

## **CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)**

*Examiners' report*

# ***BUSINESS***




**05834–05837, 05878**


## **Unit 15 Summer 2019 series**

Version 1

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

## Paper Unit 15 series overview

This paper, as in previous sessions, comprised two parts. The first part focused on initiating, monitoring and managing the change and the second part focused on post-change management. Consistent with past performance, candidates tended to struggle with the first part compared with the second part. Most candidates appeared to have engaged well with the resource materials; the case study was based on the familiar subject of school trips. Questions that most candidates performed well in included 1(a,) 2(a) and 2(b).

The questions that candidates struggled with were mainly 1(b) and 1(c). With 1(b) there was the usual evidence of confusion between 'barriers to change' with 'drivers for change'. Candidates are advised to make sure that they have a sound grasp of these two key terms in their preparation for the exam. The analysis of barriers to change, i.e. the impacts of barriers to change, remained a key weakness. Candidates are reminded that these impacts must be business- or change management-facing for Level 3 marks to be awarded. Another key point is to take note of the number of barriers to change stated in the question. The question required four barriers to change to be analysed. For a Level 4 award, at least four barriers to change needed to be analysed before making a judgment.

Question 1(c) required the production of an action plan. Many candidates appear to struggle to grasp what an action plan is for and, therefore, what it should contain. Action plans should contain activities, these do not need to be complicated e.g. holding a meeting or developing strategies for filling skills gaps. Candidates are advised to study Resource 1 carefully before producing their action plan, so that appropriate activities could be proposed which are specific to the business in question. Activities which are specifically appropriate to the business and its situation are likely to be rewarded more highly than generic change management activities. Level 3, analysis marks remained inaccessible to the majority of candidates. Candidates were required to analyse how their proposed actions/activities could improve the chances of success of the change.

All three levels of response questions required a justified decision to be made as to the most important factor that the business should consider at Level 4. Question 2(a) was the most accessible question at this level.

### Question 1 (a) (i)

1 Refer to **Resource 1**.

(a) Drivers of change come from many sources including changes in the economy and changes in the market.

(i) Identify **two** changes in the economy that have driven change at *Coalex Ltd*.

1 .....

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2 .....

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[2]

This question was generally well answered. Candidates needed to understand the key term – the drivers of change in the economy, with reference to the information presented in Resource 1 in order to answer this question correctly. Whilst most candidates appeared to understand ‘drivers of change’, some struggled to identify changes in the economy. These are external drivers of change due to economic factors i.e. inflation, unemployment rates, etc. Candidates were required to identify these drivers of change with reference to Resource 1 for marks to be awarded. For example, candidates were required to state that ‘the interest rate was low’ and not just state ‘interest rates’.

### Question 1 (a) (ii)

(ii) Outline **one** change in the market that suggests *Coalex Ltd*'s visitor centre is likely to be successful.

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[2]

This question was less well-answered compared with 1(a)(i). Some candidates appeared to have confused ‘change in the market’ with ‘change in the economy’. Changes in the market refer to changes in consumer trends in terms of attitude and buying habits, as well as changes in the nature and strength of competition. Full marks were awarded for an answer which outlined a change in the market and how this change may lead to the likely success of the visitor centre.

## Question 1 (b)

(b) Analyse four likely barriers to change at *Coalex Ltd*.

Which one of these **four** barriers is likely to have the greatest impact on *Coalex Ltd* if it is not managed successfully? Give reasons for your choice.

[16]

Many candidates achieved Level 2 on this question. Barriers to change for *Coalex Ltd* were outlined clearly in Resource 1. Most candidates used Resource 1 in their answers and achieved Level 2 marks. Candidates should avoid giving generic answers such as 'lack of employee engagement' or 'stakeholder inertia' as these are only Level 1.

Level 3 marks were awarded for analysing an impact of the barriers to change on *Coalex Ltd* which the majority of candidates failed to do. Analyses must be business- or change management-facing and this is an area candidates are urged to work on. Even fewer candidates managed to analyse at least four barriers to change, as required by the question.

Level 4 was awarded for candidates who made a justified decision on which of their four barriers was likely to have the greatest impact on *Coalex Ltd*. Whilst a good number of candidates attempted to make a justified decision on their choice, Level 4 could not be awarded without prior analysis of at least 4 barriers.

## Question 1 (c)

(c) *Coalex Ltd* plans to open a visitor centre.

Produce a plan of action which includes **four** activities *Coalex Ltd* should do to manage this change.

Using Lewin's change management theory, justify which is the most important activity in your plan of action.

[16]

This question consists of two parts. The first part asks for four activities that *Coalex Ltd* should do to manage change. The logical way to approach this question is to write about four activities that the business should do before discussing Lewin's change management theory. Candidates are advised to note that relevant activities do not have to be complicated ones; 'meet with stakeholders' would suffice. However, 'meet with stakeholders' is a generic activity and could only be awarded Level 1 marks. 'Meet with the local council' would be an activity specific to the information in Resource 1 and would allow candidates to access Level 2 marks.

Level 3 was awarded for analyses of how the proposed activities would help *Coalex Ltd* to make the change happen or more successful. This was, unfortunately, rarely seen. This is an area of weakness candidates need to address in order to access higher level marks.

For those candidates who did analyse four actions, a Level 4 mark of 13 was awarded for suggesting which of the activities proposed was the most important one with a reason. Candidates who successfully applied Lewin's change management theory to the activity deemed to be the most important would potentially access the higher marks at Level 4.

Question 2 (a)

2 Refer to **Resource 2**.

(a) Analyse the qualitative and quantitative information shown in **Resource 2**.

Which are the most important issues that *Coalex Ltd* needs to monitor to further improve the visitor centre?

Justify your view.

[16]

This question focuses on the use of Resource 2, post-change information. This level of response question was the most accessible to the majority of candidates and the question was generally well-answered. . Most candidates were able to outline and analyse the issues contained in Resource 2 to access Level 3 marks. Whilst the mark scheme did not require both qualitative and quantitative information to be included in candidates' answers, most were able to present a good balance of both types of information to achieve Levels 1 and 2.

As the question does not specify how many issues to discuss, candidates needed to analyse just one issue successfully to access Level 4. As with the other two levels of response questions, Level 4 was awarded for choosing the most important issue with a reason. Level 4 marks were awarded according to the 'quality' of justification presented by candidates.

Question 2 (b) (i)

(b) The board of directors is considering conducting further research on the visitor centre.

(i) Explain **two** benefits to *Coalex Ltd* of conducting further research on the visitor centre.

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[4]

This question is about how *Coalex Ltd* could benefit from carrying out further research about the visitor centre; as such, only benefits to the business were acceptable. Whilst most candidates could identify the potential benefits to the business of carrying out further research, many failed to contextualise their answers to gain full marks. Candidates are advised to contextualise their answers as far as possible and use the information provided in the resources e.g. toys, children, gift shops, etc.

### Question 2 (b) (ii)

(ii) Explain **two** drawbacks for *Coalex Ltd* of conducting further research on the visitor centre.

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[4]

Instead of benefits this question asked for drawbacks to *Coalex Ltd* of conducting further research. The requirements were exactly the same as in 2(b)(ii) . However, this question appeared to be less accessible than part (i). There was some evidence of misinterpretation of the question as some candidates explained the drawbacks of conducting research per se. Candidates are advised to read the questions carefully before attempting to answer them.

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