

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

BUSINESS

05834–05837, 05878

Unit 15 Summer 2024 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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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.

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Unit 15 series overview

This series continued the recent trend of students producing better quality responses to the full range of questions on this paper. Candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of a range of concepts from the unit content and good exam technique. The context of a taxi service implementing a home delivery service seemed accessible to a wide range of candidates and answers typically made good use of the provided data.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed sophisticated chains of reasoning, built on relevant theory, using appropriate references from the case study, in order to make judgements based on the significance of the impact on Rhode Taxis. Were able to correctly analyse their arguments on extended writing items, showing directionality and business impact. Were able to make subtle distinctions between different pieces of content, for example, by recognising that the directors of the taxi company are all examples of the same type of stakeholder, in order to avoid duplication in their answers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gave generic answers which did not relate to the context of a taxi business seeking to expand into home deliveries. Were unable to fully contextualise answers, making simple comments that reused language from question stems or the resource booklet rather than showing any wider knowledge. Were unable to link the evidence in the resource booklet to the correct pieces of theory, mis-categorising the examples provided.

This paper has retained the same structure as previous series, being based around two questions, each based on a different piece of resource material. Question 1 related to part A in the resource booklet which introduced a business called Rhode Taxis which has experienced some recent challenges owing to changes in the market and in customer behaviour. This section lays out the reasons that the business needs to change and considers how the managers of the business are planning to change. As in previous series, Question 2 relates to Resource B which gives details of the impact of the change to offering delivery services. Candidates were able to give good answers to all of the 16 marks questions in this paper, showing excellent analytical skills and in some cases, good evaluative skills. Candidates also tended to have a good understanding of key theorists and models of change, although, as in previous series, the contextualisation of answers seemed to prove more challenging for many candidates.

Matching the right ideas to the right piece of stimulus is essential

Some candidates lost marks on this paper because they were not able to correctly link the information in the case study to the right piece of specification content. Question 1 (b) (ii) referred to two external factors – the introduction of bus services and the desire of customers to have takeaway food delivered to their homes. Students struggled to recognise that the first point was a change in competition and that the second was a change in customer habits. By failing to link the stimulus to the correct piece of theory in their response, candidates lost marks. Similarly, in Question 1 (c), candidates were not able to correctly recognise the different types of barriers to change included in the stimulus material, thus giving answers that gained few if any marks.

Question 1 (a)

1 Refer to **Resource 1**.

(a) Identify **three** stakeholder groups and explain how each might be affected by the change at Rhode Taxis Ltd.

1

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2

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3

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[6]

As in previous series, Questions 1 (a), (b), (c), and (d) related to Resource A. This is an important feature of this paper and it is important that candidates use the right evidence to answer the relevant questions. A small minority of candidates used Resource B evidence, describing how the change had actually impacted specific stakeholders, rather than using the pre change evidence in Resource A to describe potential impacts. As a result, these candidates were only able to obtain up to three marks for this question if they correctly identified stakeholders.

Overall, Question 1 (a) was well-answered, with many candidates able to correctly identify relevant stakeholders and use evidence to suggest ways in which the change may impact them, such as the potential disruption to the lives of local residents caused by the noise of deliveries being sent around the clock, the impact on taxi drivers of having to learn how to work in the warehouse and the impact on directors in terms of having additional revenue and gaining more pay as a result. A small number of candidates named specific stakeholders as part of their response. As long as the named stakeholder represented a distinct group of stakeholders, this was a valid answer, but some candidates listed the names of each of the three company directors identified in the case study. In such cases, candidates were only able to achieve up to 2 marks because they had not identified distinct stakeholders, but the second and subsequent director was simply repeating the previous point and thus were not given marks.

Misconception



This question asked candidates to identify stakeholder groups. This meant identifying multiple different types of stakeholder group. Giving more than one example of the same type of stakeholder group was not a valid answer and so did not earn marks.

Candidates should read questions carefully and ensure that they understand what they need to find in the case study.

Question 1 (b) (i)

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

(i) Outline **one** change in the economy that has driven change at Rhode Taxis Ltd.

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..... [2]

This question was answered well by the majority of customers. Earning full marks for this question required two key points – the type of economic factor and the data from the case study showing how it affected the business.

