

GCSE Business

Tackling the 9-mark question
Paul Clark



Welcome to this Professional Development Course

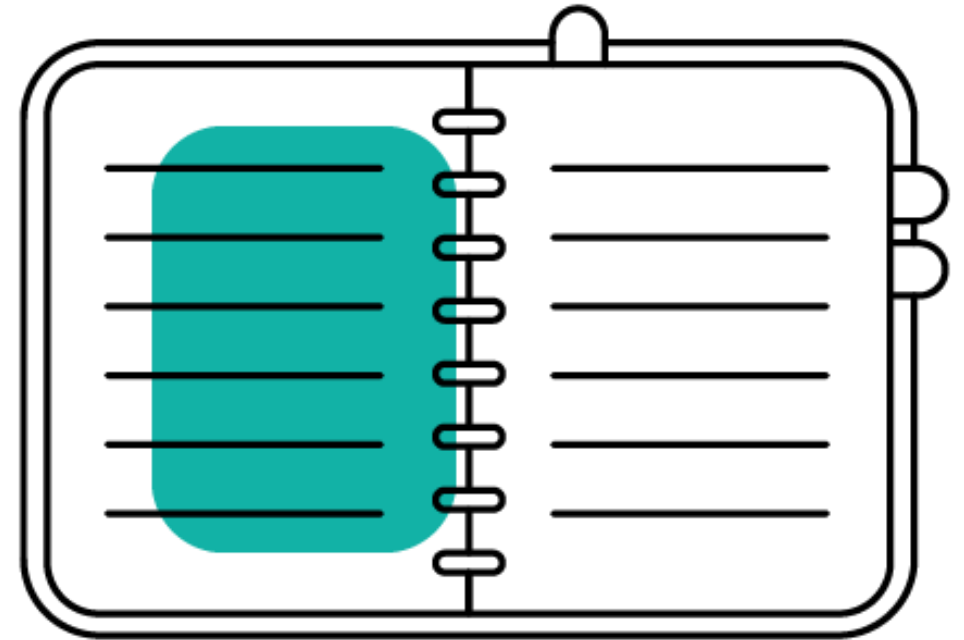
This event is for teachers delivering the Pearson Edexcel GCSE Business specification.

In this session, the facilitator will offer practical advice on strategies to help students effectively tackle 9-mark 'Justify' questions.



Agenda

- Introductions
- Structuring a response to a 9-mark question
- Advice on what to include in a conclusion
- Advice from the principal and chief examiners
- Common mistakes
- Example case study
- Example question
- Mark scheme



Structuring a response to a 9-mark question

Give a balanced argument, simplest way:

- ✓ Look at the pros and cons of one option
 - ✓ Most time efficient method
 - ✓ Easiest option

Three paragraph approach:

1. Advantage of the chosen option
2. Drawback of the chosen option
3. Sophisticated conclusion

Much more difficult approach:

- Advantage of option 1 and advantage of option 2

Do not use:

- ✗ Advantage of option 1 and disadvantage of option 2

Advice on what to include in a conclusion

Sophisticated conclusion:

- ✓ Which option is best and why – what's the main reason in the context of the business.
- ✓ Why is it better than the other option?
- ✓ What might your decision depend on?

Principal Examiner's advice

Question 6 (c)

This was the first 'Justify' question on the paper and from the range of responses there seems to be some misconceptions as to how to approach the 'Justify' question. A significant number of students developed the benefits of both options within their answer. This approach does not naturally lead to any 'Evaluation' or 'AO3b', unless the candidate starts to contrast the importance of the two benefits. Candidates who followed this approach seldom included any contrasting comments. This therefore cannot be accepted as evaluative comment and therefore contribute to assessment of AO3b, 'Evaluation'. Using this method across all 4 of the 'Justify' questions on both papers could cost a candidate 12 marks across the entire qualification.

A better approach would be to pick one of the options, and consider the pros and cons of that option, and then come to a conclusion that adds extra evaluation, rather than a repeat of what has already been written elsewhere in the answer. If this is done with application throughout and there are 5 linked strands of development – then 9 marks should be accessible to the candidate.

Remember there is no requirement for candidates to consider both options as part of their response.

