

**CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)**

**Examiners' report**

**BUSINESS**

**05834–05837, 05878**

**Unit 15 January 2025 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 [Teach Cambridge](#).

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## Unit 15 series overview

Candidates generally performed well during this series, making good use of the material in the resource booklet. Many candidates demonstrated a good understanding of unit content and were able to apply this to the scenario of a small charity seeking to expand nationally. Most candidates were able to demonstrate good exam technique, providing well-structured answers to each question on the paper. The majority of answers used evidence from the resource booklet effectively to support their answers.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>used relevant theory as the basis for their answers to each question</li> <li>were able to relate their answers to the context of a small charity seeking to expand nationally</li> <li>made selective quotes from relevant sections of the resource booklet to support their answers</li> <li>made appropriate analytical comments that are relevant to a charity relating to issues such as costs, business reputation and productivity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>did not demonstrate sufficient understanding of the operation of a charity business, in particular when using references to revenue and profit as analytical points</li> <li>did not demonstrate a good understanding of the material in the resource booklet, making simple errors such as suggesting that the toy library sells toys.</li> </ul>

This paper was split into two sections. The first section contained Question 1, which related to Resource A. This dealt with the pre-change phase. The second section contained Question 2 which related to the post-change phase. As in previous series, the paper contained three 16-mark extended writing items, two of which were part of Question 1, and the third was part of Question 2. Each of these questions required students to demonstrate analysis and evaluation. While candidates were often able to accurately analyse issues in Questions 1 (d) and 2 (a), Question 1 (c) proved more challenging, with many candidates using models such as Kolb's change management model as the basis of their answer, rather than referring to the elements of a change plan. Most candidates were able to steadily accrue marks throughout the paper, earning some marks for each question.

### A solid grasp of key concepts is essential to success

Some candidates clearly had knowledge of different aspects of change management but were unable to demonstrate understanding by applying concepts to the data in the resource booklet. For Question 1 (a), some candidates were able to name drivers of change, but did not recognise that they were relevant to the data provided. For Question 1 (c), many candidates could name elements of a range of different change management models, but did not recognise that these were not part of a plan for managing a change, which is a separate piece of content in the specification.



Exemplar 1

1 one would be ~~its~~ environmental impact as most toys are collected and returned via petrol & diesel vehicles contributing to pollution and carbon emissions. This may affect the businesses reputation if it continues.

2 Another would be <sup>because</sup> ~~rising unemployment which can~~ market trends. This is due to the current ~~the market~~ child toys that are being sold are out of date and unpopular <sup>\*</sup> causing customers to lose interest leading to loss of sales if no change is made and out of trend for younger children.

In the response shown, the candidate has gained 4 marks for highlighting two relevant drivers of change and, in each case, using a relevant quote from the case study to support their answer.



## Exemplar 2

One barrier to change that may have led to volunteers not supporting the change is the stakeholder <sup>and volunteer</sup> fear when determining the after affects of the change. Stakeholders <sup>volunteers and</sup> weren't told enough and are worried that they will have too many toys, some of which that will outdated, after the switch to nationwide coverage; they are afraid of the strain it will put on them and the charity. [2]

In the response, the candidate has correctly identified stakeholder fear as a barrier to change, earning one mark. They have then linked this correctly to the data from the case study, noting that this is because they have not been told enough about the change, earning a second mark. The candidate then goes on to elaborate on why this will create fear, although this additional explanation is unnecessary.

## Question 1 (c)

- (c) The directors of Carma Play have agreed that it would be helpful to create a plan of action to ensure that the change is managed successfully.

Analyse **four** actions that should be taken to plan for and manage this change.

Which of these actions is likely to be most important for the success of the change?  
Give reasons for your answer.

[16]

This question required candidates to analyse the actions that should be included in a plan to carry out the implementation of Carma plays national postal service. Most candidates were able to correctly explain two or more relevant answers with most attempting to analyse those actions. In some cases, candidates were unable to achieve analysis marks due to using generic analytical statements, for example, by suggesting that training volunteers would lead to a reduction in profits for the business. In cases such as this, candidates did not fully understand the difference between a charitable organisation and a commercial business.

