



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

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

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Summer 2024

Publications Code 8BS0_01_2506_ER

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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):

As with many of the definition questions, answers were often vague and unclear. Many learners simply suggested that a niche market was a 'small market' which is too vague an answer to gain marks. Attempts at examples were given, but again these were vague e.g. toothpaste or chocolate. To achieve a mark, examples need to be specific to a niche market.

Question 1 (b):

Similarly to Q1a, answers were vague. Many learners suggested that mass markets are 'large markets' but without anything more specific to demonstrate knowledge. Examples were again vague and not specific to a mass market. Identifying a specific mass market product would have been the most effective method, rather than simply providing a brand name as some did.

Question 1(c):

This question was well answered. Some learners did lose marks for not providing the correct answer to two decimal places.

Question 1 (d):

Many learners were able to provide an accurate definition of innovation, but some provided explanations and examples of a USP without demonstrating knowledge of innovation and therefore were not able to gain marks. Application and analysis marks cannot be awarded without the demonstration of knowledge. Good use of the extract was made to apply correct answers, but learners must be careful not to simply repeat the context given in the question. In this case 'chocolate' was given in the question and therefore not able to achieve application marks.

Question 1 (e):

Learners had a good understanding of online retailing, and many made good use of the extract to apply their answers. However, as in previous years, learners sometimes neglected to assess their answer by providing a balancing point to each benefit.

Question 1(f):

This question was a good differentiator. Many learners struggled to demonstrate thorough knowledge of cost-plus pricing. Some attempted to answer the question by discussing alternative pricing strategies. This did not answer the question so marks could not be awarded unless the alternative pricing strategy was used as a balancing argument after having demonstrated understanding of cost-plus pricing.

Question 2(a):

Learners found this definition difficult. Many rewrote the term by stating it is 'training on-the-job'. This is not an adequate response. Both training and on-the-job needed to be defined. Examples cannot be awarded without knowledge being demonstrated first.

Question 2(b):

Generally, well answered. Many learners were able to demonstrate an understanding of 'financial incentives' and provide examples such as bonuses or commission.

Question 2(c):

This was another good differentiator. Many learners were not able to demonstrate knowledge of market mapping. The majority that knew how to draw a market map were able to achieve the full four marks. However, some learners did not identify a competitor or did not provide clear labelling. Market share was often used as a label, based on the information in the extract, but is not a correct label for market mapping.

Question 2(d):

Most learners were able to demonstrate knowledge of 'competition' and make good use of the extract to apply their answers. However, some answers focused on how competition could affect employees or recruitment, which was not an awardable response and is not a factor given in the specification for this topic.

Question 2(e):

Most learners were able to demonstrate knowledge of external recruitment but often struggled to apply their answers. Generic responses, even when balanced, cannot achieve top level marks as context is required at both Level 2 and Level 3.

Question 2(f):

Learners made good use of the extract to support their answer to this question. Although some focused on the advantages and disadvantages of financial incentives, which is not what the question was asking for. Learners should have knowledge of all elements of the specification rather than relying on the extract for answers.

Question 3:

As with most of the levels of response questions, exam technique has improved compared to previous series. Many learners were able to achieve Level 3 or Level 4 marks by discussing both options and connecting their chains of analysis to the impact on profit. Good use was made of the extract, and learners appeared to have found the business example accessible. It is important to show an understanding of the business situation rather than just copying parts of the extract.

Most learners attempted a judgement, but it is important that this is not simply a repeat of points they have already made in their balanced argument.

Paper Summary:

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

- Learn the key terms in the specification and be able to write clear, concise definitions. This could account for as much as 10% of the marks available on the paper.
- In all other questions, use the extracts to provide effective context rather than simply copying quotes. It is essential that learners can select the appropriate qualitative and quantitative information from extracts to support their answers.
- Learners must read the questions carefully and ensure that any application is relevant to the question. Use of the extract is not a substitute for knowledge.

