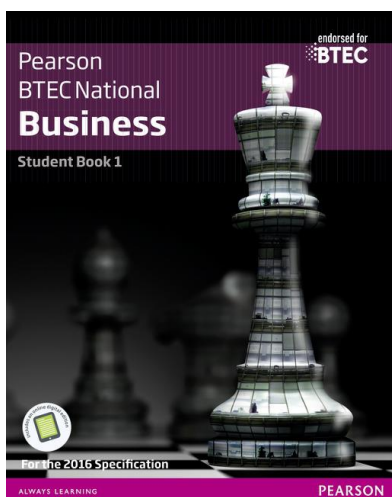


BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Business: Unit 6

Your free sample of the student
book: preparation for
assessment

(BTEC National Business: Student Book 1 (with
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Getting ready for assessment

This section has been written to help you to do your best when you take the external examination. Read through it carefully and ask your tutor if there is anything you are not sure about.

About the test

The assessment test will be split into two Parts: A and B. Part B is likely to be two activities worth 44 marks each. Part A contains material for completion of preparatory work for the set test which will be undertaken a set period of time before Part B. Part A will include a case study which you will use to prepare for the test and must be carried out independently and you will not be allowed to share your work with other learners. Your tutor may give guidance on when you can complete the preparation but cannot give you feedback during the preparation period.

The case study will provide a scenario and you will be given activities and a short set of instructions. Remember to read these very carefully so you know what to prepare, which could be on anything included in this unit. It is highly likely you will need to analyse and evaluate some data.

As the guidelines for assessment can change, you should refer to the official assessment guidance on the Pearson Qualifications website for the latest definitive guidance.

Sitting the test

The test will be supervised and your work will be kept securely during any breaks taken. Listen very carefully to any verbal instructions you are given and thoroughly read the instructions for the test.

You will be instructed to produce one or more of the products defined by the command terms. You will need to demonstrate ability to:

- analyse data
- analyse management information
- identify and apply management principles.

Command or term	Definition
Executive summary	A brief but comprehensive synopsis of a business plan or proposal.
Formal report	This is a report written for an audience in appropriate business language, layout and style.
Presentation	Using software to prepare the materials for a visual presentation.

- ▶ Remember, a pass mark requires you to rationalise the styles and skills required in different management and leadership situations.
- ▶ You will also need to show you understand the factors influencing management and performance of the workforce and how to apply them in the workplace.
- ▶ Make sure you justify the recommendations proposed for business improvements, which must be related to management and leadership principles.

Check you have everything you need for the test and arrive in plenty of time.

Plan out your time to ensure you get chance to proof read and correct any mistakes before handing in.

Worked example

Part A: Set task brief

You are working for the quality department in a manufacturing company which produces high energy drinks. Your boss, the quality manager, has asked you to carry out quality checks of each department starting with sales to contribute to a report on the continuing viability of the business. You will need to:

- identify the issues in this case study and carry out preparations for completing the tasks relating to this unit
- spend approximately six hours on this research (check exact times available with your tutor, as this may change).

Part A: Set task information

Activate Drinks Case Study

High energy drinks are often associated with healthy lifestyles and leisure-type activities. The sports industry is also associated with consuming high energy drinks as a means to sustain intensive activities. Activate introduced their range of energy drinks in early 2000 and business went well, increasing sales year-on-year until 2012 when they started to decline.

It's important to highlight any numbers in the text as you may need to refer to quantitative data.

Although competition between brands is fierce, with Red Bull being a market leader, sales overall are up by 6.7% in the USA alone in the year from 2013.

The sales team has doubled since the year 2000 to 20 personnel, overseen by a Sales Director who was promoted from being Production Manager in the factory. The sales team have either been recruited externally or internally from other non-sales-related roles.

As the Activate brand was a new concept, which was introduced as a totally new line for the business long established in manufacturing the bottles for other high energy drink manufacturers, the leaders made the strategic decision to make and package in-house rather than only make and distribute to drinks manufacturers.

As sales have fallen and the Sales Director has been unable to confirm the reasons for this, the quality department have stepped in to investigate the possible reasons for this decline.

Read this carefully! Make sure you understand exactly what you need to do ahead of starting your preparatory work on Part A.

Think about how you will make the best use of both the space and time you have available.

Make sure you have fully understood what you need to do from the set task brief. You need to look at the viability of the business and so this piece of information about how well the business is doing is crucial.

Note that the information about the Sales Director might be important as it gives you background about a previous role which might just be relevant later.

It might be important to refer to the history of the product later and also the history of the business as a manufacturer.

Make sure you research all terms you do not understand or know little about.

You will need to spend time thinking about the likely reasons behind them.

One of the theories the quality team are keen to explore is the structure of the sales department which has been operating in a laissez-faire manner. Although the current leader has a managerial background, the context of manufacturing is not the same as managing a sales team and dealing with customers directly. As business grew rapidly there was little time for any training and only two of the team, who were recruited externally, have any sales experience and both from the retail sector.

The Sales Director reports that the department is extremely frantic and that everyone has kept busy dealing with enquiries, talking to production, chasing suppliers for raw materials and never enough time for meetings, appraisals and other 'stuff' which, the Director quotes, 'gets in the way of the day-to-day business'. When asked about the benefits of employing two team members with sales experience, the Sales Director is quick to respond that they are young and both worked in a different sector although have some useful qualities.

Think about what the Sales Director might be implying here. It could indicate how the sales department operates as a culture.

You might want to practise interpreting graphs; perhaps you have some you can refer to from maths lessons?

In response to the Sales Director reporting that the department is always extremely busy, the quality team have asked for records of staff attendance to check whether the pressure and amount of work is too great for the number of staff employed. The only records available are for the six months starting 2015, due to, as stated by the Sales Director, the pressure of work and lack of apparent support from the administration team or HR.

