



**Wednesday 18 June 2014 – Morning**

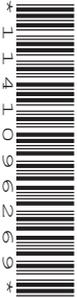
**A2 GCE BUSINESS STUDIES**

**F295/01/RB** People in Organisations

**RESOURCE BOOKLET**

**Duration: 2 hours**

**To be given to candidates at the start of the examination**



#### **INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- The information required to answer questions 1–6 is contained within this Resource Booklet.

#### **INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

- The information contained within this Resource Booklet is based on one or more real businesses.
- This document consists of 4 pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

#### **INSTRUCTION TO EXAMS OFFICER/INVIGILATOR**

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## Intresoft Limited (IL)

Tom and Amanda Bunton established Intresoft Limited (IL) in 2000. IL has an excellent reputation for high quality software packages. These packages are designed to accomplish a particular task within a business. IL employs over 50 staff who are all graduates of the best universities in the UK. Nearly all the graduates are either mathematicians or scientists, with very few having a degree in computer science.

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Amanda always looks to employ graduates who are highly intelligent, but who have no fixed ideas about how computer programs ought to be written. 'As long as they have talent, we will look after them with our in-house training', she often states.

Most of IL's customers are UK industrial businesses, but a growing number of customers are from the USA. Interest in the software which IL creates has also been growing amongst media businesses such as newspapers, magazines and television.

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Tom and Amanda have always been forward thinking with regards to how they run the business. Tom is responsible for the financial aspects of the business, while Amanda is responsible for human resource management. Tom and Amanda's relationship with the employees is excellent.

IL is unusual in how it treats its employees. There is no dress code and employees are allowed to work flexibly, as long as they work the agreed number of hours per week. IL's 'performance payment package' includes; starting salaries which are around £35,000, with an annual performance bonus, which is a percentage of the salary. All employees also participate in the company's profit sharing scheme. Each employee is given a proportion of the profits twice yearly. The amount is dependent on the number of year's service and the level of profits. Employees have a generous pension scheme and there is also a private health plan.

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As well as the 'performance payment package', employees are provided with free meals and access to a vending machine, which serves hot and cold drinks. Additional facilities include recreational games such as table football and table tennis and a lounge area with daily newspapers and trade journals.

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The office is 'open-plan' to encourage collaboration and there are no separate offices for managers or for Tom and Amanda. Each employee is provided with a chair, specially designed to improve their working posture whilst at their computer screens.

Minesh, one of the latest graduate recruits, said to one of his colleagues, that he was very happy working for IL, as it was not only a well paid job but also most enjoyable. He also liked the in-house training he received. He particularly liked the support he received from his mentor during his induction programme. He also found the monthly software update training, delivered by one of his colleagues, very useful.

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IL's managers have been appointed from within the business. Under Amanda's guidance, they undertake the mentoring of new staff. The managers, together with other experienced staff, are responsible for developing new software.

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A weekly breakfast meeting is held to inform the staff of what is happening and what are the priorities. It is also an opportunity for the staff to be heard and for new ideas to be exchanged.

Sales of IL's software have continued to expand rapidly. Consequently Tom is keen to expand the business to meet the increased demand. This, he has suggested, would need a recruitment programme on a larger scale than the business has had to undertake previously. However, Amanda is keen to ensure the 'family atmosphere' amongst its existing staff remains, as it has brought success and a dedicated workforce with a very low labour turnover. In addition, the number of absences is minimal.

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In one of the recent breakfast meetings, Tom highlighted the increasing number of customers which are based in the USA. IL already sends two employees to America on an average of four trips a year. There they meet prospective customers to find out their exact software needs, ensuring that a unique package can be provided. Fluctuating exchange rates and the performance of the UK economy have caused several problems for IL recently. They are likely to continue to do so in the future and especially impact on IL's profits.

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Amanda is keen to ensure that whatever happens the employees continue to be well looked after. "Without our wonderful team of employees, we would not be where we are today", she stated. She also wants to repeat last year's trip to Barcelona where all of the employees were able to relax or participate in water sports, all paid for by IL.

Tom is more concerned about the long-term prospects for the business and he wants to ensure the business continues to grow in order for it to remain competitive. He wants the business to be twice the size that it is now within a few years.

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He has been thinking about having a permanent sales office in the USA, as he feels that this would make selling easier and save valuable time. He thinks that there would be a need to raise finance, but it would be worth the effort. Tom does not like to rely on banks for finance and considers the majority of any funding should come from the profits of the business. Given IL's turnover of £9.5m in 2013, he thinks that anything is possible.

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