AQA

AS LEVEL

BUSINESS

7131/2 Paper 2
Report on the Examination

7131
June 2022

Version: 1.0

This paper proved to be accessible for students on all questions. Most students demonstrated skills across the range of assessment objectives. A very small number of students appeared to have issues with timing that meant they were unable to complete all questions asked. Those students who performed consistently well were able to demonstrate their ability throughout the paper. There were very few occasions where scripts featured a 'no response' mark, the most common question for 'no response' was question 5. More able students made good use of the insert for analytical questions, and for evaluative questions used good judgement with developed points with some support to their conclusions. Failure by some students to target the specific question limited some of the judgements made. The top scoring students demonstrated well-developed, concise and balanced arguments that were critically considered in their conclusion, and provided a clear and supported judgement to the evaluative questions.

Overall, the most effective answers were clear, concise and well-focused throughout. The quality of handwriting still remains an issue for some. It is difficult for examiners to follow an argument that is difficult to read and illegible numbers are impossible to credit. In preparing students for future examinations teachers should encourage students to:

• fully focus on all of the demands of the question asked, which should help students to plan answers that are more clearly focused;
• practise using business terminology both in their writing and verbally;
• practise developing supported judgements that are based on decisions related to the question set;
• develop arguments in the context of situations within the insert, using the case material; and,
• build clear and supported judgements when responding to evaluative questions that focus on the question set rather than generic unspecific conclusions.

Question 1

It was anticipated that this question should have proved very accessible. Many students did demonstrate the basic numeracy skills needed to calculate the gross profit accurately. There was, however, a disappointingly high proportion of incorrect answers in which only part of the calculation had been completed. Success in this subject involves students being confident with basic numeracy and students must show their workings in all calculation questions.

Question 2

It was expected that many students would be able to perform well on this question. The question proved reasonably accessible, however, there were many students gaining zero and one mark. A common incorrect response was to confuse the method to calculate break even. On all numerical questions, it is advisable to write out the formula or method being used, and to lay answers out clearly and show workings.

Question 3

Responses to this question covered the full range of marks fairly evenly, with few students gaining zero or one mark. A common incorrect answer was to discuss the negatives of operating in a niche market generally. Too many students missed the word 'growing' and so did not answer correctly.

Question 4

This question was focused on analysing the impact of using primary market research to make a decision. Those students scoring level 3 marks did so by answering the demands of the question well, ie VeganLife Ltd using primary research to make a decision. Many students used the information from the case well to support their answers to this question. However, there were lots of students discussing the benefits and drawbacks of primary research in general, when these points were not then linked to VeganLife Ltd making a decision, the demands of the question were not met.

Question 5

This question had the most 'no response' answers. It was clear that many students did not have any knowledge of the Hackman and Oldham model of job design. Those students that did were able to demonstrate their knowledge very well. Many students listed all features of the model, which was not needed to gain a good mark or full marks to this question. The better answers selected two features of the model and applied it well to the case study, using the information from the case study to support their arguments.

Question 6

There were many good responses to this question that showed good analysis, good use of the case study and good judgement in their decision with the question. The students scoring in the top levels for this question did so by laying out their argument early on and ensuring that they showed balance in their analysis of the importance of cash flow and profit. The weaker responses listed reasons why one was more important than the other and did not use the details from the case study. There were many examples of students who confused the two concepts and this question also highlighted that some students had not picked up that VeganLife was an Ltd, or demonstrated confusion between an Ltd and PLC.

Question 7

Good responses to this question identified and demonstrated knowledge and understanding of what quality assurance is, and then went on to evaluate the impact of quality assurance on the competitiveness of VeganLife Ltd. Weaker responses did not discuss what quality assurance was, which then meant these responses struggled to demonstrate good analysis and evaluation in their arguments. This question specifically highlighted the importance of students correctly identifying the demands of a question. Many students discussed the benefits and drawbacks to introducing a quality assurance system, and also discussed information from the case. However, many of these students missed the impact on 'competitiveness' for VeganLife Ltd and so failed to answer the question fully. There were few students who confused quality assurance with quality control.

Question 8

The best responses focused their answers on 'all businesses' and their 'future profits'. Students scoring in the top levels for this question showed balance to their arguments and used good, well thought out business examples to emphasise and support their points. It was pleasing to see that most students now seem to be able to identify when they are being asked to discuss 'all' businesses, few students missed this part of the question. Overall, this question proved very accessible, lower level responses tended to be very generic and focused on one element only, either demographic or environmental factors. A small number of students could not demonstrate sufficient knowledge or examples of demographic factors and struggled to apply these to businesses.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.