

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

BUSINESS

05834–05837, 05878

Unit 2 January 2024 series

Contents

Introduction3

Unit 2 series overview4

 Question 1 (a)5

 Question 1 (b)6

 Question 1 (c)6

 Question 1 (d)7

 Question 2 (a)8

 Question 2 (b)9

 Question 2 (c)9

 Question 2 (d)10

 Question 3 (a)11

 Question 3 (b)12

 Question 3 (c)12

 Question 3 (d)13

 Question 3 (e)13

 Question 4 (a)14

 Question 4 (b)14

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 [Teach Cambridge](#).

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Unit 2 series overview

The majority of candidates appeared well-prepared for this unit; the case study was well understood and accessible. On the whole candidates performed well on in-tray exercises based on practical business activities, in particular the sub questions involving some calculations. Apart from Question 3, most candidates performed relatively well throughout the paper. There was a significant improvement in candidates' analytical and evaluative skills.

Question 1 centres around the activities involved when organising a conference. Whilst most candidates found Questions 1 (a) and 1 (d) challenging, the rest of the question was well answered. Question 1 (c), which was the levels of response question, was particularly well-performed.

Question 2 focuses on travel arrangements. Question 2 (a) was one of the most well-performed questions on the paper with most candidates demonstrating their ability to prepare a suitable travel itinerary based on given time and budget constraints.

Question 3 was the most challenging question to most candidates who either struggled to interpret the different sub questions accurately or there was a lack of knowledge on the use of data/information to inform business decisions. Question 3 (d) was particularly challenging for the majority of candidates who did not understand what the question was asking for even though it was based on a topic that candidates should be familiar with in an education setting.

Question 4 relates to the organisation of a meeting. The in-tray exercise requires candidates to compose a letter to prospective customers inviting them to a meeting for research purposes. Candidates were also tested on their knowledge of different methods of meeting which was one of the easiest questions on the paper.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpreted questions accurately • answered in context • showed good analytical and evaluative skills • had good knowledge of formal business communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not fully understand the questions set • showed gaps in their knowledge • demonstrated poor exam techniques • gave vague responses that did not show knowledge of the topic concerned or the case study in question.

Question 1 (a)

Text 1

Gabi's Insect Farm is situated in a village about 20 miles from Cardiff, Wales. Gabi Gardner, the insect farm's sole owner, lives in the farmhouse. Currently there are two part-time employees who help Gabi with the day-to-day work on the farm. The farm's main source of revenue comes from supplying insects to local farmers for use as animal feed.

Gabi is considering new ways forward for her business. She is keen to explore the possibility of supplying the insects for human consumption, either as ingredients for healthcare supplements or as ready-to-eat products.

Gabi is a member of the Sustainable Agriculture Association. The Sustainable Agriculture Association is a not-for-profit organisation. Membership of the association costs £50 per year. Gabi has received publicity material from the association about a conference it is organising. Gabi thinks that attending the conference might help her decide on the next steps for the business.

1 Use Text 1.

- (a) Explain **two** factors which the conference organisers should have considered when designing the publicity material.

1

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.....

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2

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.....

.....

[4]

This question was poorly answered by the majority of candidates. Judging from the incorrect responses, candidates either misinterpreted the question or did not read it properly. There were a lot of responses about the factors that the conference organisers needed to consider when choosing a venue e.g. a suitable location. Some candidates went into detail about what should be included in the publicity material rather than explaining the factors. Yet others discussed the different methods of promotion e.g. social media which is not what this question is asking for.

The mark scheme requires the different factors to be identified correctly before the context mark can be awarded. Candidates are reminded about the importance of answering in context for this qualification.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Identify **two** consumables needed to produce hard copies of the publicity material.

1

2

[2]

This question was pitched at the 'pass' level and yet a number of candidates did not show their understanding of the term 'consumables' by stating 'computers' and 'photocopiers'. This is despite the same question being set in the last series, albeit in a different context.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Analyse **three** likely consequences for the Sustainable Agriculture Association of issuing conference publicity material that had been poorly checked.

Which would be the most serious consequence? Justify your view.

