

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

BUSINESS

05834–05837, 05878

Unit 2 January 2021 series

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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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Unit 2 series overview

<i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i>	<i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepared for the exam in terms of coverage of content, in particular, meeting documentation and different methods of meeting for this paper.• Demonstrated the key skills of analysis and evaluation in the level of response question.• Interpreted questions accurately.• Answered in context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Were less well prepared in terms of coverage of content, in particular, meeting documentation and methods of meeting for this paper.• Often did not interpret questions accurately.• Often failing to answer in context.• Did not demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate effectively in the level of response question.

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Question 1 (a)

1 Refer to Text 1.

- (a) Layla is wondering how to choose suitable suppliers for her new business.

Rank the factors that the data in **Fig. 1** suggests Layla should prioritise by labelling in the table the factors from 1 – 4 (1 being the most important and 4 being the least important).

Factor	Priority 1, 2, 3 or 4?
Fair working conditions for those who make the clothes	
The brand label of the clothing	
The price charged to the customer	
How environmentally friendly the manufacturing process is	

[4]

This is the first in-tray question that requires candidates to interpret the information given in Fig.1 to choose suitable suppliers for Green Chic. It was pleasing to see that most candidates were able to interpret the survey data accurately scoring full marks.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Explain **one** likely consequence to *Green Chic* of not listening to potential customers.

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..... [2]

While most candidates were able to explain likely consequences to Green Chic of not listening to its potential customers, few managed to answer in context to score full marks. Candidates are advised to avoid providing generic responses as far as possible for all the questions on the paper. Simply by quoting 'clothing' or 'fashion' or 'garments' in their response would help full marks to be given. It is therefore good practice to avoid using the word 'product or service' in their responses, which is generic to all businesses.

Text 2

It is vitally important that Layla orders stock of the right design and quality for *Green Chic's* target customers. Layla's research about suitable suppliers indicates that they are mostly located overseas, mainly in East Asia. Layla realises that once her business starts trading she will need to communicate with her suppliers frequently to ensure *Green Chic* does not run out of stock.

Question 2**2 Refer to Text 2.**

Layla is considering the following three ways to hold meetings with suppliers:

- telephone conferencing
- web conferencing
- face-to-face at each supplier's venue.

Explain **one** different advantage and **one** different disadvantage to Layla of using each of the methods shown in the table to hold meetings with suppliers.

Method of meeting	Explanation of advantage	Explanation of disadvantage
Telephone conferencing		
Web conferencing		
Face-to-face at each supplier's venue		

[12]

A generally well answered question that requires candidates to show their knowledge of the different methods of holding meetings. Candidates who did well were able to apply their knowledge to the scenario by recognising that most of Layla's suppliers were overseas. While most candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of web conferencing and face-to-face meetings, telephone conferencing was often mistaken as making telephone calls among the less able candidates. Candidates who did well in this question were able to describe the good and bad features of each method clearly, e.g. using telephone conferencing the participants do not have to travel. This knowledge is required for marks to be given. Candidates are advised to avoid giving vague responses such as 'it is a quick and easy method' without explaining why.

Text 3

Layla is fully aware of the importance of carefully checking meeting documentation, such as the minutes of meetings, for accuracy.

Question 3

3 Refer to Text 3.

Evaluate the importance to *Green Chic* of Layla keeping accurate minutes of her meetings with the intended overseas suppliers.

[12]

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It was evident from most candidates' response that few understood what minutes of meetings were. Even among those candidates who demonstrated some understanding of minutes of meetings, there was a good number who misinterpreted the question and wrote about the different checks that should be carried out to make sure that the document is accurate.

It is worth pointing out that 'being/appear professional' is too vague to be considered analysis. Candidates are also advised not to use the word 'affect' in their analyses because the mark scheme requires their responses to be explicit in terms of whether it is a good or adverse effect. Often analyses marks were lost for vague responses such as 'it will affect their reputation'.

Text 4

With the opening of *Green Chic* only two months away, Layla has begun to prioritise the tasks that require her attention. She has delegated the design of *Green Chic*'s business card to her teenage sister, Ali, who is currently studying GCSEs. This makes it possible for Layla to focus on the recruitment of a sales assistant for the shop.

Layla has drawn up the following list of tasks the shop assistant will be expected to perform:

- Welcome customers into the store.
- Represent the store in a professional manner.
- Answer customer queries regarding products and prices.
- Stock shelves.
- Help with window displays.
- Process payments.
- Notify owner when stock is low.
- Inform customers of upcoming sales and special offers.

Question 4 (a)

4 Refer to Text 4.

(a) Complete the table below by identifying **three** skills and **three** personal attributes that Layla should include in the person specification for a sales assistant.

