

Examiner's Report

Unit Title Strategic Marketing

Unit Code 6USM

RQF Level Level 6

Session November 2022

Comments on Global Cohort Performance

	Comments
Task/Question 1	<p>Many of the candidates performed well and had a good awareness of the difference between internal and external stakeholders and their significance for the organisation. Analysis and evaluation were mostly adequately provided and supported by theory; some candidates did use the Mendelows matrix to expand this task. There was generally a good understanding, but there needs to be an awareness of the need to reference work correctly using Harvard style throughout, to underpin the discussions.</p> <p>There was an element of candidates who did not appear to adequately understand the topic and therefore the contribution did not sufficiently answer the task, which lost valuable marks. However, the majority understood the parameters of the stakeholder issues and provided valuable discussion in context of organisations.</p>
Task/Question 2	<p>This task was handled well and there was a good approach and many of the candidates showed understanding with some interesting issues raised, and thus it provided an opportunity to explore many of the different avenues for analysing the environment. The overall approach was positive and there were some opportunities to expand into appropriate models which was lost in many cases. For example, Porter's Five Forces model was an obvious choice along with the essential marketing research methods and use of Marketing Information Systems within organisations. One of the stumbling blocks here was overlooking the need to remain academic in approach and to reflect on suitable theoretical principles and model and thus there were some candidates who struggled with this aspect. There were many instances of clear and focused evaluation and analysis supported by theoretical underpinning.</p>
Task/Question 3	<p>This task provided an ideal opportunity to discuss some of the well-known models such as Anthony (1988) and merchant (1998) but unfortunately there was only a handful of candidates who took advantage of this. The expectation was that there would be an awareness of the importance of monitoring organisational objectives and the ability of measurement through marketing metrics. Unfortunately, this task was poorly handled overall with a lack of understanding by some which reduced content or any theory to support to support the discussion. There was an attempt to discuss the Balanced Scorecard by some which was an excellent approach and afforded an opportunity to go into more depth regarding the chosen organisation and its ability to implement and monitor strategy.</p> <p>One of the recurring issues has been the lack of attention to detail in content and the need to focus on balancing discussion about the practical efforts of the management and that of the theoretical recommendations to incorporate and provide a balance discussion with recommendations. Thus, in some cases this task was misunderstood and candidates provided descriptive text which does not reflect the ability to analyse and evaluate the evidence.</p>
Task/Question 4	<p>The overall approach to this task was weak with most candidates choosing to discuss existing pricing strategies within the organisation when the task required a more evaluative approach to how pricing should or could be conducted within the organisation, which gave an opportunity to evaluate different models and circumstances. Thus, by only discussing existing strategies, the approach and content was descriptive and did not reflect the standard of response at Level 6.</p>

	<p>Added to this was the lack of theory being used to uphold any recommendations.</p> <p>However, there were some very good responses which allowed candidates to express any thoughts in evaluating how their organisation might benefit from a change in strategy to take into account changing external environments and competitive responses.</p>
<p>Task/Question 5</p>	<p>This was an ideal opportunity for candidates to consider aspects of marketing communication from the 'e' perspective as well as those that cover all areas of the marketing mix and its efficiency and effectiveness. Many candidates performed well in this task with a clear focus, context and use of theory to support discussion. The standards varied and there were those who struggled with providing sufficient discussion supported by appropriate theory. This being a very wide scope for discussion offered an ideal chance for candidates to choose to focus on some areas of the organisation's strategies and to make meaningful recommendations supported by a theoretical framework. Whilst many candidates showed a good understanding with clear evaluative contribution and context, this was not supported by theory. There were those who relied upon describing the activities of the organisation without venturing into evaluative approaches which were required at Level 6. As a result there was a lack of theoretical underpinning.</p>

Question 1

1. Comments on learners' performance

Many of the candidates performed well and had a good awareness of the difference between internal and external stakeholders and their significance for the organisation. Analysis and evaluation were mostly adequately provided and supported by theory; some candidates did use the Mendelows matrix to expand this task. There was generally a good understanding, but there needs to be an awareness of the need to reference work correctly using Harvard style throughout, to underpin the discussions.

There was an element of candidates who did not appear to adequately understand the topic and therefore the contribution did not sufficiently answer the task, which lost valuable marks. However, the majority understood the parameters of the stakeholder issues and provided valuable discussion in context of organisations.

2. Recommendations for learners

This was a wide task which allowed for a variety of stakeholders to be chosen and enabled a clear focus of the influence of these stakeholders to the organisation's marketing and their support to business performance. Consider the basic analysis tools to determine the benefits of the given strategies best placed for your chosen organisation, and this will give you a framework from which to commence.

3. Quick Tips

Remember the importance of appropriate support from relevant theories and how academic writing underpins your approach to answer this question.

