

Examiners' report

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

BUSINESS

**OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical
in Business**

Certificate: 05834

Extended Certificate: 05835

Foundation Diploma: 05836

Diploma: 05837

Extended Diploma: 05878

Unit 9 Summer 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. A selection of candidate responses 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.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from [Teach Cambridge](#).

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Unit 9 series overview

Unit 9 is assessed by a two-hour question paper which has 90 marks. This series the question paper comprised of eight questions and 13 part-questions. This series has seen a wide spread of marks given to candidates. This has depended on knowledge and understanding of the specification and the level of exam preparation.

There were many NR (no response) responses in this series and many less successful responses to the extended response questions comprised of just one sentence.

Less successful responses showed limited knowledge of the specification and key human resource (HR) terminology. This included Question 1 (a) which required candidates to identify key responsibilities of the HR function, which is the whole focus of this unit. More successful responses showed good knowledge and understanding of most parts of the specification and used context well within responses.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
• demonstrated knowledge and understanding of topics across the specification • focused on key words within the questions • showed understanding of formal appraisal techniques • showed understanding of methods of off-the-job training • were able to apply theory/concepts in the specification to the given context • were able to use key HR terminology.	• demonstrated limited knowledge of many topic areas within the specification • did not respond to questions in context • did not attempt some questions • did not know HR terminology or definitions • focused on the topic rather than what the question was asking in their responses.

Question 1 (a)

1

(a) Explain **three** human resource responsibilities that Sam needs to fulfil for SH Bespoke.

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[6]

Candidates needed to identify a responsibility of the HR function and provide a contextual example from the scenario. The question assessed LO1.1 which provides an overview of many of the topics within this specification.

Many candidates were able to identify at least one responsibility, although there were NR (no response) responses and some candidates only provided one or two responses, leaving the others blank.

Assessment for learning

Encourage candidates to include context from the scenario in their responses; particularly if the name of the business/organisation is included in the question.

Assessment for learning

Candidates should not use the terms 'fire' or 'firing'. In a HR unit candidates should know the HR terminology, e.g. dismissal or contract termination.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Explain how **two** pieces of current UK legislation affect human resources planning at SH Bespoke.

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[6]

Candidates needed to identify a specific piece of legislation and then explain the impact on human resources planning of that legislation i.e. what HR must do.

Some candidates correctly identified legislation but then explained the legislation rather than explaining the impact on human resources planning. There was also one mark available for context in each instance; however very few candidates referred to specific information from the scenario.

There were many NR responses.

Some responses did not identify the correct legislation relating to health and safety. Many identified the Health and Safety Act, which is incorrect.

Other responses did not identify specific pieces of legislation instead referring to, for example, minimum wage legislation or working hours legislation.

Assessment for learning



Insist that candidates use the correct 'title' of legislation from LO1.3 of the specification in classroom discussions and practice questions.

Question 2 (a)

2

- (a) Using data from **Table 1**, calculate the product wastage rate for SH Bespoke for **2024**. Show your workings.

[3]

Successful responses included the correct formula for product wastage rate and used it accurately. However, some responses did not include the % sign and therefore were not given full marks. There were some NR responses to this question.

Question 2 (b)

(b) Explain what the data in **Table 1** shows about SH Bespoke's accident rates.

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..... [3]

This question was successfully responded to by many candidates. Candidates who were less successful often stated data from the table rather than explaining it, e.g. stating that there were five accidents in 2023 and seven accidents in 2024, rather than explaining that the accident rate increased.

Assessment for learning



Encourage candidates to identify the command verb in each question before starting to write their response.

Question 3

- 3 Sam is about to start the recruitment and selection process for the additional employees.

Explain **two** barriers to effective employee relations that may affect SH Bespoke as the business grows.

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[6]

This question required candidates to provide a contextual response. However, many stated generic barriers from the specification rather than those which would apply to SH Bespoke as a growing business. There were many NR responses to this question.

Encourage candidates to identify the key words in the question as this will help them to focus on what the question is asking and any context which needs to be included.

Question 4 (a)

4

(a) The recruitment and selection process for the role of designer is shown below.

