



AS **Business**

7131/2

Report on the Examination

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Question 1)

This question required students to carry out a calculation of labour productivity. It proved to be a very accessible question for many students, based on a concept that seemed to be considerably more familiar to the majority of students than the later margin of safety question (question 2). For students with a sound knowledge and understanding of labour productivity and percentage increase, there was a straightforward route to 3 marks. Approximately two-thirds of the students achieved full marks.

Question 2)

This question required students to carry out a calculation based on what should be a familiar concept. It proved to be a very challenging question for a significant majority of students. For those with a sound knowledge and understanding of the concept, there was a straightforward route to three marks, very few students were able to accomplish this. The majority of students failed to demonstrate any knowledge or understanding of the key concept and struggled with this question overall.

Those students who were able to access full marks clearly demonstrated their sound understanding of the concept and their knowledge of break even. More than half of the students attempting this question scored 0 marks. Approximately 10% of students did not attempt this question. It was evident that there was a fundamental lack of knowledge of margin of safety for the majority of students.

Question 3)

This question required students to explain one impact a change in target market would have on the promotional mix. The key to being successful in this question was to clearly explain an impact on the promotional mix of the proposed change. This question proved to be a challenge to the vast majority of the students, with only a relatively small number of responses reaching level 3.

It was evident that many students did not have the knowledge or understanding of what a promotional mix is. Many students discussed a possible impact on the marketing mix and/or tended to focus on the cost implication of making the proposed change. Very few students then went on to discuss how this related and impacted the promotional mix. The majority of the responses to this question were awarded a mark in level 2. The significant number of responses that remained in level 1 simply stated an impact that did not fit with the context or without any attempt at explanation, or to demonstrate perfectly reasonable knowledge and understanding of promotional mix, with no explanation or use of the context.

Question 4)

This question proved accessible and differentiated effectively with a balanced spread of marks overall. The demands of the question required students to analyse how the business would benefit from using a decision tree in making the decision to enter a new market. The majority of students were able to demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the basic concept of a decision tree. As seen in previous series, some students offered unnecessarily lengthy definitions, with some then offering little more, such responses remained in level 1.

Many of the responses scored level 3. The most effective responses were concise in the points made and demonstrated relevant knowledge and understanding. These responses were not overly lengthy and demonstrated a disciplined and clear focus on the demands of the question. The higher-level responses ensured their focus and points made were well in context of the business and the decision to be made. Weaker responses tended to be more general considerations of the use of decision trees, offering advantages and disadvantages for example, others were largely descriptive.

Question 5)

This proved to be a very accessible question with the majority of students being able to provide good responses, moving into the highest level.

This case study offered plenty of evidence on which to build valid and develop arguments, more than half of the responses reached the highest level. Most students were able to confidently analyse relevant factors that the business should consider when choosing the new supplier. The most impressive responses made effective use of the context and developed sound lines of reasoning throughout their arguments. The strongest responses developed clear and convincing links to the most important factors the business should consider, and why.

The weaker responses lacked real focus on the context and explained general factors that any business may consider when making the decision.

Question 6)

This proved to also be a very accessible question, again with a high number of students being able to provide good responses, moving into the highest level.

There were some overall excellent answers to this question. The strongest responses confidently evaluated their points made in terms of how concerned the managers should or should not be in the context given. The use of the data and the case study in general was very well executed by the top-level students. These students tended to back up their reasoning very effectively with evidence from the case study. At the same time these students demonstrated a clear understanding of the need to balance their arguments and then justify their overall decision.

Weaker responses tended to either be a one-sided argument with no evidence of balance shown, making it very difficult to demonstrate the skills of analysis and evaluation in their responses.

Question 7)

Question 7 assessed an area of content that was removed from the AS Business specification for first teaching from September 2023. The question was therefore invalid and all students were awarded full marks for this question. We are sorry for this exam question error.

Question 8)

Overall, this was a well approached question by the majority of students. A high number of students scored between 9 and 15 marks. Once again, as with the last series; not many full mark responses were

seen. The higher mark responses confidently included the issue of using the different methods of motivation to increase labour productivity and using this factor in their context when making a decision. These students used the case study well, and in addition, ensured their responses had an 'ALL' context.

A small minority of students seemed to focus on the financial versus non-financial part of the question and used this to demonstrate all of their knowledge and understanding of everything they knew about these motivation techniques, in general. These responses often completely ignored the labour productivity element in the stem. As said above, those responses that actually focused their responses to address the need to increase labour productivity, with balance in their reasoning, scored highly. Other weaker responses were over detailed in the use of different motivational theories/concepts and often drifted off the demands of the question, stating knowledge of the concepts only.

Overall, it was felt that the knowledge and understanding of financial and non-financial methods of motivation, within a context, was very well demonstrated by many students. It was pleasing to see that the 'ALL' element of the question was well addressed by many students in their responses. The "ALL" element is often seen in the evaluation part of the response and this year it featured in more responses in this part of the answer than in the two years previously.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.