

2015 NCEA Assessment Report

Business Studies Level 2 90843, 90844, 90845

Part A: Commentary

Comment on the overall response of candidates to 2015 examinations for all achievement standards covered by this report.

Candidates have responded favourably to the reduction of content in the Teaching and Learning Guidelines, and there has been an overall improvement in achievement.

Factors which would lead to further improvement in achievement include:

Candidates should aim to give full explanations and discuss questions holistically. They should provide balanced analysis of advantages and/or disadvantages of a particular course of action. It was noticeable that a number of candidates used the bullet point scaffolds given in the question as direct questions. This is not the intention. The bullet points are designed to allow a candidate to frame their answer towards excellence or merit, and should not be perceived as stand-alone questions.

Candidates should think of original solutions to problems or issues raised in the external examination and not repeat the same solution to every issue/problem. For example, if the issue is conflict resolution then holding a meeting to discuss next steps is worthy. However, for the issue of leadership challenges, 'holding a meeting' on its own, may be insufficient as a solution.

Part B: Report on standards

1. Assessment Report for 90843: Demonstrate understanding of the internal operations of a large business

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explained business concepts by using connectives such as 'because' and 'as' explained how the business could decrease manufacturing costs, but didn't link these to the context of policies or procedures stated responses or impacts, without explaining how they could happen. For example, stated an increase in productivity without explaining how.
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> could not distinguish between different production methods confused leadership styles with organisational structures used non-business language, such as 'the business runs smoothly'
Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully explained the impacts and consequences of business internal decisions gave justified reasons, but not in the context of their chosen business consistently used correct business knowledge included relevant examples repeated ideas, rather than providing new information in a justified conclusion.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gave specific responses in the context of their chosen business, that were not memorised or prepared responses gave justified reasons, by fully explaining impacts/consequences on the business and integrating relevant business knowledge added new information to justify responses made in the analysis.

<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>Candidates who performed well were able to link their responses to the context of a manufacturing company, which was the context of the examination.</p> <p>Those candidates who read and understood the stimulus material and answered in context, such as with a real New Zealand organisation, often achieved at merit level or above.</p> <p>Although most candidates could fully explain a leadership style, a number of candidates did not get credit for their understanding, as they did not apply this to their chosen business. These responses tended to be prepared responses and earned an Achieved Grade.</p> <p>At level 2, Achievement requires candidates to provide an explanation; candidates have to give a reason for their answer. Achievement with merit requires full explanations; candidates have to explain how the situation contributes to an outcome or impact on the business.</p> <p>Candidates who did not achieve the standard failed to demonstrate understanding of the topics in the Teaching and Learning Guidelines. They commonly gave general responses, and did not use business knowledge to reinforce their ideas. They commonly did not complete all parts of the questions, and stated, rather than explained in their answers.</p>
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2. Assessment Report for 90844: Demonstrate understanding of how a large business responds to external factors

<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understood key elements of the question and were able to apply their knowledge to the problems presented in the stimulus material • used relevant business knowledge, rather than colloquialisms in their answers • had a sound knowledge of how external factors affected the decision-making in a large business.
<p>Not Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produced weak or vague responses which did not use the stimulus material to support or expand their answers • misinterpreted some part of the question(s), or provided irrelevant answers • did not attempt all questions, or provided brief, incomplete or superficial answers.
<p>Achieved with Merit</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed in-depth understanding of the problems presented, and were able to provide answers that showed good application of business concepts • provided explanations which were based on sound analysis that were balanced and in-depth.
<p>Achieved with Excellence</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrated information from the stimulus material into their responses • provided comprehensive and fully-supported solution(s) using the stimulus material • added new information to justify answers, rather than repeating earlier comments.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>Some candidates did not appear to have the tool kit of specific business knowledge or terminology to enable them to be successful in the examination.</p> <p>A number of candidates misread the question, and as a result produced answers which were not possible within the given context.</p>

3. Assessment Report for 90845: Apply business knowledge to a critical problem(s) in a given large business context

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explained solutions which were relevant to problems raised in the case study material • used business knowledge to help explain why their solutions may have been appropriate • quoted from the stimulus to support their explanations.
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided solutions to issues/problems which were not appropriate given the stimulus material • repeated the same solution for different issues/problems, such as closing down Executive Challenge, without applying it to the particular issue in the question • did not use relevant business language to explain their solutions, e.g. the managers needed to have a meeting to ‘touch base’ with Mikaere.
Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided solutions which were fully explained, with appropriate business knowledge • included solutions that were appropriate, given the stimulus material, with some clear discussion as to their value. There may have been suggestions of problems with the solutions • included business knowledge, and showed good understanding of business terms included in the stimulus.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully explained two appropriate solutions which were based on a detailed understanding of the resource material • included a clear justification as to why one solution was more appropriate than another by considering cost, time or human resource implications • defined each solution to the issue/problem clearly. There was very little, if any, overlap between solutions offered • applied relevant business knowledge to the issues facing the business.
Standard specific comments	<p>Candidates should read the stimulus material very carefully. Some candidates missed ideas in the stimulus, which if understood, would have increased the quality of their responses. For example, the introduction of Executive Challenge ensured the long-run sustainability of A4A. Removing it at short notice without a back-up plan would probably lead to A4A closing down. Candidates seemed to miss this point and argued vigorously for the closure of Executive Challenge without fully thinking through the implications. This skill is an important one to develop a fully-explained response.</p>