

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

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PL Business, Admin & Finance
(BA101, BA102, BA104, BA105)
Paper 01

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Unit 1

LO1 – Candidates are required to understand what makes a product or service. Overall the work was to a very good standard. However the number of entries were low for this January.

LO2 – The candidates are asked to generate an idea that could be used for a product or service. Again the work was very detailed and centres and given candidates some good advice and guidance on their chosen idea and showed good understanding how it could be successful.

LO3 – There was comprehensive coverage of market research and candidates had backed this up with strong interpretation and recommendations.

LO5 – Overall the work for this unit was very strong

Unit 2

LO2.1 – This was carried out well by centres and candidates were able to show how to retrieve their files. Much better guidance has been given.

LO2.1 – Candidates presented relevant documents and in some cases had draft copies to show where their mistakes and how they were changed.

Lo2.3 – Grammar and spelling were also better this year and documents were presented in business format.

Unit 4 Sales and Customer Service in Business

Standard of Assessment

The delivery of this unit was variable; the better centres arranged for candidates to visit places of work and observe customer service in action. They were able to see firsthand, good and bad customer service and examine the customer service policy of the organisation.

LO1 Performance for this learning objective was variable. The candidates were able to outline customer service roles but not always in enough detail and not always in relation to the business they were studying. Candidates need to be aware that it is not just the customer service department who are responsible for customer service but many other employees too. The better candidates were able to report clearly on the different customer service roles and explain the tasks they performed.

LO2(1) Candidates were able to identify types of customers but, in many cases, this was very brief. The types of customers will vary from business to business and they will have specific characteristics. It is not enough in this LO to say customers are families; their specific characteristics need to be identified i.e. in a shoe shop there may be a need for somewhere for the children to play. The ones who had visited businesses were able to explain clearly who the customers were and explain their needs, other candidates just made a general list and were unable to access MB3.

LO2(2,3) Again, those who visited businesses were able to give specific examples of good and bad customer service and explain why it was good or and the effect it would have on the business and the customer. Those who were writing a general report based on their own experience only gave a brief example. Better candidates were able to relate the good and bad customer service examples back to the customer needs mentioned previously.

LO3 This learning objective provided better differentiation and there was a marked difference between the better candidates and those who had made only a cursory attempt at this task. The answers ranged from a couple of lines to a detailed explanation relating to the benefits of good customer service showing real insight and depth. Good candidates were able to refer and relate their explanation back to their chosen business and pick out particular features of their customer service policy.

Overall

Candidates are being disadvantaged if they do not observe customer service in action; if they are left to arrange the visits themselves the outcomes will be variable. The centres exhibiting better practice arranged for whole classes to visit specific organisation and hence all had access to the same information; the differentiation came when they had to interpret this and then write it up. Without these visits the work became very theoretical and less meaningful.

Unit 5 Careers and Employment in Business

Administration

Centres are reminded that there is no necessity to include copious amounts of research for this unit, two job print outs are sufficient.

Standard of Assessment

Overall this unit was delivered to a high standard and the majority of candidates were able to access the higher level marks because of the nature of the tasks; candidates were required to research jobs and assess how well they were equipped to perform these jobs. The work produced was well researched and candidates achieved high marks.

LO1 The candidates were all able to show where they had researched two jobs; there was evidence from the internet and from local newspapers. They were able to compare these jobs well and state which one they would prefer; they did not always relate their preference to their own skills and experience and this prevented them from entering MB3.

LO2(1)/ LO3(1) Candidates were able to produce a standard CV and a letter of application and this was completed to a high standard; the format was appropriate and there were few errors in most of the candidates work. The better candidates were able to relate their own skills and experience to the skills and experiences required by the advertised job.

LO3(2) The preparation for the interview was done less well this time than in the last series. Candidates were able to produce general, very brief questions but most did not produce sample answers to their questions. Very few candidates made any attempt to relate the questions to the job they were applying for. The preparation for most candidates stopped here; a few showed examples of good practice by printing maps and planning a route and considered what would be appropriate to wear to an interview with a specific explanation why.

LO4 Centres are reminded that the goals the candidates set must be related to their work experience placement and should be set before they embark on the placement. The goals set tended to be very general. Most candidates only focused on a couple of goals and MB3 required them to relate to a wide range of goals.

LO5 This task was completed to a high standard especially by those who were encouraged to complete a work experience diary. Most candidates were able to evaluate what went well and what could be improved; they were less able to comment on what aspects of their feedback they did not agree with.

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