Question 2

1. Comments on learners' performance

This task was handled well and there was a good approach and many of the candidates showed understanding with some interesting issues raised, and thus it provided an opportunity to explore many of the different avenues for analysing the environment. The overall approach was positive and there were some opportunities to expand into appropriate models which was lost in many cases. For example, Porter's Five Forces model was an obvious choice along with the essential marketing research methods and use of Marketing Information Systems within organisations. One of the stumbling blocks here was overlooking the need to remain academic in approach and to reflect on suitable theoretical principles and model and thus there were some candidates who struggled with this aspect. There were many instances of clear and focused evaluation and analysis supported by theoretical underpinning.

2. Recommendations for learners

Although you need to concentrate on the strategies of the organisation regarding its competitive environment, avoid remaining only in a descriptive approach. At this level you need to show your ability to be evaluative and be critical of the organisation's strategic approach, primarily towards the strategic focus and expected reactions and responses of its competitors to their own marketing decision-making in order to anticipate the risks to future growth.

3. Quick Tips

Consider, carefully, the components of the question and how best you may provide a commentary.

Question 3

1. Comments on learners' performance

This task provided an ideal opportunity to discuss some of the well-known models such as Anthony (1988) and Merchant (1998) but unfortunately there was only a handful of candidates who took advantage of this. The expectation was that there would be an awareness of the importance of monitoring organisational objectives and the ability of measurement through marketing metrics. Unfortunately, this task was poorly handled overall with a lack of understanding by some which reduced content or any theory to support to support the discussion. There was an attempt to discuss the Balanced Scorecard by some which was an excellent approach and afforded an opportunity to go into more depth regarding the chosen organisation and its ability to implement and monitor strategy.

One of the recurring issues has been the lack of attention to detail in content and the need to focus on balancing discussion about the practical efforts of the management and that of the theoretical recommendations to incorporate and provide a balance discussion with recommendations. Thus, in some cases this task was misunderstood, and candidates provided descriptive text which does not reflect the ability to analyse and evaluate the evidence.

2. Recommendations for learners

This task involves maintaining sight of the strategic performance of the organisation and its ability to monitor strategies through appropriate control measures and in approaching this task you might discuss various measures and theories such as Anthony (1988) and Merchant (1988) as well as Balanced Scorecard which highlights appropriately, the importance of setting objectives.

3. Quick Tips

When considering how to answer this question, consider providing examples of how the various factors of the marketing mix might be measured in context of an area under discussion in other tasks, so using a model helps you to provide appropriate information.

Question 4

1. Comments on learners' performance

The overall approach to this task was weak, with most candidates choosing to discuss existing pricing strategies within the organisation when the task required a more evaluative approach to how pricing should or could be conducted within the organisation, which gave an opportunity to evaluate different models and circumstances. Thus, by only discussing existing strategies, the approach and content was descriptive and did not reflect the standard of response at Level 6. Added to this was the lack of theory being used to uphold any recommendations.

However, there were some very good responses which allowed candidates to express any thoughts in evaluating how their organisation might benefit from a change in strategy to take into account changing external environments and competitive responses.

2. Recommendations for learners

This task enabled you to discuss the possible trends and challenges involved in effecting the appropriate pricing for the organisation that will suit the environment in which it exists, the brand positioning it follows and expectations of customers. If the marketing mix to be taken into consideration, it is not enough to merely consider the organisation's existing policies but to explore avenues for improvement and those which will enhance growth and satisfy shareholders.

3. Quick Tips

Remember to work with the marketing mix also as these pricing decisions will impact on the stages of the product life cycle as well as logistical costs and desired media methods of communication that indicate changes needed over time.

Question 5

1. Comments on learners' performance

This was an ideal opportunity for candidates to consider aspects of marketing communication from the 'e' perspective as well as those that cover all areas of the marketing mix and its efficiency and effectiveness. Many candidates performed well in this task with a clear focus, context and use of theory to support discussion. The standards varied and there were those who struggled with providing sufficient discussion supported by appropriate theory. This being a very wide scope for discussion offered an ideal chance for candidates to choose to focus on some areas of the organisation's strategies and to make meaningful recommendations supported by a theoretical framework. Whilst many candidates showed a good understanding with clear evaluative contribution and context, this was not supported by theory. There were those who relied upon describing the activities of the organisation without venturing into evaluative approaches which were required at Level 6. As a result, there was a lack of theoretical underpinning.

2. Recommendations for learners

This covers a wide spectrum of possibilities for discussion and considering the marketing mix, branding strategies, customer behaviour and satisfaction may all be necessary to follow through on understanding how well the organisation's technology decisions impact on providing growth and profit for the organisation.

3. Quick Tips

This task requires you to think broadly about the various areas that impact the technological landscape and therefore determine strategic decisions for the good of the organisation's position in the marketplace.