



New Zealand Qualifications Authority
Mana Tohu Matauranga O Aotearoa

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Assessment Report

Level 3 Business Studies 2016

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Part A: Commentary

The overall level of achievement has improved on past years. In many centres, candidates were well prepared, demonstrating a good understanding of business knowledge and structuring responses clearly at each level of the standard – Explain, Fully Explain and Evaluate.

The single-item (single-question) papers encouraged most candidates to attempt all sections. However, some candidates did not answer the evaluation questions, which hindered their opportunities to provide evidence to meet the standard.

Many candidates filled their papers, and on some occasions extra paper, but provided limited explanation. These candidates tended to get off topic or provide explanations that were not required.

Answers reaching higher grades were well-structured and succinct. Candidates coached in the “because”, “leading to”, and “therefore” method, or the “What, Why, and How” method, stood a much better chance of achieving than those who only answered the “What” and skipped the “Why”. Close reading of the stimulus material was needed to ensure that answers were relevant to the question.

Justifications require new information that has not already been included in the answer. This should be used to fully explain why one solution is better than the other, in relation to the business in question. Repeating previous arguments or additional arguments that are not specific to the nature of the context business are not justifications.

Part B: Report on Standards

91379: Demonstrate understanding of how internal factors interact within a business that operates in a global context

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- explained the “what” in their answer and gave the reasons for their answer as to why a change management strategy was necessary, by careful reading and interpretation of the stimulus material
- explained the difference between Kaizen and TQM.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- misinterpreted why a change management strategy was necessary. Some candidates instead chose a specific strategy and discussed it at great length, showing business knowledge, but their response did not answer the question given
- tended to use the word “relevant”, often without showing a good grasp of the situation, e.g. “Strat Y must do a change management strategy in order to stay relevant”; stating their answer without discussing why that is the answer
- had a poor grasp of the different types of intellectual property
- used a low standard of business language.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- demonstrated their business knowledge by linking impact to other functional areas of the business, and were able to use the “what, why and how” technique to fully explain negative and / or positive impacts for the innovative strategy and / or IP chosen
- reiterated the points made previously for positive and negative impacts without offering any new information to gain the “justified”.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- fully explained a positive and a negative, and a cost and a benefit of their chosen innovative strategy and intellectual property, in context
- justified their conclusion by including new information which was not just a repeat of what they had already written
- provided new information by comparing the strategy in the short term vs. long term, and / or by providing valid additional effects on the business.

Standard-specific comments

Candidates generally demonstrated a better understanding of Kaizen than TQM. Very few candidates related TQM to the quality assurance process throughout the supply chain, including the customer, and hence did not gain a higher grade.

91380: Demonstrate understanding of strategic response to external factors by a business that operates in a global

context

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- repeated the question in the answer, often without adding further detail
- lacked good use of business knowledge / language
- stated a strategic response and explained why it is a business-wide reaction in terms of either size, scope, or time.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- gave answers which were only statements, not explanations. They often only stated the “what”, without the “why”
- did not use the appropriate context to answer the question, e.g. referring to a small business as opposed to a global business
- explained an impact, using it as both a positive and a negative.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- gave full explanations in their answers
- structured their answers well, linking ideas by using words such as “because”, “therefore”, and “this means that”
- used correct business language
- repeated or summarised their positive and negative impacts, rather than provide a justified conclusion using new information.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- justified their strategic response by referring to new information
- demonstrated correct use of terminology, and integrated business knowledge throughout their answers
- explained the strategic response and justified the conclusion in relation to the question.

Standard-specific comments

Candidate explanations of their strategic responses tended to be weak. The explanation should relate to multiple levels of size, scope, and timeframe of the response.

Candidates should continue to develop an understanding of a range of agencies (government and non-government) to assist with their answers.

91381: Apply business knowledge to address a complex problem(s) in a given global business context

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- explained, rather than re-stating from the resource material, causes of problems and / or explained effects of the problem on at least one stakeholder and / or explained positive effects of valid solutions
- understood the resource material and referred to it appropriately
- used linking words such as “because” or “therefore” to explain why
- tended to use weak business terminology such as “middle man”, rather than “intermediary”.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- re-stated information from the resource material without offering any explanation, or did not use the resource material at all
- lacked understanding of basic business concepts, and in some cases of the resource material
- stated solutions that were not feasible.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- fully explained causes and / or effects and / or positive effects of valid solutions
- expanded answers using phrases such as “this would lead to...” and “this will result in...”, which showed how these factors would impact the stakeholders / business
- included appropriate business terminology and examples from the resource material and their own knowledge
- repeated or summarised their previous answers, rather than providing a justified conclusion using new information.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- integrated relevant business terminology, making extensive use of the resource material provided, and their own business knowledge
- linked their answers from parts (a) and (b), along with the resource material, to provide justified conclusions
- introduced new information into the conclusion that provided a conclusion relevant to the issues being faced by the context business in that question.

Standard-specific comments

The achievement standard involves applying business knowledge to address complex problems. This involves explaining cause(s) and effect(s) of the problem and a range of possible solution(s). Candidates should cover all aspects of the questions. Many candidates explained causes and solutions, but were unable to explain the effects on business / stakeholders, or only explained one effect.

In their answers, candidates should be referring to the resource material provided. Simply re-stating what the resource material contains is not sufficient for an explanation.

Candidates need to ensure they read and understand the resource material. It is clear that some candidates were confused by the location of KCC's operations, the fact that they manufactured their cheese in New Zealand and exported it to China, and that this was where they experienced delivery issues.

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