



ELC

Business Studies

Entry Level Certificate **R343**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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General Comments

The overall standard of work seen this session is broadly in line with previous years. Candidates approached the tests very well and produced some creditable work in the coursework task. Centres at times under value the work completed by candidates at this level, where basic analysis and simple judgements should be well rewarded.

Centres are reminded that when entering candidates for the assessment, option 1 is for the OCR repository where candidates' work is uploaded digitally. Option 2 is for postal moderation.

Written Tests

There are two sets of tests available. Candidates are required to submit one test from the each of the two different tests. There is the opportunity to sit each of the tests in two halves if centres feel it would be helpful. There is no time limit on the written tests which can be taken at any time during the course. The other tests not being used for assessment are available for practice if required.

Candidates attempted the tests well, responding to the stimulus material to show some good understanding of the subject at this particular level. There was no particular section of the tests which proved difficult across all mark ranges, though calculation questions were at times a challenge for lower ability candidates.

Coursework format task

Candidates have a choice from two scenarios to investigate, a business making and selling badges and a business selling jeans. Both proved accessible and equally popular amongst candidates who showed some good understanding of the marketing needs of each business.

The task is marked under three assessment objectives (AOs):

- AO1 Knowledge and understanding
- AO2 Application
- AO3 Analysis and evaluation

This method of assessment is in line with the OCR GCSE Business Studies course and helps candidates move between courses if thought to be necessary.

Application of the Assessment Objectives

AO1

Knowledge and understanding is the most accessible element within this section of the overall assessment. In investigation 1, candidates use the data provided. For Emma's jeans shop it involves assessing at which town she should target her business; in Tom's badge business it involves assessing his entrepreneurial skills. Candidates were able to show understanding of what was required in becoming a successful business person and in Emma's case what was required in a town to make her marketing of a jeans shop successful.

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In investigation 2, a number of candidates produced some good secondary research on the market for badges and pricing methods for Emma's jeans shop. The technical terms for elements such as pricing (skimming, penetration etc.) are not required, though candidates should understand the need to take into account competitor's prices and that consumers would always want lower prices.

For investigation 3 candidates were required to investigate the ways that Emma might advertise her jeans shop, or how Tom might organise distribution. The knowledge shown of advertising was rather stronger than distribution (selling through a shop or the Internet).

AO2

For AO2, candidates should look to apply their knowledge to the business situation in the assessment. For example could Emma afford to consider television advertising? Could Tom afford to rent an expensive shop? Can Tom make the full range of badges that larger competitors make? Could Emma compete with other established shops and sell her jeans at a lower price?

Candidates should look to explore all aspects of marketing, where applicable. In Emma's case it was surprising that there was little mention of social media, which a business such as this could have readily used.

For AO2, it is important that candidates consider the business they are investigating at all times.

AO3

Here candidates should collect relevant data, analyse that data and recommend a course of action. For investigations 2 and 3 this involves the collection of primary and secondary research. The primary research could be conducted within the teaching group if appropriate and involve up to 10 simple questionnaires being completed. The collected data should be graphed and then analysed, with candidates looking to explain what the graphs show. At Entry Level the comments may be quite simplistic, but should be rewarded wherever possible.

At the higher levels in the assessment, candidates should try to make recommendations that are linked to the data analysis. Once again, the references to the data may be simple and straightforward but are worthy of reward at this level.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

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