Many candidates were able to correctly analyse one or more relevant actions, and many attempted to evaluate these actions by highlighting one that they felt was more significant, for example by stating that reviewing stakeholders feedback was the most important. Where candidates gave a reason for their choice of most important action they were often able to give an argument to show why this might be the case. While many candidates attempted to evaluate their answers, few were able to gain full marks for this skill as they omitted two important points – firstly, they did not contextualise their evaluation with a reference to, for example, toys or volunteers. Secondly, they did not reject an action that they felt might be less important. For example, by suggesting that appointing a change champion might be less important than creating and communicating a vision for change as, without a vision for the change, the change champion will have nothing around which to build the enthusiasm of volunteers.

One common error made by students was to use a change management model such as Kolb's 3 stage model as the basis for their answer. A significant minority of students wrote in abstract about the need to unfreeze and refreeze the business. While these answers may have correctly analysed Kolb's theory, they did not contain concrete actions that might have been relevant to a plan for implementing the change to offer a postal service for customers of Carma Play.

### Misconception



A number of candidates included actions such as carry out market research or run special offers to attract customers. When writing about a plan for the implementation of a change, answers should relate to activities within the business, relating to the implementation of the change. Answers that relate to the initial planning of the change, such as market research, or relating to the promotion of the business, such as carrying out advertising, are not valid answers as they do not relate to the implementation of the change within the business.

## Exemplar 3

One action that should be taken to plan for and manage this change is to consult the key stakeholders such as volunteers so that they are well informed about what change will be happening, they can do this by holding a meeting with the key stakeholders so that if they have any questions, it can be answered and discussed so that they are satisfied and well informed.

Another action that should be taken is to set clear aims and objectives for the change. By doing this all ~~stake~~ stakeholders know why the change is happening and what they are working towards. This will ~~increase~~ increase productivity ~~because~~ at Carma Play because many people tend to work more ~~efficiently~~ efficiently when they know what the end goal is.

Another action that should be taken is training initiatives this is because the toys are now going to be delivered meaning that the volunteers will have to package them. Training will be needed because some volunteers may not know how to

Package to a good standard, so with training initiatives, the volunteers will be proficient in packaging to a high standard, this will increase customer satisfaction ~~because~~ because ~~the~~ when the packaging is at a high standard, the customers will feel valued.

Another action that should be taken to plan for and manage this change is

In the response provided above, the candidate has been awarded 9 marks because they have been able to correctly analyse one aspect of a plan to implement the change. In the first paragraph, they have explained how the business can consult with stakeholders but have not shown a business impact. In the second paragraph they have analysed the issue of setting aims and objectives by showing how doing so will increase productivity for Carma Play. In the third paragraph, they have explained why training is necessary but have not shown how this will impact the business beyond a vague reference to packages being of a good standard.

## Question 1 (d)

(d) Evaluate possible impacts of the change on Carma Play's physical resource needs.

[16]

This was the second 16-mark question on this paper. Candidates were able to identify a range of different physical resource needs that would be created by the change. Answers such as the need to create extra parking, create a packing room or obtain machinery for packaging and labelling were common correct answers. A significant minority of responses highlighted other types of resource needs such as human or financial. These points were not awarded marks as they did not relate to physical resource needs.

Many answers correctly explained the impact of physical resource needs but were not able to gain analysis marks as they used generic references to profit or revenue as the basis of their analysis. As the context of this paper was a charitable organisation, these were not valid analytical points and as such analysis marks could not be awarded. Another common error that prevented candidates from achieving analysis marks was to develop their answer in relation to the impact of the physical resources on volunteers or on clients of Carma Play. In order to achieve Level 3, answers had to show a business facing impact of the physical resource needs. For example, buying packaging materials would increase the costs to the charity, while turning the staffroom into a packing area without giving volunteers space to rest would reduce motivation and therefore reduce productivity. Not showing the impact of the resource needs on Carma Play meant that answers were considered explanatory rather than analytical and thus were only awarded up to 8 marks.