- 1 Produce a job description
- 2 Produce a job advertisement
- 3 Advertise the job in the local newspaper
- 4 Request applicants to email a CV with a covering letter
- 5 Face-to-face interview with Sam
- 6 Email the chosen candidate to offer them the job role
- 7 Probationary period

Evaluate the suitability of this recruitment and selection process for the role of designer at SH Bespoke.

[16]

The full range of marks was given for this question. Candidates needed to identify either a feature that is included, a feature that is not included or a feature that should/could be included to be given a mark in Level 1.

Level 2 required development of the Level 1 feature. This could be a positive/negative of an included feature, a way that an identified feature could be improved or a reason why a missing feature should be included. Level 3 could then be reached by providing an impact or consequence to the business/Sam of including the feature, not including the feature or improving the feature.

For a mark in Level 4, candidates needed to explicitly state whether the given recruitment and selection process is/is not suitable and then provide a clear, valid reason for this decision. For full marks, candidates needed to include context within their conclusion and provide more than one reason to support their decision. Few candidates included context in their response.

Some responses were not given a Level 4 mark because a definitive decision was not made, e.g. it is suitable because..... but it is not suitable because..... Other responses made a decision of which is the most important feature of the process or what was the most serious omission. Such responses do not respond to the question set and therefore Level 4 was not achieved.

There were many NR responses to this question.

Assessment for learning



Words which are included in the question are not awardable as context, e.g. in this question, 'Designer'.

Exemplar 1

In conclusion this recruitment and selection process is not suitable as it lacks many steps. The most impacting being not informing unsuccessful candidates as it damages SM Bespokes reputation which can lead to loss of public trust and loss of customers.

This response has been given a Level 4 mark. Having already reached Level 3 (which is required to access Level 4), the response has explicitly stated that the process is not suitable. The first reason given, 'as it lacks many steps' is too vague to give a Level 4 mark. However, it then goes on to explain that not informing unsuccessful candidates may damage the business' reputation. This is a valid reason why the process is not suitable; therefore a Level 4 mark can be given.

Question 4 (b)

(b) Evaluate methods of off-the-job training that SH Bespoke could use to train the new designer.

[16]

To be given a Level 1 mark candidates needed to identify a method of off-the-job training (LO8.1). Many less successful responses were unable to identify methods; therefore, scoring zero marks. Vague responses such as 'reading about the business on their website', 'evening classes', 'exams/assessments' and 'using Apps', were all seen.

Some responses provided the location of the training, e.g. 'go to another business', 'go to university' and 'a college course'. These are locations rather than methods. Other responses provided the content of the training, e.g. 'a design course'. Again, this is not a method of off-the-job training. Some responses identified methods of on-the-job training rather than off-the job.

To be given a Level 2 mark candidates needed to show understanding of the method identified. Some less successful responses were too vague (TV) as the description could relate to more than one method of off-the-job training; it needed to explicitly relate to the method identified. For example, 'online courses could be used as they give designers specific skills and knowledge that they may not already have' TV.

To be given a Level 3 mark candidates needed to provide either an impact on Sam/the business of using the identified method or a benefit/drawback to Sam/the business. Few responses did this; many provided impacts on the employee undertaking the training rather than Sam/the business.

For a Level 4 mark candidates needed to select what they believed to be the most appropriate method and provide a reason for this choice. To achieve full marks, this reasoning needed to be contextual and there needed to be reasoning why an alternative method was not as appropriate.

There were many NR responses to this question.

Question 5

5 Explain **two** benefits to SH Bespoke of providing induction training for the new labourers.

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[6]

To be given the first mark a business-facing benefit of providing induction training needed to be identified. Many less successful responses explained what induction training is and/or what it might include rather than stating a benefit to the business of providing this.

Benefits to the labourers of having induction training were also a common response; however, this is not what the question was asking for.

The second and third marks in each instance were available for explanation of why induction training would result in the identified benefit, plus context.

Question 6 (a)

6

(a) Analyse **two** monetary rewards that could be used to motivate the labourers.

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[6]

The full range of marks was given for this question.

The question clearly differentiated between successful responses that showed understanding of what monetary rewards are (as given in LO2.2) and those that did not. Less successful responses were unable to identify two monetary rewards. Some were unable to identify one monetary reward.

Some responses included promotions, pay rise and flexible working. A pay rise is not deemed as a monetary method of motivation by this specification (any motivational impact is likely to last for a very short period before the extra pay becomes taken for granted). Promotions and flexible working are non-monetary methods of motivation (LO2.2).