[12]

Candidates' performance on this level of response question was generally better compared to the last series with a good number of candidates achieving Level 4. Only a minority of candidates suggested a decrease in profit as an impact on the Association. This showed sound understanding of a third sector organisation as not-for-profit. The majority of candidates were able to demonstrate good analytical skills outlining clear chains of arguments. However, candidates are reminded to avoid using 'affect', 'impact' without specifying how. Instead, candidates should state clearly how an organisation will be affected/impacted e.g. affect negatively, adverse impact on.

To achieve Level 4 candidates must choose the most serious consequence with a reason outlining why it is chosen. Full marks cannot be given without context in the concluding paragraph, so this is an important point to note.

Question 1 (d)

(d) Gabi has sent a request to book a place at the conference.

Identify **two** documents Gabi should expect to receive from the conference organiser.

1

2 [2]

Most candidates did not score full marks. The question asks for two documents, not pieces of information e.g. timing of the conference. Candidates are advised to avoid giving vague answers e.g. tickets. These must be clearly specified e.g. entrance tickets.

Question 2 (a)

Text 2

The conference is to be held in central London at a venue 10 minutes' walk from London King's Cross Station. The conference starts at 10am and finishes at 5pm. Gabi wants to spend as much time at the conference as possible. She will park her car at Cardiff railway station and use public transport to, from and in London. Gabi needs to be back in Cardiff no later than 8pm.

Train timetables for travel between Cardiff Station and London Paddington Station are shown below, together with the fares.

	Outward – Cardiff (CAR) to London Paddington (PAD)			Return – London Paddington (PAD) to Cardiff (CAR)		
Depart	CAR 07:23	CAR 07:55	CAR 08:17	PAD 17:08	PAD 17:28	PAD 18:08
Arrive	PAD 09:12	PAD 09:44	PAD 10:11	CAR 18:58	CAR 19:33	CAR 20:07
Fare	£64.20	£84.00	£66.20	£105.00	£74.50	£66.60

The following methods of travel are available between London Paddington Station and London King's Cross Station. Buses and underground trains run every five minutes.

Method of travel	Duration and fare for a single journey
Underground train	12 minutes, £4.10
Bus	25 minutes, £2.00

2 Use Text 2.

- (a) The budget for the return journey between Cardiff and the conference in London is £145.

Taking into consideration time and cost constraints, recommend an itinerary for Gabi's journey by completing the information in the table on the **opposite page**.

[8]

This in-tray exercise tests candidates' ability to recommend the most appropriate itinerary based on time and budget constraints. Most candidates performed well scoring full marks. The most common mistake being the departure time for the first leg of the journey where candidates did not state it accurately e.g. 7:23 could either be in the morning or the evening. Candidates should have either used the 24-hour clock format i.e. 07:23 or indicate clearly using am or pm.

Own figure rule was awarded for stating the correct fare for the mode of transport recommended even though it is not appropriate according to the constraints given.

Question 2 (b)

- (b) The distance between the farm and the conference venue is 160 miles. Using HMRC's approved rate of 45 p per mile, calculate the maximum mileage claim Gabi could have included on her travel expense claim form if she had chosen to drive to and from the conference.

Workings:

Maximum mileage claim £

[3]

This question was well-performed by candidates on the whole with a good majority scoring full marks. However, some candidates lost 1 mark for calculating the cost of a single journey instead of a return journey.

Question 2 (c)

- (c) Other than mileage identify **two** costs that Gabi could include on her travel expense claim form.

1

2

[2]

This question was not well-answered despite being targeted at a 'pass' level. A good number of candidates stated 'fuel', showing either they did not read the question properly or they did not understand what 'mileage' referred to.

Question 2 (d)

- (d) Other than cost considerations, explain **two** benefits to Gabi of taking the train rather than driving from Cardiff to London.

1

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.....

.....

2

.....

.....

.....

[4]

The consideration of cost was excluded by the question which a good number of candidates did not notice. There were many responses referring to the speed of trains and traffic congestion. Given the problems associated to travelling by train in the current climate, these responses were excluded by the mark scheme.

In order to get full marks, candidates were required to answer in context which the majority did not do. Some candidates lost marks for explaining the drawbacks to Gabi of driving which does not answer the question.

