

# Assessment Report

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## On this page

[Level 2 Business Studies 2021](#) ▾

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Standards [90843](#) [90844](#) [90845](#)

### Part A: Commentary

Several candidates used their own case studies that met the context of a large business (20 or more employees or with a regional or local significance). Those who did, generally achieved well, if they answered the question being asked. Using multi-national companies such as Google, Facebook, and Apple is an inappropriate choice at this level. Some case studies used were fictional and therefore received no credit.

Candidates should avoid repeating resource material for their answers, and to carefully consider other aspects of the business context and provide these insights in addition to direct links to the resource. Candidates who did not do well tended to write generic answers – often just definitions – and provided little or no context. It is recommended that candidates use the business name and product or service they provide throughout their responses to provide context.

Justifying answers to Excellence level continues to be an issue where candidates are not providing new information in their responses when they need to compare solutions or provide positives and negatives for the solutions. A review of previous



assessment schedules provides examples of what an Excellence response may look like.

It is important for candidates to ensure they have a clear understanding of the business concepts as outlined in the Teaching and Learning Guidelines, particularly in terms of their understanding of the Māori business concepts and how these concepts can be applied to the case studies provided.

## Part B: Report on standards

### 90843: Demonstrate understanding of the internal operations of a large business

#### Examinations

The examination consisted of one question split into four parts; candidates were required to response to all parts.

As per the Assessment Specifications, a business context was provided for the examination. Where applicable, candidates were able to use a large business they had studied to answer any part of the question, or the business context provided in the examination. There was one part of the question where candidates were required to refer to the actual business they had studied. A 'large business' refers to a business operating in New Zealand with more than 20 employees and / or with a regional or national significance.

The examination covered the following business knowledge, concepts and concepts: policies and procedures, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and pūtake, monthly cost and revenue reports, and the production process (job, batch and flow production). The examination required candidates to apply their understanding of the internal operations of a large business to the business context provided, or to their own business context. A comprehensive understanding of internal operations of a large business was required for Excellence, which involved justifying with relevant evidence the significance of a business decision or the likelihood of its success in terms being economically sustainable.

#### Observations

Most responses were fully answered, suggesting that candidates who chose to complete this standard were better prepared. Candidates performed strongly when explaining the importance of practising CSR and how doing so will impact a business' brand.

Many candidates had technically correct responses (included business concepts) that were rote-learned. Some candidates wrote responses that did not answer the question. For example, candidates wrote about health and safety policies and procedures when the question asked for policies and procedures for selling goods and services.

To earn better grades, candidates need to write their responses in context, either by using the case study provided or their own chosen business.

Many candidates could not identify a production process (job, batch, or flow) or were unsure what revenue and cost reports are.

### **Grade awarding**

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- provided a general explanation without relating it to their chosen business or the context given
- explained the 'what' and 'why', and gave reasons
- did not explain impacts (for example, the impact of CSR on a brand or the production process and how it might affect other functions of a business).

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not understand the different methods of production (batch, job, and flow production) and attempted to use their own method of production or lean production instead
- did not attempt all four parts of the exam, or provided brief and incomplete responses
- did not answer the question given and did not give specific examples relating to the case study – for example, referring to policies and procedures mostly for production / health and safety instead of for the selling of goods.

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

- applied business knowledge to a specific business, either by using the provided case study or a business of their own
- clearly explained the impact of decisions, using the 'what', the 'why', and the 'how'
- included relevant business knowledge.

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

- justified by linking their response to context and / or the business
  - integrated relevant business knowledge and / or Māori business concepts
  - compared and contrasted the advantages and disadvantages of batch, flow, and job production processes
  - justified how CSR and profitability could be achieved together.
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## 90844: Demonstrate understanding of how a large business responds to external factors

### Examinations

The examination consisted of one question split into four parts; candidates were required to respond to all parts.

As per the Assessment Specifications, a business context was provided for the examination. Where applicable, candidates were able to use a large business they had studied to answer any part of the question, or the business context provided in the examination. There was one part of the question where candidates were expected to refer to the actual business they had studied. A 'large business' refers to a business operating in New Zealand with more than 20 employees and / or with a regional or national significance.

The examination covered the following business knowledge and concepts: demographic changes on sales and production, the impact of technological change, the influence of trade unions and the Employment Relations Act, and the business practice of rangatiratanga. The examination required candidates to demonstrate their understanding of how and why businesses respond to these

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external factors and the consequences of operational decisions. A comprehensive understanding of how a business responds to external factors was required for Excellence, which involved justifying with relevant evidence the significance of a business decision or action in response to an external factor, and the likelihood of success from this decision or action in terms being socially and economically sustainable.