When candidates are describing monetary rewards encourage them not to use words within the 'name' of the reward to describe it, e.g. 'profit sharing is being given a share of the profits', would be too vague to be given as a description.

Question 6 (b)

(b) Describe **three** ways the success of any methods introduced to motivate the labourers could be measured.

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[6]

The full range of marks was given for this question. The question required candidates to identify a way that the success of any methods used to improve the motivation of employees could be measured and then describe the 'way'.

Less successful responses explained benefits of using the 'way' rather than describing what it is.

Assessment for learning



Make sure that candidates understand the requirements of each command verb. 'Describe' is a command verb that is often misunderstood.

Question 7

- 7 Evaluate formal appraisal techniques that SH Bespoke could introduce to monitor the performance of the labourers.

[8]

This question differentiated between successful responses which showed understanding of formal appraisal techniques and those that did not.

Less successful responses often included employee of the month, performance related pay and customer feedback. Responses that were too vague to be given marks included regular meetings, employee feedback and performance appraisal.

To be given a Level 1 mark candidates need to identify a formal appraisal technique. This did not have to be appropriate for the labourers for a Level 1 mark.

To be given a Level 2 mark candidates needed to show understanding of the technique identified i.e. provide description of what it involves. Many responses were too vague to be given a Level 2 mark. For example, a commonly seen description of peer appraisal was 'feedback from colleagues' or 'feedback from other employees'. This is too vague; candidates needed to show understanding that it is feedback from employees on the same level of the hierarchy or other labourers (in this instance). 'Co-workers' was also often seen, but again, this was too vague for a small business where all employees work alongside each other.

If Level 2 has not been given, candidates could not be given a Level 3 mark; understanding needs to be shown of the technique to progress to the next level.

To be given a Level 3 mark candidates needed to provide an impact or consequence on Sam/the business of using the identified formal appraisal technique. Few responses achieved this.

For a Level 4 mark candidates needed to provide a reasoned judgement as to which was the most appropriate technique for this business. 360° appraisal and upward appraisal were not awardable as the most appropriate as the labourers do not have subordinates in the hierarchy to provide feedback. Candidates must consider information within the scenario when making Level 4 judgements.

It is important that candidates know, understand and can describe all the formal appraisal techniques given in LO5.1.

Exemplar 2

Another formal appraisal technique is peer appraisal. This is good as the labourers will be able to ask their colleagues or friends if they believe they are doing better quality work or not. Because of this, they are more likely to work harder to get praised by their friends to show them they are trying their hardest. However,

This response correctly identifies peer appraisal as a formal appraisal technique. However, the description of this technique is too vague as it is unclear who the colleagues or friends are. To be given a mark in Level 2 the candidate would have needed to make it clear that these were either other labourers or colleagues on the same level of the hierarchy.

Exemplar 3

One technique can be the 360° degree feedback method. This is gathering feedback from a supervisor, peer and subordinate from the labourers. However this may not work as some business is too small and labourers have no subordinates.

This response correctly identifies 360° degree feedback/appraisal to be given Level 1. A mark in Level 2 has then been given as the response clearly shows understanding of who will provide the feedback. The candidate has also recognised that this is not an appropriate technique in this context as the labourers have no subordinates.

Question 8 (a)

8

(a) Explain **two** possible causes of conflict that may occur at SH Bespoke.

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[4]

This question assessed LO6.1. For full marks, responses needed to provide a possible cause of conflict with reference to context/the scenario. A non-contextual response achieved 1 mark, in each instance. Few responses were in context.

Some responses gave alternate ways of describing conflict, e.g. arguments, and disagreements; these were not given marks. Other less successful responses were too vague, e.g. 'misunderstandings' or 'miscommunication'.

Question 8 (b)

(b) Explain **two** reasons why Sam might want to resolve any conflict at SH Bespoke.

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[4]

Candidates needed to provide a reason why Sam might want to resolve conflict. For full marks this needed to be a contextual reason.

The key to achieving marks was to provide reasons why Sam might want to resolve conflict not what might happen if he did not resolve any conflict. Responses which focused on what might happen if he did not resolve conflict did not achieve marks for this question.

Assessment for learning



Encourage candidates to highlight key words in the questions to make sure that their response has the correct focus.

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