Question 3 (a)

Text 3

During the conference Gabi learned that there is a growing trend for using insects in the production of protein powder for human consumption. Gabi considers this a good investment opportunity for her business.

Gabi has decided to invite Purchasing Managers from national protein powder manufacturers to a face-to-face meeting at the farm. She hopes to find out which insects she should invest in, to help her prioritise her resources.

During the meeting she would like to use presentation software to present information about the farm and how she could meet the growing demand for insect protein.

3 Use Text 3.

- (a) Identify with a tick (✓) the information Gabi is hoping to find out from the protein powder manufacturers to help her prioritise her resources.

You should only tick **one** box.

Changes in the economy

☐

Corporate social responsibilities

☐

External stakeholders' requirements

☐

[1]

This question tests candidates' knowledge of the different types of information available to a business when prioritising resources. Although targeted at a 'distinction' level, a good number of candidates were able to choose the correct answer.

Question 3 (b)

(b) Identify **two** internal pieces of information that Gabi should use to inform her investment priorities.

1

2 [2]

A difficult question for most candidates, also targeted at 'distinction' as in part (a). Despite the long list of acceptable answers on the mark scheme, most candidates did not score any marks. The specification requires candidates to know internal and external sources of information available to a business when prioritising tasks. This is an area most candidates need to work on.

Question 3 (c)

(c) As the farm takes its next steps Gabi's workload will increase.

State **one** benefit to the farm of Gabi delegating tasks to her employees.

..... [1]

Whilst most candidates appeared to have sound knowledge of what delegation involves, most lost the mark due to misinterpretation of the question. The majority of responses referred to the benefit to Gabi of delegating tasks rather than how the farm could benefit.

Question 3 (d)

- (d) Identify **two** documents that Gabi could produce to help her deliver her presentation. In each case, state the purpose of the document you have identified.

Document 1

Purpose

.....

.....

Document 2

Purpose

.....

.....

[4]

Considering the fact that PowerPoint presentation was introduced in the late 80s and has since been widely used in schools and colleges, the performance on this question was poor, with most candidates not scoring any marks. Instead of identifying documents relating to the delivery of presentation, there were a lot of responses relating to the organisation of meetings. This indicates a misinterpretation of the question. Misinterpretation was also evident in answers where candidates identified documents to be distributed to the audience during the course of Gabi's presentation.

Question 3 (e)

- (e) In her presentation Gabi will be using external data produced by a third party.

Name the legislation that protects the rights of the third party and state **one** action Gabi must take to comply with this law.

Legislation

Action

.....

[2]

Even though the majority of candidates knew the legislation concerned, most did not name it accurately enough to score full marks. Candidates could benefit from learning the names of the different laws on the specification fairly accurately to improve their performance.

However, most candidates were able to describe the action that Gabi should take to comply with the law. Candidates who described what Gabi should not do lost 1 mark for not answering the question.

Question 4 (a)

Text 4

The face-to-face meeting with the Purchasing Managers of national protein powder manufacturers is to take place at the farmhouse exactly two months from today. The meeting will start at 10 am and finish at 12 noon. Light refreshments will be served.

4 Use Text 4.

- (a) Identify **one** other form of meeting Gabi could use to obtain information from the protein powder manufacturers.

..... [1]

This is a well-answered question for most candidates who scored the full mark. However, candidates are advised to avoid vague answers e.g. telephone, video as there is a difference between telephone/video calls and telephone/video conferencing.

Question 4 (b)

- (b) Write a letter inviting Purchasing Managers to the meeting. Your letter should include as much information as possible, bearing in mind Gabi needs to produce an attendance register in advance of the meeting. Ensure your letter clearly indicates where the address of the recipient should be written.

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

Use the letterhead on the **opposite page** to write your letter. You **may** use the space below to draft your letter. You will **not** receive marks for your draft.

[12]

The majority of responses indicated that most candidates did not know the layout of a formal letter. Common mistakes included the position of the date, if it was written at all, the position of the recipient's address and the appropriate salutation for a formal letter with the matching complimentary close.

Whilst most candidates managed to get the tone of the letter correct i.e. polite; the content of their letter lacked the details required as stated on the mark scheme. The key to scoring well in a question like this lies in candidates' ability to include as much relevant detail as possible, these are often explicitly given in the text.

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