Chief Examiner's advice

Question 6 (c)

There appear to be ingrained misconceptions as to how to approach the 'Justify' question. A significant number of students simply developed the benefits of both options within their answer. This approach **does not** naturally lead to any 'Evaluation' or 'AO3b', unless the candidate starts to contrast the magnitude or importance of the two benefits. At GCSE level, this is a necessary skill that is tricky to master, and from this year's marking experience, it was seldom seen. As Chief Examiner I have no idea where this approach has come from, but it seems to be a piece of 'baked in' examination technique that some centres seem insistent on using. Sadly, this is to the significant detriment of the students. **Using this method across all 4 of the 'Justify' questions on both papers could cost a candidate 12 marks across the entire qualification.**

On the question of options, whilst there can never been one preferred approach, surely the safest and easiest route for candidates is to pick an option, and consider the pros and cons of that option, and then come to a conclusion that adds extra evaluation, rather than a repeat of what has already been written elsewhere in the answer. If this is done with application throughout and there are 5 linked strands of development – then 9 marks should be accessible to the candidate. Remember there is no requirement for candidates to consider both options as part of their response.

Common Mistakes

Inappropriate structure limits evaluation marks (makes it harder):

- × Advantage of option 1 and disadvantage of option 2
- × Advantage of option 1 and advantage of option 2

Inappropriate structure limits the analysis due to the amount of time it takes:

- × Advantage and disadvantage of option 1 as well as advantage and disadvantage of option 2

Lack of context

- × Miss out on application marks

Case Study & Question

In order to continue the growth in its sales, *Greggs* is considering two options:

Option 1: differentiate its product range

Option 2: lower its prices

(c) Justify which **one** of these two options *Greggs* should choose

(9)

Read the following extract before answering Questions 4, 5 and 6.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

Greggs plc is a company that produces baked goods such as sausage rolls, savoury snacks and cakes. It has more than 1,900 shops and a number of factories located across the UK.

In 2018, *Greggs* planned to open a further 130 shops to cope with its continued growth in sales. It wanted to increase the use of technology in its factories, where it uses batch production. To be able to cope with this expansion, *Greggs* also planned to invest in improved logistics.

The growth of *Greggs* has been a UK high street success story. From originally being based in Newcastle and the north-east, it has expanded rapidly across the whole of the UK. It has switched away from selling traditional bakery products, such as bread, to become more like a fast food chain. As a result, *Greggs* now sell a variety of takeaway goods such as pizza, soup, coffee and sandwiches and operates in the very competitive 'food-to-go' market. Its main rivals are Pret a Manger, Costa and Starbucks.



(Source: abimages/Shutterstock)

