

# Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

## Summer 2010

IGCSE

### IGCSE Commerce (4340) Paper 1F

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## General Comments

The overall performance of candidates in this examination continues to be encouraging, especially with an increasing overall entry for this examination. The overall marks and level of achievement for paper 1F were pleasing as the mean mark was higher than last year. Moreover, centres continue to appear to be selecting and entering candidates for the appropriate Tier.

The format of the examination paper was the same as in the last two years with no changes to specification content or assessment objectives. The demands made on candidates were also broadly comparable with those in previous series.

Candidates continue to cope well with the use of the question paper as answer book. There were not many occasions where candidates used space in addition to the answer lines, in order to complete their answers. Centres are again encouraged to work with their candidates to ensure that (most) answers are limited to these answer lines, the number of lines being a good indicator of the expected length of answer. The standard of written communication was generally good, and sometimes excellent.

A major factor behind candidates losing marks is that candidates do not always answer at the appropriate level of skill. IGCSE examinations measure a far wider range of skills than simply recall of knowledge. Candidates need to demonstrate analytical and evaluative skills as well.

The Mark Scheme contains much information that is relevant to centres, as follows.

- Each question indicates the level(s) at which it is based:
  - o AO1 Demonstrate - this Assessment Objective tests candidates on their ability to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the commercial term, idea or concept featured in the question. For example, question 2 (e) asks candidates 'Give three reasons why some retailers no longer deal with wholesalers.' Command words such as 'Give', 'Define', 'Describe', 'Name', 'List', 'State' and 'What is . . . ?' confirm the question is at this level.
  - o AO2 Apply - this Assessment Objective tests candidates' ability to relate their answer to the context. In this Series, candidates were required to use the information given about financial figures about consumer credit. For example, question 3 (a) (i/ii) required candidates to calculate the 'percentage of total credit' and the 'amount owed'. Command words such as 'Calculate', 'What was', 'How' and 'Give [an example in context]' confirm the question is at this level.
  - o AO3 Analyse - this Assessment Objective requires candidates to select, interpret or otherwise analyse some issue presented by the question. Command words such as 'Analyse', 'Compare' and 'Select' confirm the question is at this level.

- o AO4 Evaluate - this most demanding Assessment Objective tests candidates on their ability to formulate some judgements. Command words such as 'Evaluate', 'Explain why', 'Judge' and 'Suggest' confirm the question is at this level.
- Possible answers are provided as indicators of what is expected. It remains important for Centres to realise that the answers given in the Mark Scheme are **not** meant to be exhaustive. This is confirmed by the use of the statement 'Valid points could include', and by the use of the abbreviation 'e.g.'.
- The possible answers are structured using dashes and obliques ('slashes'). It remains the practice in this examination to use a dash in order to separate points that are worth **additional** marks, and an oblique to indicate an **alternative** way of making the same point.

## Comments on Individual Questions

### Question 1

Part (a) was generally quite well attempted. Many candidates achieved at least two of the four marks available, with some candidates obtained maximum marks. Marks were often lost by candidates not selecting appropriate methods of transport from the bar chart shown.

Part (b) was generally satisfactorily answered, with part (ii) being often incorrectly answered by many candidates who gave incorrect calculations. This topic of transport is clearly an area that centres need to focus greater attention on when preparing candidates for future IGCSE Commerce examinations.

Part (c) (i) was better answered than part (c) (ii) with many candidates realising that there is not an extensive rail network but that there is a better network of roads. One good answer is shown below.

'Because of less flexibility, trains cannot get to many places. Rail journeys are fixed and follow only one line or track. Roads are much flexible and cover the whole of the country. Trains have to run to a fixed schedule which is not the case with road transport.'

Part (d) required candidates to apply their knowledge given on delivery notes and owning own vehicles when transporting goods. Weaker candidates often could not provide the second or third mark for part (i). For example, in part (i) apart from saying that delivery notes act as proof of delivery they could have mentioned the fact that they are given back to the driver and can be used in any dispute. Most candidates were able to gain one mark for part (d) (ii).

Part (e) concerned the advantages of using air transport. Many candidates gave the valid advantages of 'speed' and 'less risk of theft' but it was only the better candidates that gained the third mark.

Part (f) on the topic of insurance was poorly answered in both parts (i) and (ii). Some candidates misinterpreted part (ii) as claiming for goods stolen rather than the procedure for taking out theft insurance.

## Question 2

On a general level, question 2 was not well answered compared with the other two questions in the paper. Centres are encouraged to study carefully the content area of retailing in the world of commerce.

The part (a) question focussed on asking candidates to provide information about the tertiary sector and self-service. Many candidates in part (i) did provide the correct answer of tertiary production. In part (ii) many candidates did give correct definitions of 'self-service' but very few candidates could provide the two self-service advantages required to part (iii). Apart from needing 'less staff' there were many limited and disappointing answers to part (iv). However, one good answer is shown below.

*'By adopting self-service, retailers do not need to employ a lot of staff which saves on wages, leading to more profits. Attractive displays lead to impulse buying resulting in more sales, as people lead busy lives and want to shop quickly.'*

In part (b) candidates should have been able to score at least three marks out of seven. However, many of the answers lacked knowledge on the differences between the four types of retailers provided. Often candidates lost marks by confusing department stores with multiple chain stores and suggesting that market stallholders having a large variety of quality goods.

In part (c) the vast majority of candidates were able to give at least two valid services offered to a retailer by a wholesaler.

In part (d) many candidates knew that a cash-and-carry warehouse sold goods on a cash basis without providing transport for two marks. However, very few candidates were able to achieve the maximum three marks for this part.

For part (e) it was insufficient to give general ideas such as to improve sales or improving gross profit to gain any marks. There were also many limited answers, giving few marks to this part. However, one good answer is shown below.

*'Some retailers no longer deal with wholesalers because they want to shorten the distribution channel, so that the goods will be delivered quickly. Large scale retailers want to cut costs and buy in bulk directly from the manufacturer. Branding has made it easier to deal directly with the manufacturer as branded goods sell well and do not promotion by the wholesaler.'*

### Question 3

In part (a) foundation tier candidates found difficulty the calculation to part [ii] which required candidates to calculate the amount owed by consumers using store cards. This part was well answered by many higher tier candidates. Foundation candidates generally scored two out of the four marks available to parts (i) and (ii) whereas many higher candidates achieved the maximum score of four marks.

Part (b) produced disappointing answers from foundation candidates, with limited knowledge shown on the advantages and disadvantages of using credit cards. However, there were some very good answers from higher level tier candidates who often used relevant examples to illustrate their points.

In part (c) the vast majority of foundation candidates did not provide suitable methods of credit to the two circumstances needed in parts (i) and (ii). Many higher level tier candidates were able to identify suitable sources of credit and to give detailed relevant reasons as well.

Part (d) was well generally well attempted by all candidates. Some of the foundation candidates found difficulty with identifying four separate action points, with many only stating one or two simple action points, such as 'sue the retailer'. A large minority of higher tier candidates scored three out of the four marks available to this question part. The best way to answer this question was to give four distinct consumer actions.

Part (e) differentiated well between the foundation and higher level tier candidates. Better foundation candidates scored up to four marks whereas some higher level tier candidates scored the maximum seven marks. Centres should review the published the mark scheme to see the marking points that were awarded.

## Grade Boundaries - June 2010

4340 - Statistics

Option 1 - Foundation tier paper (1F) and paper 03

Grade	C	D	E	F	G
Grade Boundaries	55	45	35	26	17



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