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Examiners' Report October 2025

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level in Business

WBS14/01

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October 2025
Question Paper Log Number P75887A
Publication Code WBS14_01_2510_ER
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General

The paper proved to be an accessible paper for most candidates. The paper tested a range of topics that required students to read the question carefully. There were a wide range of marks, where some candidates wrote well developed arguments.

Strong candidates showed excellent subject knowledge and were able to apply their answers to the extract provided and use their own examples to support their points. These points were then developed well with several strands in their chains of reasoning. However, there were some candidates that didn't read the question fully and failed to address all elements of the question. There are also a number of candidates that are just rewriting the extract and failing to add any subject knowledge in terms of the cause or effect, showing a lack of knowledge and analysis.

Candidates should make sure that their knowledge point is clear before supporting this with information from the extract to ensure that they are showing clear knowledge of the question. These points need to be well developed showing the consequences in order for them to reach top marks.

Question 01(a)

This question was answered well by many candidates. The majority of candidates knew the formula for percentage change. However, some of the candidates incorrectly rounded their answer. If they did not have the correct rounding's we work back and look to see whether there is the formula and the workings. There are still a number of candidates that are not showing the formula or/and workings and when they rounded incorrectly, they scored 0 marks. It is important that centres advise their candidates to write down each stage of their calculation and ensure the formula is clear in their answer.

Question 01(b)

This question was answered generally well by many candidates. There were a number of different disadvantages that were addressed by different candidates, and we accepted any relevant point. However, candidates are spending too much time writing out definitions and there are no knowledge marks for this. Centres should encourage candidates to make sure that they're making a clear point e.g. a disadvantage in this case, before they start to use the context to answer the question. Centres should also advise candidates to fully read the question, as this question was the disadvantage for a country not to a business and some candidates didn't address this part of the question.

Question 01(c)

There were a range of answers for this question. Some candidates are just writing out huge parts of the extract and not using their knowledge to develop a chain of reasoning. There were many responses that would state a number of benefits, but failed to develop an argument, not linking it back to how this would affect a country, such as Ireland. Many candidates chose to just focus on the impact on a business rather than the country making it difficult to reach higher levels, as the question wasn't fully addressed.

Question 01(d)

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates. They were able to discuss the importance of the government incentives, such and the low corporation tax and tax credit, and they were also able to assess whether there were more important factors when choosing a country as a production location. Although many of the candidates wrote a conclusion, these conclusions are still lacking in depth and are often a summary of what has already been said. Centres should be advising candidates to create a new argument that supports the points made in the answer, so that the conclusion adds value to what has been written.

Question 01(e)

There were a range of responses for this question, as some candidates didn't fully read what the question was asking of them, in terms of how this skill shortage could impact the international competitiveness of Ireland. Many struggled to see the link between skills shortage and a countries ability to be able to compete with other countries. Centres should advise candidates to look at these topic areas from a business perspective, but also from a countries perspective and they should make sure that when they are answering a question, they're looking carefully at the question to see what it is assessing i.e. who the impact is on.

Question 02

This question was answered well by many candidates. They were able to use Porter's five forces and the context in the extract to assess the potential opportunities in the pet food industry. The majority of the candidates had the knowledge behind the theory; however, some didn't manage to reach the top levels, due to the lack of development in their analysis. These candidates tended to list a number of facts or benefits but then failed to explain the cause or consequence or the wider implication on a global business. Centres should advise students to develop their chains of reasoning when evaluating a theory. There were only a few candidates that managed to develop effective conclusions/recommendations, as many just repeated what had already been said in their arguments and failed to add anything new.

Question 03

This question was answered generally well by many candidates, as they had good subject knowledge of the implications of economic growth on international businesses. There were some great arguments about the opportunities that were presented to these international businesses, given the economic growth in India and many were able to bring in their own examples as well as use ones in the extract. However, many candidates struggled with the counter argument to why this might actually present challenges for international businesses. Also, it is clear that some candidates are not fully reading the question, as some wrote about the impact on domestic businesses rather than international businesses. Centres should advise students to underline the key parts of the question and go back over the question to check that they have fully addressed what has been asked of them.