Overall, candidates who did well on this question tended to analyse the impact of two or more physical resource needs, showing how those needs would impact Carma Play, before indicating which physical resource need was likely to have the greatest impact on the charity. The best answers also made a judgement about why another physical resource need was less significant. A small minority of responses made evaluative comments that were in context, but using key words such as toys or volunteers, making their answer specific to the issues raised in resource A.

### Misconception



Many candidates wrote about resources other than physical resources. Answers relating to human resources were a common wrong answer, with many candidates explaining that the charity might need more volunteers. Unfortunately, volunteers are not a physical resource and while it may be true that more of them might be needed, responses that did not consider the implications of this for physical resources such as the amount of parking needed or the size of the staffroom were not awarded marks.

## Exemplar 4

One possible impact of the change on Carma Play's physical resource needs is that they will now have increased costs because in the ~~SK stakeholder~~ meeting Kai expressed that they may need packing and labelling machines. These ~~may be~~ machinery may be expensive to acquire so Carma Play may have to for example take out a bank loan to fund this. This could later harm them as to do not really have a strong income stream to repay loans.

Another possible impact of the change is sustainability concerns, this is because a lot of cardboard will be used in packaging the toys. This may raise concerns because people may want to know where the packaging goes after use and whether or not it is recycled. This could improve Carma Play's brand image or ruin their reputation.

Another possible impact is that they may have to <sup>train</sup> recruit people to maintain and repair packing and labelling machines. ~~to do this~~

In the exemplar response, the candidate was awarded 10 marks because they were able to analyse two physical resource needs accurately. Their answer linked the purchase of labelling machines to one business facing impact – higher costs, and also linked the purchase of cardboard to package toys to concerns about sustainability, which is then linked to another relevant business facing impact – a damaged reputation. The candidate is not able to achieve marks in the highest mark band because they have not made a reasoned judgement as to which physical resource need is more important.

## Question 2 (a)

### 2 Use Resource 2.

(a) Analyse the unresolved issues that the directors need to address.

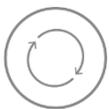
Recommend which one of these issues it is most important to address. Give reasons for your answer. **[16]**

This was the first question on this paper which required candidates to use resource 2 to support their answer and was the final 16-mark item on this paper. This was answered well by candidates with a majority able to analyse at least one unresolved issue, and most able to correctly identify three or more unresolved issues from the data in the resource booklet. Candidates tended to focus on issues such as the complaints received about the condition of the toys in the library, the lack of age appropriate toys available, the feedback from clients about the social aspect of the service being lost or the concerns raised by volunteers. In many cases, these issues were linked to a negative impact on the reputation of the charity, allowing candidates to achieve 9 or more marks. Most responses analysed the issues effectively and many attempted to evaluate their arguments by highlighting one which they considered more important than others.

Not all candidates who attempted to give an evaluation of their arguments was able to achieve the higher mark bands for this question because their response did not justify their selection of the most important issue. For example, candidates may have simply stated that the condition of the toys being lent out was the most important issue without indicating why this was the case – had they, for example, linked this to the impact on the reputation of the charity and the risk that this would potentially reduce the number of donations being received, they might have been able to achieve marks in the higher mark band.

A small minority of candidates used resource A as the basis for their answer, referring to the drivers of change or barriers to change, such as stakeholder fear or the rise in unemployment locally and nationally as the basis for their answers. While some of these answers were well analysed, none could be awarded any marks as they did not relate to the correct data. Centres should ensure that candidates know that Question 2 relates to resource B and that the data from resource A should not be referenced in their responses to any part of Question 2.

### Assessment for learning



Contextualising evaluation points is essential to achieving higher marks for evaluation, as is selecting important issues and rejecting less important issues. Candidate should have the opportunity to practise identifying issues in unseen data and indicating which issues are more or less important, along with giving a justification for their choices.

## Exemplar 5

ONE issue that Carma Play has is that the average number of customer complaints each month has increased after the change. This acts as a negative as complaints correlate to dissatisfaction. This means the customers will stop donating and borrowing ~~for~~ from the charity and the rate of donation as well as borrowing will drastically decrease.