SALES DEPARTMENT ABSENTEEISM						
	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15
# on payroll	19	18	17	17	17	18
# sick	0	6	8	3	0	1
# maternity	1	1	1	1	1	1
# holidays	2	1	1	2	0	1
# compassionate leave	0	2	1	0	1	1

Part B

Activity 1

Following the research you have undertaken, you will need to produce a report for your quality manager. In your report you should identify the key issues and include recommendations for the sales department. The boss of the organisation has made it clear that removing Activate as a product line is unlikely as too much has been invested in its production although is open to suggestions which lead to an increase in sales.

(Total for activity 1 = 44 marks)

Plan out the structure for your report, making sure you have all the necessary headings ending with a conclusion and recommendations. Include a contents page and don't forget your references.

Activity 1 Answer:

There are a number of issues that this report will investigate in relation to the falling sales of the Activate brand and the reduction in sales. Quality checks were undertaken to ...

I will discuss the following key issues:

- *inappropriate leadership style*
- *sales team has limited sales experience*
- *lack of delegation*
- *possible conflict between Sales Director and team members with sales experience*
- *lack of formal procedures*
- *weak management skills*
- *poor planning and organisation.*

From the evidence gathered... the sales department operates under a laissez-faire leadership style (fact) and this appears to impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the department...

...Due to the lack of procedures in the sales department, the monitoring of staff attendance was overlooked until Therefore, although it could be initially assumed that the workload was too great for the number of employees, the sales department was operating on ... percentage of staff...

My recommendations moving forward include upskilling the Sales Director to build on production knowledge in a sales context. This will ensure that they are able to both understand the concerns of staff they are responsible for but also allow them to understand the data coming from the team.

....restructuring the sales team to operate in a transformational style, this change will....

....retaining or reskilling the sales team members with little sales experience. This will not only upskill the workforce but may help with motivation. This may help with sickness absenteeism, which is quite high from the data provided....formalising appraisal procedures....

You may find it useful to tick off each aspect as you refer to it in the report and then strike through again when you have made a recommendation associated with the finding.

Ensure you only include the facts where making a judgement otherwise make it clear when it is your opinion. A useful term to use when relating to opinions or where there is insufficient evidence to be absolutely sure is to refer to what the findings 'suggest'.

When using terminology always make sure you're using it in the correct context!

Activity 2

Prepare a maximum of five slides with speaker notes for a presentation which contributes to a meeting between the quality manager, organisation boss and Sales Director. Your contribution will:

- provide an evaluation based on the data from staff absenteeism
- propose a systematic approach to managing the human resources
- explain the impact of managing change on the potential sales opportunities.

(Total for activity 2 = 44 marks)

Activity 2 Answer:

Rather than lots of words, you may want to include a diagram here to show how the new structure could look.

This may be another place where you could consider including a diagram. Using a diagram makes it easier for the audience to interpret the data.

Any recommendations you make should be backed up by the evidence you have already discussed. Be prepared to justify any recommendations you make!

Slide 1

Slide content

Sales department staffing and structure
The proposal is to move to a transformational structure. This will allow...

Speaker notes

The following proposals to be discussed: building on the skills of existing staff with support for team members and managers from experienced mentors in similar positions.

Slide 2

Slide content

Staff absenteeism
The analyses of the staff absenteeism table indicate that the sales team does not operate on full capacity though further exploration is required to identify staff turnover.

Speaker notes

Discuss limitations of the data: only one-sixth of the period between the three years from the end of 2012 to the end of 2015.

Slide 3

Slide content

Recommendations
Review the current procedures and policies
Identify periods where current staff allocation is not meeting needs. ...

Speaker notes

Expand on the periods where we're busy - make sure they realise how crucial that is...

Slide 4

Slide content	<p>HR strategy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 carry out TNA of sales department 2 undertake appraisals 3 evaluate job roles and skill levels 4 review job descriptions 5 implement sales and management training programme 6 set sales targets 7 implement quality monitoring system
Speaker notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 the TNA will identify existing abilities and how these align to the needs of the organisation. Gaps in skills and understanding will be used to inform training plans and team structure 2 appraisals will provide the opportunity for staff to assess where they think they belong in the organisation, what training they need and their aspirations for their careers 3 job roles.

When you discuss staff training, the type of training may be different for each individual, especially for the Sales Director. Consider how the manager will feel if attending the same training as subordinates and what the training is meant to achieve.

Ensure you refer to the key terms you have learnt about in your studies, such as upskilling, reskilling etc.

In slide 4, you might add to your speaker notes where you will make links between the quality monitoring system and some examples of what the system could comprise. For example, proposing the company works towards *liP*, with a brief explanation of why and how the business and department will benefit.

Slide 5

Slide content	<p>Culture and managing change</p> <p><i>From discussion with line managers we have established the following concerns....</i></p>
Speaker notes	<p>Discuss relationships between proposed changes to department operations and managing change.</p> <p>Make links to Herzberg's theory and how recognizing staff contributions will impact on future sales and setting sales targets.</p>

When you talk about culture or any other terms, remember to elaborate on what you mean in this context. It's helpful to assume that your audience won't necessarily know what you mean or how you are relating it to the current situation.

You could produce an executive summary. First you need to identify the main points, highlighting the business case, the main issues and providing an overview of actions to be taken. Begin with an introductory sentence. Make sure that the points you make are relevant to the activity. Use examples of positives, negatives and any outstanding issues. Use transition words such as 'next', 'before', 'for example', 'to sum up' to connect sentences. Proof read your work for presentation, spelling and grammar.