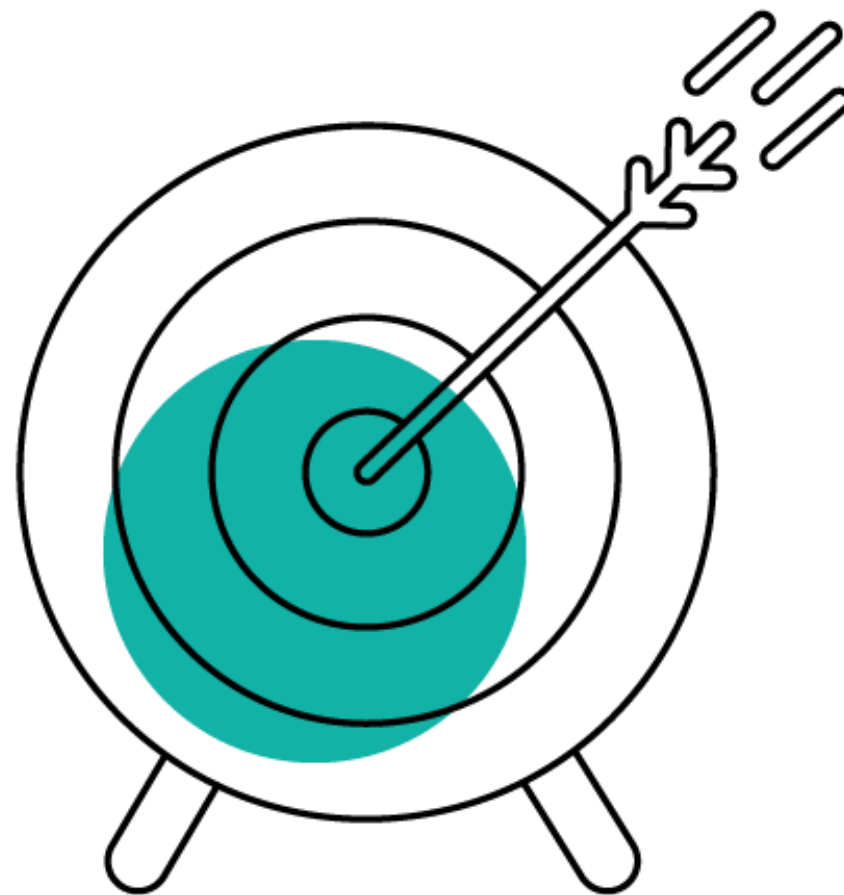
Figure 3: *Greggs*' vegan sausage roll

In 2019, *Greggs* gained national publicity by becoming the first food retailer to start selling vegan sausage rolls. It is hoped that products such as this will help *Greggs* stand out from its rivals. The vegan sausage roll is priced at £1, 10p more than the meat-based equivalent.

(Source: adapted from <https://www.foodmanufacture.co.uk/Article/2018/02/27/High-street-baker-posts-profits-growth> and <https://metro.co.uk/2019/01/03/actually-greggs-vegan-sausage-roll-8305542/>)

The Mark Scheme

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Limited application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context (AO2).Attempts to deconstruct business information and/or issues, finding limited connections between points (AO3a).Makes a judgement, providing a simple justification based on limited evaluation of business information and issues relevant to the choice made (AO3b).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sound application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context although there may be some inconsistencies (AO2).Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding interconnected points with chains of reasoning, although there may be some logical inconsistencies (AO3a).Makes a judgement, providing a justification based on sound evaluation of business information and issues relevant to the choice made (AO3b).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Detailed application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context throughout (AO2).Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding detailed interconnected points with logical chains of reasoning (AO3a).Makes a judgement, providing a clear justification based on a thorough evaluation of business information and issues relevant to the choice made (AO3b).



Subject Advisor Support

Our subject advisors are experts in their fields and are here to support you throughout the year.

Business Studies

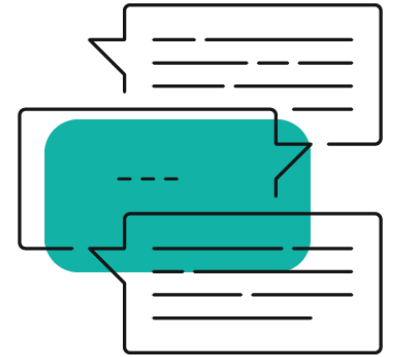
Email: teachingbusiness@pearson.com

Phone: +44 (0) 344 463 2535
(Mon–Fri, 9.00–17.00)

[Book an appointment with your Subject Advisor](#)

[Sign up](#) to receive regular updates from your Subject Advisor on qualification news and support for your subject.

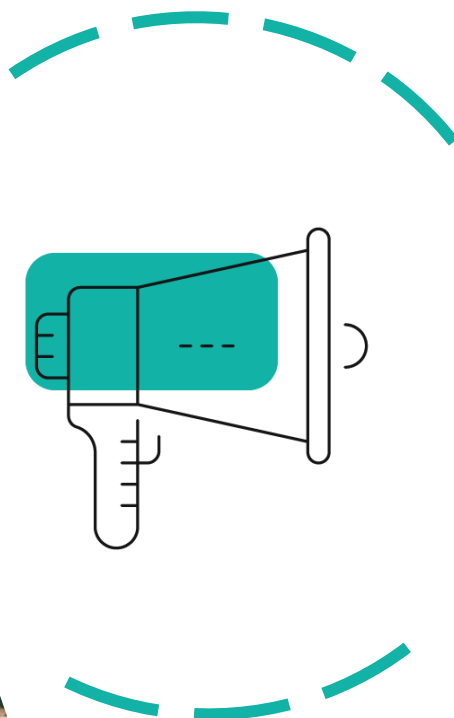
Colin Leith
[Business and Economics](#)



Find out more

For more professional development courses please see Pearson's [Professional Development Academy](#)





Your Feedback Matters

Following this event, you will receive an invitation to share your thoughts about the session. Your feedback is invaluable to us, as it helps us tailor our professional development materials to better meet your needs. Please don't hesitate to let us know what you'd like to see more of and what areas you think could be improved.



Pearson