Misconception



Some candidates have used their wider knowledge of economic factors to answer this question rather than the data provided in the resource book. A common answer to this question was inflation, with candidates pointing out that it has been high, leading to a cost of living crisis. While this is true of the real world at the time of the exam, this is not noted in the case study and so is not a valid answer.

Candidates have made similar mistakes on similar questions in previous years. It is important to remind candidates that they should only refer to the data in the resource booklet when completing this assessment.

Question 1 (b) (ii)

(ii) Outline **one** change in the market that has driven change at Rhode Taxis Ltd.

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..... [2]

While many candidates were able to achieve 1 mark for this question, a surprisingly high number did not achieve two marks because they did not name the change in the market. The example shows a candidate who has correctly noted that bus services are more frequent, leading to fewer people using taxis. Unfortunately, the candidate has not outlined that this is a change in the level of competition for Rhode Taxis. So, they have not gained the second mark for this question.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be able to demonstrate an understanding of which sections of the unit content different aspects of the resource booklet relates to. They should be given the opportunity to practice classifying examples of changes in the market, economic factors and other elements of the unit content in preparation for questions such as this, as well as the 16 mark extended writing items.

Exemplar 1

The bus services are more frequent this has
lead to fewer people using taxis to travel.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Rhode Taxis Ltd will start to deliver its baskets of ingredients within the next six months.

Analyse **four** barriers to this change.

Which of these four barriers poses the greatest risk to Rhode Taxis Ltd's change management process?

Give reasons for your answer.

[16]

This was the first 16 mark question on this paper. Candidates found this question relatively accessible, with many able to identify a range of different barriers to change. Some students highlighted barriers to change that were not relevant to the case study in some cases, those answers were purely generic, simply explaining how that barrier to change might exist for Rhode Taxis. In other cases, those responses misapplied evidence from the case study. In such cases, those elements of candidates' responses were not given any marks as they did not accurately answer the question. Credit was only given to answers that related to the barrier to change indicated by the contents of Resource A.

In the example provided, the candidate has been able to achieve 13/16 marks because they have been able to correctly analyse two barriers to change before making a judgement. They have demonstrated analysis by showing the business impact of each barrier to change. In the case of a lack of employee engagement they have pointed out that this will reduce the motivation of workers, leading to a loss of revenue as a result of poor service. This is a good example of the kind of chain of analysis that candidates need to construct in order to achieve higher marks on this type of question.

In terms of poor leadership, the candidate has shown that this might lead to customer complaints due to poor service, damaging the reputation of the taxi firm. This is a less detailed example but illustrates how the standard necessary to achieve Level 3 on the Levels of Response for this question can be just met.

It is worth noting that the candidate incorrectly explains how stakeholder inertia might be a barrier to change. While this is a potential barrier to change, it is not a valid answer to this question as there is no evidence in Resource A that this barrier exists for Rhode Taxis. So, although the candidate has attempted to analyse that barrier, they gain no marks for that section of their response. In the final paragraph of the answer, the candidate makes a supported judgement about which barrier to change is most important. Had they explained why another barrier was less important, in context, they would have potentially achieved full marks.

Misconception



Generic responses to questions such as this will rarely achieve any marks. Where a concept such as barriers to change is tested, candidates' answers should only relate to aspect of that concept that can be linked to the contextual material provided in the resource booklet. .

Exemplar 2

one barrier would be that Rhode
Taxis previous initiatives have failed.
This may lead to Stakeholders
not trusting.

One barrier would be ~~that~~ there
being a lack of employee engagement.
This is due to the drivers not liking
the idea ~~and~~ of working in a
warehouse and would prefer to
just be taxi drivers. As a result,
~~this may lead to there being no~~
~~communication between stakeholders~~
~~therefore~~ As a result, this may lead to
there being no motivation whilst
delivering the food which may
lead to less customers as well as a fall
in revenue.