Skills	Personal attributes
1	1
2	2
3	3

[6]

Another in-tray question that tests candidates' ability to draw up a list of skills and personal attributes of the sales assistant that Layla is looking for according to the tasks she requires them to perform. This question also tests candidates' knowledge of the content often found in a person specification. Most candidates performed well, showing good knowledge of person specification and the ability to identify personal attributes appropriate for a sales assistant. Less able candidates tended to copy the tasks given in Text 4 losing marks.

Question 4 (b)

(b) Other than the job title, identify **two** items that Layla will need to include in the contract of employment for the sales assistant.

1.....
.....
2.....
.....

[2]

On the whole candidates performed well in this question showing sound knowledge of the content of a contract of employment. Candidates are advised to avoid giving vague responses such as 'hours worked'.

Question 4 (c)

- (c) Layla needs to book a serviced office to interview applicants for the post of sales assistant. The interviews are planned to take place four weeks from today. Layla will need the office space for a whole day. The serviced office needs to provide IT equipment, photocopying facilities, stationery, car parking and refreshments. Cost and location (in terms of availability of public transport) are also important considerations for Layla.

Compose an email of enquiry which Layla can send to various serviced offices so that she can choose the most suitable one.

You will be assessed on the content, tone and layout of your email.

Use the proforma provided on the **opposite** page to write your email.

You **may** use the space below to draft your email. You will **not** receive any marks for your draft.

[12]

You may use this box to draft your email.

Most candidates scored around 7 or 8 marks for this question showing their ability to follow instructions given when composing a business document. Candidates who did well were able to follow instructions closely and included all the details for Layla's enquiry. It is good practice to use the text as a checklist so that nothing is missed off.

However, few candidates were able to work out the date for when the serviced office was required accurately, but instead gave vague responses such as '4 weeks from now'. While there is not a strict layout to follow for an email, candidates are advised to make sure that there is a clear subject outlined in the space provided at the top of the email as well as a polite closing. There was evidence of misinterpretation of the question as some candidates wrote 'booking of serviced office' in the subject space. It is very important for candidates to read the question carefully before attempting it.

To: Undisclosed recipients

From: Layla Green

Subject:

Question 4 (d)

(d) Explain **two** likely reasons why Layla prefers to write an email to these organisations rather than telephone them with her enquiries.

1.....
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2.....
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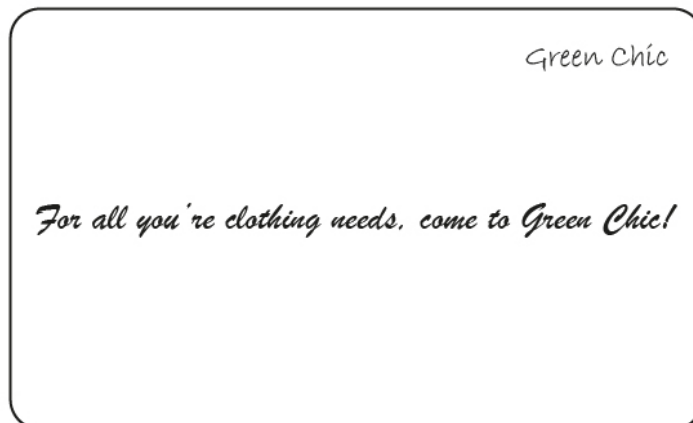
[4]

Candidates' performance on this question was generally poor with few scoring full marks. Like Question 2, candidates were required to show knowledge of the beneficial features of email before marks could be given. Candidates are advised to take note of this requirement when answering similar questions on methods of communication, payment methods, etc. However, a good number of candidates were able to point out that Layla could send out the same email to various organisations thus saving time. Few candidates acknowledged the fact that emails help written records to be kept for future reference even though it is an obvious benefit compared to a telephone call.

Question 4 (e)

- (e) Layla feels that the draft design of the business card that Ali has produced is not fit for purpose and needs to be improved.

**Front of
business card**



**Back of
business card**



Identify **six** ways the business card could be improved.

Improvement 1

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Improvement 2

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Improvement 3

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Improvement 4

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Improvement 5

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.....

Improvement 6

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[6]

This is an in-tray question requiring candidates to suggest six improvements to the business card presented in the text. It was an easy question for most who scored at least 4 marks. Most candidates were able to give clear, concise and appropriate improvements instead of merely pointing out the weaknesses found on the business card. However, candidates are advised to avoid giving vague responses such as 'the font should be clearer' or 'add images'. Answers without a verb should also be avoided, e.g. 'image of shop' does not constitute an instruction therefore no marks.

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