Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel GCE AS Level
In Business (8BS0)
Paper 1: Marketing and people

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Introduction

This report provides feedback on 8BS01 ‘Marketing and People’, one of two papers which make up the AS level qualification in Business.

This report should be used by centres to provide teachers and students with guidance as to how to approach various question types going forward.

Question 1 (a):

The majority of candidates were able to show some understanding of the term 'market research'. Many candidates stated the types of research (Primary and Secondary) and were awarded marks for this. It is evident in this, and the subsequent 2-mark questions, that candidates struggle to write clear definitions. This could be an area of focus to help candidates have a better understanding of the terminology in this qualification, which would help them across all question types.

Question 1 (b):

Again, the responses lacked clarity and many candidates simply stated it is 'what customers want', rather than the amount they are willing/able to buy.

Question 1(c):

This question was a good differentiator. The more able candidates were able to achieve full marks. Although Income Elascticity of Demand is a more complex topic, the calculation in nor more challenging than that of Price Elasticity of Demand which has been asked in previous examination series. Some candidates also neglected to calculate the % change in quantity demanded and used the new demand figure from the extract in the YED equation instead.

Question 1 (d):

Many candidates were able to show a good understanding of the product lifecycle, but as in previous examination series, they struggled to gain both application marks. There also seemed to be a focus on the negative effects of being in the growth stage of the product life cycle, which led to them not answering the question.

Question 1 (e):

Income elasticity of demand is a topic that candidates find challenging, so this question acted as a good differentiator. Candidates did make a good attempt to use the extract to support their answers. In many cases this resulted in them demonstrating some understanding of YED and Oatly as a luxury product. Without clear knowledge of factors affecting YED however they were not able to provide two factors of relevant assessment.

Question 1(f):

Candidate knowledge of secondary market research was good, and they were able to provide both advantages and disadvantages of its use. These were often generic however and candidates neglected to apply to Oatly or make good use of the extract to support their answer.

Question 2(a):

Generally well answered, with many candidates achieving full marks on this question.

Question 2(b):

Generally, well answered. Many candidates provided the correct formula and therefore achieved full marks. Some confusion with selling share in the business which perhaps suggests candidates are not reading the question carefully.

Question 2(c):

The majority of candidates were able to achieve the knowledge mark for demonstrating an understanding of 'private limited company'. Achieving both application marks and the analysis mark was less common as candidates struggled to show the benefit to the Keeble family. Those candidates that understood limited liability were much more likely to achieve 3 or 4 marks as they were able to provide a benefit more easily.

Question 2(d):

Most candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of a 'strong brand' although as with the other 'explain' questions they had difficulty achieving both application marks and, in some cases, explaining the benefit of having a strong brand. As with most questions in this paper, it is essential that candidates develop an in-depth knowledge of topics so they can form analysis points. In this case recognising that a strong brand could lead to a competitive advantage over Walls and Richmond, therefore leading to more sales for Heck!

Question 2(e):

This question was poorly answered and it is clear that candidates do not have a good understanding of entrepreneurial roles. They instead tended to list entrepreneurial characteristics or simply lift elements from the extract such as 'being independent' or 'doing research'.

Question 2(f):

Candidates seemed to be able to define market segmentation, but as with previous questions, lacked the depth of understanding required to enable them to develop chains of analysis or attempt assessment. There was a clear attempt to use the extract, but these attempts were often unsuccessful as the knowledge and understanding was lacking.

Question 3:

As in previous examination series, many candidates struggled to achieve higher than Level 2 marks. Good use was made of the extract to identify advantages and disadvantages of both physical stores and online sales, but chains of analysis were not developed to link to increasing sales in the competitive retail environment. Candidates often found one option easier to assess than another, which again meant the question was not fully developed.

Attempts at supported judgements were significantly better than in previous examination series, although again lacking a focus on increasing sales in the competitive retail environment.

Paper Summary:

Based on the exemplars that have been seen by the Principal Examiner, centres and candidates are offered the following advice for 2025:

· Learn the key terms in the specification. This could account for as much as 10% of the marks available on the paper.

· Learn the formulae in the specification and set out 'Calculate…' questions clearly. Across 8BS01 and 8BS02 10% of the marks available must be based on quantitative skills.

· In 'Explain how…' questions recognise that 2 of the 4 marks available are for ‘Application’ or ‘AO2’.

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