Another issue which is important to address is the lack of ~~area~~ availability of toys. Toys cannot be reserved and therefore they go quickly and <sup>some</sup> customers can't get any. ~~The~~ ~~than~~. Before the change 650 were available to be borrowed at one time; after it fell to 230. This again can cause dissatisfaction and unhappiness that lead to the increase in complaints, and a loss of reputation and bad customer retention.

Another issue is the lack of ~~employee~~ <sup>volunteer</sup> satisfaction. The employees find their

role too stressful and some find their job boring. This means that volunteers are not motivated and have low morale. This means that productivity is affected negatively and that the quality and speed of work falls. This would lead to more complaints, more absenteeism and more labour turnover. This leads to less donations and borrows, which is chronically bad for the business.

In conclusion, the most important issue the charity needs to address is that of employee satisfaction and motivation. This is it because this issue causes other issues. This is an issue that affects productivity and quality. This means that customers are more likely to complain, this leads to less borrowing and donations for the charity. The lack of productivity could also have correlation with the lack of availability of toys and ~~either~~ even the fact that some toys come dirty. The issue is one in which is entirely negative and causes a negative reputation and brand image ~~for~~ the business which also lower customer and volunteer retention. It's drastic.

In the response provided, the candidate has analysed three physical resource needs. They have done this in detail and have shown a good understanding of the different unresolved issues highlighted in resource B. The candidate has been able to achieve 15 marks for this answer because, alongside their analysis they have also provided a strong justification for the motivation of staff being the most important unresolved issue relating to the change, highlighting the fact that this will impact on productivity and contextualising their answer with a reference to borrowing of toys and donations of toys.

### Question 2 (b)

(b) Carma Play has received negative publicity for losing its original focus on providing toys for children in the local community. The directors have now decided to restrict the postal delivery service to those who live within 25 miles of the toy library. Some of the volunteers do not agree with this.

Name any **two** steps in 'Kotter's 8 Step process for leading change'. For each of these steps, describe **one** action that the directors of Carma Play could take to help manage this change successfully.

Step 1 .....

Action .....

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Step 2 .....

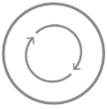
Action .....

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[6]

This question required candidates to name two steps from Kotter's model. They then needed to describe an action which would allow that step to be achieved. While many candidates were able to correctly name steps from the model, few were able to explain how this could be implemented. For example, after naming 'create urgency' as a step, candidates tended to explain what creating urgency meant or why it was important rather than showing how this could be done.

**Assessment for learning**



Differentiating between explanations and examples is important to success on this paper. Candidates should be able to recognise which one a question asks for, and to provide one or the other for different pieces of content from the specification.

When contextualising a response, it is important not to just repeat words from the question. Therefore candidates cannot use these terms alone, to contextualise their answer. Candidates should have an opportunity to practise contextualising their answers without repeating key words from the question.

**Exemplar 6**

Step 1 Coalition

Action Carma<sup>pl</sup> plays directors and volunteers could hold a coalition to discuss <sup>a plan</sup> the issues of the change and look to communicate what both parties desire, as well as what is good ~~for~~ <sup>for the charity</sup>. This would help to manage the change better as both volunteers and directors <sup>can have</sup> and dialogue and reach a conclusion that will help the change.

Step 2 Removat Create wins

Action Carma<sup>pl</sup> plays after the coalition should look create wins by setting aims and objectives and looking to achieve them. This allows for progress of change to be tracked and recorded and for the change to be managed <sup>effectively</sup> affected. Both directors and volunteers <sup>would</sup> all also be <sup>motivated</sup> [6] with something to work towards with the Change.

One common error on this question is illustrated in the example response. The candidate has written the word 'Coalition' rather than giving the name of the step from Kotter's model. This was not awarded any marks. The development that follows cannot be awarded any marks as the candidate has not correctly named a step from the model. For their second step, they have achieved a mark, by naming the 'create wins' stage of Kotter's model. The candidate has then attempted to give an action, by talking about the need to create aims and objectives, which is relevant to the issue, but does not answer the question – the candidate has not shown how the directors of Carma Play could actually create wins for volunteers at the charity and so this cannot be awarded a mark.

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