Another barrier is poor leadership.
Having poor leadership can lead to
their being mistakes when delivering the
ingredients which may lead to
~~there being~~ customers complaining.

which may harm Rhoda Taxi's reputation. Another barrier is that there is stakeholder inertia. This is due drivers believing that there is no need for the change and that it would positively impact the business which may lead to them being unmotivated which may reduce sales. As well as this, if they cannot be bothered, this may lead to there being a ^{negative} increase in absenteeism levels due to them having inertia.

Another barrier would be previous initiatives failing. This may lead to them not trusting that the change would work which may lead to them not working as hard as well as there being an increase in labour turnover.

I believe that the most important risk would be a lack of employee engagement. This needs to be addressed first as if ~~the~~ employees are less engaged it may lead to them not being motivated which may lead to customers not being satisfied which may lead to complaints.

It is more important than ~~stakeholder~~ poor leadership as if the employees are not engaged it may lead to an increase in labour

turnover which means



that there is no one to instruct things to.

Question 1 (d)

(d) Evaluate the advantages of each of the following actions for the successful management of change at Rhode Taxis Ltd:

- consulting with key stakeholders
- appointing a project champion.

[16]

This was the second 16 mark question on this paper. Candidates tended to find this question relatively accessible, with many able to demonstrate knowledge of the benefits of consulting stakeholders. A minority of the candidates repeated elements of their answer to Question 1 (a), talking about the impact of the change on stakeholders, albeit in greater detail. Unfortunately, this did not answer the question and so was not given any marks. Many candidates seemed to lack an understanding of the concept of a project champion. In many cases, responses contained common errors such as suggesting that a project champion will be an expert in change management or that they will take over management of the change to free up directors to complete other tasks. Those elements of responses were not given any marks as they were incorrect.

In the example provided, the candidate has achieved 13/16 marks. They have been able to do this because they have made two analytical points, one about stakeholder consultation and its role in reducing inertia among stakeholders, showing how this might be linked to higher profits in the future, and another point about project champions, showing how they might improve communication between managers and workers, leading to a higher change of the change being successful. Following this, the candidate has correctly made a judgement about which of these methods is more useful to the business. Had the candidate given a valid justification as to why appointing a project champion is less important than stakeholder consultation, in context, they would have potentially achieved full marks for this question.

Misconception



A project champion is someone who is appointed to promote a change to colleagues. This is not a senior leadership role and does not involve taking responsibilities away from senior leaders. It is analogous to that of a cheerleader – someone to share information and build enthusiasm, answering questions and giving feedback to management. This is a topic which candidates have not understood well in this series or in previous series. Attention ought to be paid to the delivery of this concept in preparation for future examinations.

Exemplar 3

One advantage of Rhode Tax is consulting with key stakeholders is that it can help build trust. This is because if Rhode Tax communicates with the key stakeholder and pushes the need for change, it can lead to higher stakeholder confidence as well as build a better relationship between Rhode Tax and its stakeholders.

Another advantage is that it can help ~~improve~~ reduce stakeholder inertia. This is because if Rhode Tax consults with stakeholders and talks about all of the advantages for the business in the long term, they are able to understand that there is a need for the change. This may lead to stakeholders working harder in order to ~~gain~~ expand the business as well as there being increased ~~staff~~ motivation which could lead to more sales, increasing profit as a conclusion.

one advantage of appointing a Project champion is that it can help improve communication between stakeholders due to there being ~~a clear~~ someone to ~~to~~ tell them what they need to do in order to properly operate the change. This leads to there being a higher chance of the change being successful which can lead to the business gaining more profit.

The most important action that can be done would be consulting with Key Stakeholders as this allows for them to be more engaged and to know what is going on ~~in the business~~ with the change which can allow them to express their opinions and allow Rhodie to fix any obstacles before going through with the change which can ultimately lead to them having a change that is successful.

Question 2 (a)

2 Refer to **Resource 2**.

- (a) Using the information in **Resource 2**, analyse the unresolved issues that the directors need to address so that Rhode Taxis Ltd's change management process remains on track.

Which **one** of these issues is the most important?

Justify your answer.

[16]

This was the final 16 mark question on this paper. Candidates found this question to be quite accessible with most able to correctly identify four or more unresolved issues, and many able to analyse those issues, showing the impact of them on the business. Relatively few candidates incorrectly analysed any of the resolved issues in the resource booklet and relatively few highlighted issues from Resource A, reflecting a cohort of candidates who were well prepared for this assessment and who possessed a good understanding of relevant examination technique.

