

2015 NCEA Assessment Report

Business Studies Level 3 91379, 91380, 91381

Part A: Commentary

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

Achievement in Level 3 Business Studies continues to improve. In most centres, candidates are better prepared; having a better understanding of the content and being able to structure responses that meet the demands of the standards.

In general, candidates have responded well to the move to a single question with a number of items in AS 91379 and AS 91380. The move to a single question for 91379 and 91380 also means that candidates must attempt the whole paper. Some candidates failed to attempt the extended questions which hampered their opportunities to meet the standard.

However, in many cases issues still arise. Many candidates still filled up the whole exam paper and on some occasions extra paper, but provided limited explanation. They tended to get off topic or provided explanations that were not required.

Candidates need to work on structuring their answers more effectively, and being more succinct. Direction for this is provided in the Assessment Grades as part of the Teaching and Learning Guidelines.

<http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/Social-sciences/Business-studies/Learning-objectives/Achievement-grades-Level-3>

Candidates are required to demonstrate their understanding of the subject content. Merely repeating the stimulus material in their response and not adding anything new information does not provide evidence for achievement.

Some candidates limited their opportunities for achievement by using the stimulus business e.g. “Urban Village” as their NZ-registered business instead of a real NZ-registered business.

Some candidates wrote about stakeholders instead of shareholders in their responses. It is expected that candidates have an understanding of the ownership structure of a business operating in a global context; these generally being larger, will generally have shareholders.

Part B: Report on standards

1. Assessment Report for 91379: Demonstrate understanding of how internal factors interact within a business that operates in a global context

<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explained ideas including two of ‘what is a cost/benefit of the chosen strategy’, ‘why and/ or how’ rather than just stating them were unable to provide an explanation of what the quality management and/or change management strategy was e.g. quality assurance and/or participative/inclusive strategy, but could provide valid, generic positive and/or negative effects of it used non-business language such as ‘money’, ‘happy’, ‘comfortable’ rather than revenue, motivated or confidence explained either the process or product innovation but didn’t provide an explanation of how the innovation has enabled the firm to be competitive used innovative or growth strategies such as collaboration to explain an example of product/process innovation.
<p>Not Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lacked understanding of the concepts e.g. quality assurance vs quality control demonstrated limited understanding of how aspects of business operated or functioned failed to answer the question even though their writing had business ideas and information. For example, instead of discussing a change management strategy, the answer focused on why change is important or what change management is with no reference to any specific change management strategy stated answers with very little evidence, providing only partial explanations.

<p>Achieved with Merit</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully explained business ideas/concepts by expanding answers with 'how' and linking to the impact on the business or stakeholders • used 'because' and valid 'why' statements to fully explain the positive and/or negative of the strategy that could be implemented to overcome resistance to change • provided a specific example, and explained whether their innovation example was process or product innovation. They were also able to link this to how the innovation had enabled the New Zealand firm to be competitive • fully explained valid positive and/or negative effects of a quality management strategy, as well as being able to explain the chosen quality management strategy, correctly in alms • repeated ideas rather than providing justified conclusions i.e. did not include any new information that focused on the impacts on the business or stakeholders, but rather summarised what was already fully explained in the answer.
<p>Achieved with Excellence</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully explained a positive and a negative, a cost and a benefit of different strategies in context • provided at least ONE justified conclusion that included new information. It was not just a repeat of what they had already written. Many candidates compared the short/long term or looked at additional effects on the business or employees. • justified why the change management strategy they suggested would work to overcome resistance to change, and if they had decided that it might not be effective, they were able to fully explain an alternative that might prove to be more effective at overcoming resistance to change.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>In terms of fully explaining an example of successful innovation by a New Zealand firm, candidates, when asked, must discuss a New Zealand firm or at the very least an international firm operating in New Zealand, which has developed an innovative product/process in New Zealand for the New Zealand market. For example, McDonalds is an international company however if the candidate were to discuss the kiwiburger – unique to New Zealand or the 'build your own' menu that is currently being rolled out in New Zealand, then this provides the right context.</p> <p>A better understanding of 'process' vs 'product' innovation is required, as well as the difference between 'innovation' and what is good business practice e.g. moving manufacturing overseas or providing high quality products.</p> <p>To gain Excellence candidates needed to fully explain both cost/negative and benefits/positive effects to be able to provide a justified conclusion. They must remember to not just simply sum up what they have already said, but must include new information.</p>

2. Assessment Report for 91380: Demonstrate understanding of strategic response to external factors by a business that operates in a global context

<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stated a strategic response and explained why it is a business wide reaction in terms of size, scope and size • explained a positive or negative impact of the strategic response • stated relevant business knowledge and language.
<p>Not Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failed to answer parts c and d of the question • repeated the stimulus in their response, and did not add anything extra • did not answer questions from the right perspective • explained an impact, but used it as both a positive and a negative for part c and d • stated or gave definitions, rather than explained • used poor business language through-out the paper.

Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully explained the decision, or the positive or negative impact to the business of a strategic response included relevant business knowledge and good business language.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stated a strategic response and explained why it is a business wide reaction at multiple levels (two of size, scope, and timeframe) fully explained the negative and the positive impact to the business of the strategic response explained a justified conclusion, including new information relevant to the business context, not previously included in the positive or negative impact integrated business knowledge and language throughout the paper.

3. Assessment Report for 91381: Apply business knowledge to address a complex problem(s) in a given global business context

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explained, rather than re-stating from the resource, factors causing decisions and/or problems and explained an effect of decisions and/or problems on at least one stakeholder structured their paragraphs using linking words such as 'because' or 'therefore' to show why the problem or decision occurred explained a positive effect of an identified solution on the business used some business terminology such as 'profit' instead of 'money'.
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> displayed no/very little business knowledge. There was little subject specific terminology repeated information from the resources supplied, but offered no application poorly structured paragraphs with no reference to specifics of the case study discussed solutions which were not feasible for the given study.
Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully explained causes and/or effects and/or positive effects to solutions using "this will mean" or "as a result" statements, which showed why these factors or effects or solutions had occurred or why they would be suitable discussed impacts on the business or stakeholders included appropriate business terminology and examples from the case study resources and their own knowledge wrote well-structured paragraphs, and commonly covered the bullet points of the question repeated or summarised their previous answers, rather than provide a justified conclusion using new information.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> used extensive and appropriate business terminology, making use of a range of resources provided, and their own business knowledge from the whole course curriculum linked their answers together from part (a) and (b) along with the resource material to provided justified conclusions introduced new information into the conclusion that helped provide a conclusion that was relevant to the issues facing Weka TV in that question.
Standard specific comments	<p>The achievement standard involves applying business knowledge to address complex business problems. This typically involves explaining the cause(s) and effect(s) of the complex problem(s) and a range of possible solutions. Cause(s), effect(s) and solution(s) should all be covered in candidate answers.</p> <p>This is a resource based assessment and as such, candidates are expected to make use of them and refer to the important aspects in their answers. While questions say "use the information in Resource to answer this question", candidates are able to</p>

	<p>refer to the resources in other questions as well, especially when providing a justified conclusion. Simply re-stating what the resource says however, is not an explanation. It was clear that candidates did not understand Investment Appraisal Theory, and that Average Rate of Return, referring to profit per year and Payback Period to cashflows. Justifications require new information that has not already been included in the answer. This should be used to explain why one solution is better than the other in relation to the business in the question. Repeating previous arguments is not a justification.</p>
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