark. Samples of work should be submitted in a clear covered report file. **Use of plastic multi-punched poly-pockets or loose pages stapled together are not acceptable.** In fact, moderators noted this year that some centres submitted work where loose pages of individual candidates were mixed in with pages of other candidates. It is of paramount importance that all administrative tasks are carried out in a diligent manner.

Internal standardisation continues to play a very important role in the marking of the Controlled Assessment Task. This procedure ensures that all candidates in a centre are marked fairly and consistently, especially if there are a number of teachers involved in the marking of the work.

The Sample Cover Sheet (available on the CCEA website) **must** be placed at the front of each candidate's work with the combined marks for Booklets A and B. It is also of the utmost importance that this cover sheet is **signed by each candidate**.

Once again, as in other years, teachers are to be highly congratulated for the professional manner in which they managed this Controlled Assessment Task for GCSE Business Studies. Teachers are also reminded that they are cordially invited at all times to avail of the advice, assistance and continued support from CCEA with regard to any aspect of the internally assessed component. Centres requesting such assistance should make formal contact with the Education Manager for GCSE Business Studies.

## Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

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