In the example provided, the candidate has been given 15/16 marks. This is because they have accurately analysed three unresolved issues, showing the effect on the business of selling out of date ingredients, taxi drivers looking for new jobs, and an increase in waiting times for customers wanting to catch a taxi. In each case, the candidate has used data from the resource booklet as the basis for their answer and has built a chain of reasoning that clearly shows cause and effect.

The candidate concludes their answer by making a judgement about which factor is most important, which is supported by relevant evidence. This answer is then placed in context by relating it to the delivery of food. Had the candidate made a judgement about why a different unresolved issue was less important, supported by relevant evidence, they might have been given full marks.

Assessment for learning



Writing a chain of reasoning that reaches Level 3 of the Levels of Response in the mark scheme often requires candidates to show an impact on the business in the resource booklet. This is not always the case, and sometimes, analysis marks require impact on other parties such as workers or customers. Candidates should be given opportunities to practice questions that require analysis in relation to a range of different groups in preparation for future series.

Exemplar 4

one issue that needs to be resolved is that some staff are sending out out of date ingredients for customers. This may lead to customers falling sick as well as some complaining which may tarnish Rhode Taxis' reputation as well as reduce profit. Another issue is that taxi drivers miss working full time as taxi drivers and are looking for new jobs. This may lead to Rhode Taxis' cost increasing as they need to spend money on recruiting and training new drivers. As a result, Rhode Taxis' profit may go down due to the increase in labour turnover which may result in there being less sales.

Another issue is that some customers are not considering ordering due to the ~~dis~~ diesel-fueled cars harming the environment.

~~This means that~~ This may lead to a loss of sales resulting in less revenue. As well as this, this may harm Rhode Taxi's reputation.

Another issue is that the taxi drivers have been miserable. This lack of engagement may result in customers not being satisfied which could lower profit as well as ~~there~~ there being an increase in labour turnover which may lead to there being a loss of sales. Another issue is that the average waiting time has increased by 18 minutes which ~~may lead to~~ which means that customers may need to wait longer for the taxi which may lead to them being less satisfied which may result in a loss of customers as well as a loss of profit.

I believe that the most important issue is that there are drivers who want to leave. I think that this needs to be tackled first because if Rhode Taxi's ~~doesn't~~ has a lot of drivers leaving it may result in there being ~~less~~ less drivers to carry out deliveries which may lower profit as well as them having to pay for training and recruiting which costs much. I believe that this is more important than a long waiting for a taxi because without drivers, there is no one to deliver the food.



Question 2 (b)

- (b) Rhode Taxis Ltd has been criticised because its services have a negative impact on the environment. As a result, the directors want to introduce environmentally friendly electric vehicles.

Identify **one** soft element of McKinsey's 7-S model of change management.

Based on the soft element identified, give an example of an appropriate action that Rhode Taxis Ltd's directors could take to support the introduction of electric vehicles.

Soft element

Action

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.....

[2]

This question was relatively well-answered by candidates with most able to achieve one mark for naming a soft element from the McKinsey 7-S model. Unfortunately, only a minority of candidates were able to achieve a second mark for describing a relevant action. This is because, while many candidates were able to accurately give a generic description of a soft element, few were able to link that element to the actions that Rhode Taxis need to take as part of their plan to implement a fleet of electric vehicles.

A good answer will have included an action that related specifically to the business without repeating any of the information in the question. For example, the question mentions that the electric vehicles are environmentally friendly, so candidates cannot be given any marks for repeating this point. They could, however, gain marks for mentioning that the cars will create less pollution or that staff may need to learn how to charge them in order to use them safely.

Misconception



The final question on this paper will always require candidates to give a contextualised answer in order to achieve full marks. In many cases, candidates do not properly contextualise their answer. Repeating information from the question will not count as contextualisation and thus will limit the number of marks candidates can achieve.

Exemplar 5

Soft element SKILLS

Action one action that can be done is to
train the drivers so they are able to
know how to operate the vehicle
which may lead to there being less
risks of accidents. [2]

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