

# ResultsPlus

## Examiners' Report June 2010

### GCSE Business Studies (5BS01) Paper 01

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GCSE Business Studies (5BS01) Paper 01  
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June 2010

Publications Code UG023577

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## PE Report on Examination Paper 5BS01/01

### General comments

This was the first series of the new objective test format of examination which had been trialled by the Business Pilot and found to be successful. In terms of candidate performance the evidence suggests that this paper was accessible and enabled candidates to demonstrate effective knowledge and understanding of content from Unit 1. There were no reported problems with particular questions or with the timing available to candidates to complete the paper.

### Comments on Individual Questions

Below is a summary of performance in the questions for which particular issues were evident, or for which we feel comment is worth making.

#### Question 1

Proved to be an accessible opening question with most candidates securing a mark. This was pleasing as we had intended the paper to have as inviting an introduction as possible. This approach will continue in future series.

#### Question 3

The intention was that an early question on the recruitment process would be another opportunity for candidates to secure marks early in the paper. A majority of candidates scored at least 2 marks here. However, a sizeable number chose option C - Person Description - and thus lost a mark. This served as a good distracter and so enabled the question to work as an effective discriminator. It also highlighted the need for candidates to have secure knowledge of key terms. It also suggested that candidates were tending to rush and not think thoroughly enough about the questions and the different options.

#### Question 4

Financial aspects of small business are an important element of the course, featuring in Topic 1.3 (Putting a business idea into practice). This question was reasonably well-answered, although part (i) proved to be most difficult. Candidates performed significantly less well on this part than on the other elements. This is useful for centres to know as it highlights the need to practice this type of calculation.

### Question 5

Was a difficult question, based on the statistical evidence. It appears that the term **net cash flow** was difficult for candidates. Cash flow is a key element of the specification and the format for calculating cash flow and net cash flow clearly highlighted in the sample assessment material (SAM); centres can expect it to appear in future examination questions. Candidates need to understand how net cash flow is calculated and the importance of taking into account the opening balance.

### Question 8

Sources of finance was reasonably well-understood by candidates, although not all gained full marks on this question. The specification indicates that long-term sources of finance as loans, personal savings, profit, venture capital and share capital. The latter - option E - was chosen by many candidates. However, this was incorrect as the question context was of a sole trader rather than a limited company. This was missed by a significant number of candidates and highlights the importance of candidates reading the context carefully.

### Question 13

Statistically this proved to be the most difficult question on the paper, with many candidates who selected the wrong answer, choosing D. The distinction between invention and innovation is one that is quite challenging for candidates and thus worked well as a discriminator. Centres can expect this area to be the subject of future questions. This qualification defines innovation as the process of bringing a new idea to market. Centres need to impress on candidates the difference between this and invention.

### Question 18

Another which, according to the statistics, proved difficult for candidates. It is not a surprise that calculating the effects of changes in the exchange rates can be quite tricky for many, especially given the fact that the majority may be Year 10 students. However, this remains an important part of the specification and will continue to feature in examination series.

### Question 20

Was well-answered on the whole. This again relies on candidates having secure knowledge of key terminology. The format of this question is easy to identify. Identify 5 correct definitions from a list of 8. Obviously some of the wrong answers - the distracters - will be close to the actual answer; they may be easily confused. For example, the first definition was:

*'Information about opinions, judgements and attitudes'*

In the list of key terms, both quantitative data and qualitative data were provided as options. This was deliberate and intended to discriminate

between those candidates who knew the correct answer and those who were unsure. By preparing candidates effectively in the language of Unit 1, and by ensuring they take the necessary time to read the question and the options, there is a greater likelihood that candidates will score highly on this type of question. Note, this type of question may appear on future papers but it is not to be expected that such a question will appear on every paper.

### Advice for centres

1. **Objective test does not necessarily mean easier** - our evidence from this first series suggests that, being an objective test paper, candidates may well feel that this type of examination is easier than more traditional papers, and that the same rigour, preparation, care and thought are not necessary. This is not true. The questions are designed to require different skills, including application and analysis. If candidates approach this examination with the cavalier approach that, *'It's only a multiple choice...'*, then undoubtedly marks will be dropped on questions where they shouldn't be. Complacency is the enemy here. It is the role of teachers to ensure that any dismissive thoughts are banished and that this examination is approached like any other.
2. **Timing** - whilst many candidates scored highly on this paper, there was plenty of evidence of marks being dropped due to the question not being read thoroughly enough and carelessness on the part of candidates. The examination is 45 minutes. This is more than enough time to think carefully about each question, identify distracters and finally identify the correct answer. Candidates need to be aware that questions are designed to include some plausible distracters - possible answers that could be selected by the candidate in a hurry. Rushing through a paper to finish as quickly as possible is a dangerous strategy. Furthermore, given the relatively comfortable timing on this paper, candidates should have enough time to check all of their answers carefully before the end of the exam. If this identifies one mistake then it would be time well spent. The award showed that one mark can make the difference between one grade and another and so this is very important.
3. **Key terms** - a number of marks on this paper are gained through knowledge of key terms given the emphasis on A01. Centres should plan to consolidate this knowledge on a regular - weekly - basis with their students. This may take the form of weekly quizzes, wall displays, crosswords, and so on. Whatever strategies are used, this will prove to be time well spent in preparing for the Unit 1 examination.
4. **Practice makes perfect** - as a new format of examination centres should seek to develop the exam technique of candidates by running mock exams under the same timed conditions as the real paper. In addition to any internal papers which centres may produce, there are now three papers from Edexcel: two Sample Assessment Material papers, plus the Summer 2010 paper. These should be used effectively as formative exercises to develop the skills of candidates.

## Additional support

There is extensive support for teachers in relation to the course from Edexcel. This includes:

Ask the Expert - a service which allows teachers to ask questions of the senior examining team directly -

<http://edexcel--5571.custhelp.com/app/ask/session/L3NpZC9pOUl5cHJfaq%3D%3D>

There are exemplar materials and regular updates on training, including online training on the GCSE Business web site -

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/Business/Business/Pages/default.aspx>

Customised training can be arranged to deal with specific queries that centres have. -

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/Business/Business/Pages/training.aspx>

# Grade Boundaries

GCSE2009 Grade boundary model

Grade	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	40	37	33	29	25	19	14	9	4	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	0

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Order Code UG023577 Summer 2010

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