

Report on the Examination (NQF)



NQF unit:	INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS (1.1 IB)
Examination Session:	JUNE 2015
Introduction/General comments: The exam format was the same as previous years i.e. candidates answered any four questions from eight. This should give candidates a reasonable chance of achieving a 'Pass' grade. Candidates that scored well had shown good knowledge of the subject, and answered the questions fully taking note of the marks available for each part of the question. Candidates that failed the paper generally gave purely descriptive answers and it was evident that the syllabus had not been revised.	
Question 1: This question demonstrated that many candidates had very little knowledge of the different production methods that businesses can use. 1a) Candidates that scored well were fully aware of the difference between the three production methods. 1b) This question was worth 13 marks and many candidates answers lacked the depth and analysis to gain good marks. It is important that candidates are fully aware of the command or lead words. In this case they were 'Identify and explain'	
Question 2: This question was generally well answered and candidates were able to define and explain the four terms in part (a). Candidates that scored well understood the four business terms and linked them to the scenario i.e. improving the quality of the goods produced. Part (b) This part of the question was generally poorly answered. Candidates were not able to link the scenario with what was asked in the question i.e. problems faced by the company. Candidates that failed showed a complete lack of knowledge and gave guesses as to what the terms meant.	
Question 3: This was not a popular question and a number of candidates were unable to evaluate the sources of finance in question 3a. Also many candidates were unaware of the equations in part b and gave completely wrong answers. This meant they were unable to answer part c as it related to the ratios in part b. Candidates that did score well gave good evidence of studying the relevant terms mentioned in a and b which meant they could answer part c.	
Question 4: This was a popular question and was generally well answered. Part a – Generally candidates were aware of the four terms and gave good examples. Part b – Some candidates were unaware of the objectives of a new business and gave completely wrong answers e.g. describing the marketing mix. Candidates that scored well were aware that there were 13 marks available and ensured that each objective was fully explained.	
Question 5: This was a popular question and part (a) was generally well answered with candidates able to define the four terms. However a number of candidates struggled with part (b) and were confused what was asked for in the question. Instead of linking the scenario with the marketing mix, a number of candidates described the product life cycle. Also many answers lacked the depth and analysis needed to gain 13 marks.	
Question 6: This was not a popular question and those candidates that did attempt it generally gave descriptive answers which limited the number of marks achieved.	

Part (a) Many candidates were unable to define the three terms and unaware the impact they would have on a business.

Part (b) This question carried 13 marks and again answers demonstrated that many candidates had little knowledge of the course content relating to this question.

Candidates were unaware how the recession would affect a business making products for the home and export market. Candidates needed to treat the two markets separate e.g. not all countries might be in recession so a business could put greater emphasis on exports.

Question 7: This question was popular but mixed answers were given. Candidates that scored well were able in part (a) to define the terms and in part (b) were able to define the terms and relate them to the scenario. In part (b) there was confusion between the terms 'job enlargement', 'job enrichment' and 'empowerment'. It was evident that candidates that failed this question had not studied this part of the syllabus and made a guess at the business terms.

Question 8: This was a popular question but again there were mixed results.

Part (a) Generally candidates were aware of a 'stakeholder' and were able to define and give good examples. Some candidates confused the term with 'shareholder'.

Part (b) Generally candidates were aware of the three terms and were able to outline their objectives. Some candidates confused 'PLC' with the 'public' sector.

Part (c) This part of the question was poorly answered and candidates were not able to link the scenario with the three groups. Again answers lacked depth for 12 marks.

Conclusions: The style of the paper should enable candidates to achieve the 40% pass mark needed provided they studied the full syllabus, read the questions carefully and were aware of the number of marks available for each part of the question. Time management is important and as a guide candidates should spend no more than 45 minutes on each question answered.

Recommendations to students and tutors for future examinations:

Much has been covered in my comments above. However to summarise:

- Students need to ensure they study and revise the full syllabus.
- Read questions carefully and be aware of the 'command' or 'lead' words.
- Be fully aware of the number of marks available for each part of the question. For example a 12 mark question will need more depth in your answer than a 5 mark question.
- Be aware of time management and not spend more than 45 minutes on each question answered.