



ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2013

Business Studies

Assessment Unit A2 2

assessing

The Changing Business Environment

[AT221]

TUESDAY 4 JUNE, MORNING

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

Mark schemes are published to assist teachers and students in their preparation for examinations. Through the mark schemes teachers and students will be able to see what examiners are looking for in response to questions and exactly where the marks have been awarded. The publishing of the mark schemes may help to show that examiners are not concerned about finding out what a student does not know but rather with rewarding students for what they do know.

The Purpose of Mark Schemes

Examination papers are set and revised by teams of examiners and revisers appointed by the Council. The teams of examiners and revisers include experienced teachers who are familiar with the level and standards expected of students in schools and colleges.

The job of the examiners is to set the questions and the mark schemes; and the job of the revisers is to review the questions and mark schemes commenting on a large range of issues about which they must be satisfied before the question papers and mark schemes are finalised.

The questions and the mark schemes are developed in association with each other so that the issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed right from the start. Mark schemes, therefore, are regarded as part of an integral process which begins with the setting of questions and ends with the marking of the examination.

The main purpose of the mark scheme is to provide a uniform basis for the marking process so that all the markers are following exactly the same instructions and making the same judgements in so far as this is possible. Before marking begins a standardising meeting is held where all the markers are briefed using the mark scheme and samples of the students' work in the form of scripts. Consideration is also given at this stage to any comments on the operational papers received from teachers and their organisations. During this meeting, and up to and including the end of the marking, there is provision for amendments to be made to the mark scheme. What is published represents this final form of the mark scheme.

It is important to recognise that in some cases there may well be other correct responses which are equally acceptable to those published: the mark scheme can only cover those responses which emerged in the examination. There may also be instances where certain judgements may have to be left to the experience of the examiner, for example, where there is no absolute correct response – all teachers will be familiar with making such judgements.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and issues relating to the report.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Level 0	[0]	No knowledge and understanding.
Level 1	[1]–[4]	Little knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes limited use of specialist terms.
Level 2	[5]–[8]	Some knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes satisfactory use of specialist terms when appropriate.
Level 3	[9]–[12]	Good knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes good use of specialist terms when appropriate.
Level 4	[13]–[16]	Excellent knowledge and understanding of theories, procedures and concepts relevant to the report is displayed, including use of correct format. Candidate makes excellent use of specialist terms when appropriate.

Candidates cannot achieve the top band if the report is not in an appropriate format.

Report format should be:

Title – “Thales Air Defence (Belfast) – a special case?”

Aim – The aim of the report is to assess whether a firm such as Thales Air Defence (Belfast) should be subject to a lower rate of corporation tax (in Northern Ireland), and/or whether it should be provided with financial assistance, as incentives to remain committed to operating in Northern Ireland.

Introduction – Should set the scene by briefly describing current issues relating to businesses such as Thales and evaluate whether such organisations should be treated differently and explain how the report intends to achieve its aims.

Analysis and discussion of findings – Should examine the issues affecting businesses such as Thales and identify and analyse these issues by discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Conclusions/Evaluation – The report should reach a conclusion on whether businesses such as “Thales Air Defence (Belfast)” should be treated as a special case and justify the conclusion reached using evidence from the case study.

Recommendations – The report should make recommendations to the Enterprise Minister.

Knowledge and understanding demonstrated in this report might include: business objectives, stakeholder objectives, financial implications, pressure groups, business ethics, economic growth, employment, government policy objectives, economic instruments used to achieve government objectives, effect of government objectives on business, international dimension of business.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to problems and issues relating to the report.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Level 0	[0]	No evidence that knowledge and initial understanding has been applied.
Level 1	[1]–[6]	Little evidence that knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. The candidate makes limited use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited.
Level 2	[7]–[11]	Some evidence that knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. Candidate demonstrates satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear most of the time. The candidate demonstrates a satisfactory level of writing, form and style appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a satisfactory manner.
Level 3	[12]–[16]	Good evidence that knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner.
Level 4	[17]–[20]	Comprehensive evidence that excellent knowledge and critical understanding has been applied and all or most of the information relevant to the report has been selected. Candidate demonstrates excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner.

Candidates should draw on information presented in the case study. They must apply their knowledge and understanding to select that information relevant in order to effectively assess the current issues facing businesses such as Thales and analyse and evaluate the options open to The Northern Ireland Assembly. They must also apply their knowledge and understanding to consider recommendations for the Minister of Enterprise.

Information selected might include evidence relating to the size and history of the company, the worsening profitability situation, the closure of Raytheon, ethical issues, pressure groups, employment considerations, impact on the Northern Ireland economy.

AO3: Analyse problems, issues and situations relating to the report.AVAILABLE
MARKS

Level 0	[0]	No analysis of the problems, issues and situations.
Level 1	[1]–[5]	Little analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. The candidate makes limited use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited.
Level 2	[6]–[10]	Some analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. Candidate demonstrates satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear most of the time. The candidate demonstrates a satisfactory level of writing, form and style appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a satisfactory manner.
Level 3	[11]–[15]	Good analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner.
Level 4	[16]–[20]	Comprehensive analysis of the problems, issues and situations relevant to the report. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner. The candidate makes excellent use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited.

Candidates must analyse the selected information in order to gain a full awareness of the extent of the issues affecting businesses such as Thales. They should proceed to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the Northern Ireland Assembly treating Thales as a special case. Information selected and analysed should include:

- arguments in favour of providing a subsidy – the importance of businesses such as Thales to the Northern Ireland Economy, the importance of Thales as an employer, the current financial situation faced by Thales, the fact that Thales is an employer which is committed to training the work force
- arguments against providing a subsidy – Thales has been faced with many objections from pressure groups, the ethical considerations of subsidising a company which manufactures military products, the reaction from other firms, the cost implications.

AO4: Evaluate, distinguish between and assess appropriateness of fact and opinion, and judge information from a variety of sources.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Level 0	[0]	No evaluation of the evidence.
Level 1	[1]–[6]	Little evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. The candidate makes limited use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is not always clear. The candidate demonstrates a limited form and style appropriate to the question. The organisation of the answer is limited.
Level 2	[7]–[12]	Some evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. Candidate demonstrates satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear most of the time. The candidate demonstrates a satisfactory level of writing, form and style appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a satisfactory manner.
Level 3	[13]–[18]	Good evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. Candidate demonstrates good spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner.
Level 4	[19]–[24]	Comprehensive evaluation of all the evidence to arrive at reasoned and valid conclusions. Candidate demonstrates excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar. The meaning of the text is clear. The candidate has consistently used a form and style of writing appropriate to the purpose of the question. The answer is organised in a clear and coherent manner.

Candidates should draw conclusions, based on their analysis of the issues, regarding whether the Northern Ireland Assembly should treat Thales as a special case. They must use different sources from the case study and be able to show that they know the difference between fact and opinions. In the evaluation they must show both the positive and negative sides of options considered and they must make a final judgement regarding whether subsidies should be provided. The final judgement is likely to be that a subsidy is inappropriate in this situation. In reaching this judgement candidates should recognise the conflict of interest between the stakeholders of Thales.

Candidates should also make realistic recommendations for the attention of the Enterprise Minister. [80]

Total

80

80