## Observations

Candidates are encouraged to develop a range of business case studies in preparation for this standard. Those who had a thorough understanding of their own case studies performed particularly well in this standard, as they were able to readily apply them to the questions asked. In addition, those candidates who clearly understood the Māori business concepts and how they could be applied, were able to access higher grade boundaries.

Responses to the topic of demographic change and its impact on the functions of a business were particularly well-written. Candidates who selected an appropriate business and stakeholder were able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a technological change in part (b). It is noted, however, that some candidates were not able to distinguish between a stakeholder and a shareholder. Specific aspects, with examples, of each of the three laws covered at Level 2 should be familiar to candidates.

Candidates are reminded that pre-learnt responses when explaining the impact on a stakeholder or business functions needs to be in the context. For example, some candidates gave the generic response of “increased expenses, leading to a decrease in profit” without using the context of the case study to say why the expenses increased.

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- explained the ‘what’ and gave reasons
- attempted to link responses to the case study information or their chosen business in parts (a) and (b)
- demonstrated some business knowledge, particularly when providing responses or reasons in the context of the case study or their chosen business. For example, candidates understood what trade unions are and could explain why it is in the best interests for a business to work with them

- selected an appropriate stakeholder when discussing advantages and disadvantages of technological change.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not link and / or utilised the demographic change discussed in the case study in part (a)(i) and (ii)
- did not complete all parts of the task, in particular (c) and (d)
- demonstrated little business knowledge, e.g. what trade unions are, what the ERA is, or what a stakeholder is. Used an inappropriate example of a recent technological change in part (b), usually technology that had already existed at the time of business formation, such as online shopping
- discussed the business advantages / disadvantages to a business, rather than to a stakeholder, in part (b).

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

- clearly explained the impact, advantages or disadvantages, or consequences by stating the 'what' and the 'why', and how this would affect the business
- provided linked examples from the case study information or from their own chosen business relating to demographic change in part (a)(ii)
- explained why a technological change would be an advantage or disadvantage for a stakeholder, and how it might impact the stakeholder in the future
- demonstrated business knowledge and included appropriate business terminology
- and / or Māori business concepts (rangatiratanga in part (d))
- did not use new information to support their reasons when justifying their choice of solution or response, and / or repeated previous information.

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

- justified, by using new information and / or referring to other business concepts or ideas, whether a chosen technological change would positively impact business profitability
- justified, by using specific elements from the definition of rangatiratanga and linking to the case study or their chosen business, whether complying with

the ERA would mean that the business is practising rangatiratanga

- provided detailed, explicit, and linked examples from the case study information or their chosen business, which showed a clear understanding of the operations of that business
- demonstrated extensive business knowledge and consistently used appropriate business terminology and / or Māori business concepts, particularly when integrating the chosen Māori business concepts from the case study.

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## 90845: Apply business knowledge to a critical problem(s) in a given large business context

### Examinations

The examination consisted of one question split into four parts; candidates were required to respond to all parts.

As per the Assessment Specifications, a business context was provided for the examination and candidates were expected to respond to this and the additional resource material provided.

Candidates were required to explore the critical problems or issues presented, and their causes and effects, and apply their business knowledge to provide a range of possible solutions and recommendations for the problem or issues presented. This examination covered the following critical problems and issues that threatened the survival of the business: ineffective choice or management of a growth strategy and the issues resulting from unethical practice. To apply a comprehensive business knowledge to a critical problem in each large business context for Excellence, candidates needed to recommend two solutions or strategies and justify which of these recommendations was more effective in resolving or minimising the impact of the critical problem or issue presented.

### Observations

Candidates who performed well in this standard were able to combine the resource material with their own business knowledge when providing solutions or recommendations to the issues presented. When candidates are required to

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discuss issues, problems and / or effects, it is recommended that they avoid using similar ideas. For example, if both issues relate to delays, or increased costs, or decreased reputation, this may limit a candidate's overall performance.

A number of candidates continue to use general knowledge and language to answer their questions rather than using business-specific knowledge and terminology. For example, candidates used COVID-related knowledge about changes in people's behaviour, but did not link it back to the impact this would have on the business or how they could address the issue.

When providing solutions to the consequences of unethical practices, the solutions needed to mitigate the effects of the practice, as often the consequence has already occurred. Many candidates struggled with identifying and explaining problems that the business may experience during expansion in part (b).

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- answered most questions
- explained the 'what' and gave reasons when discussing strategies, problems, or consequences
- referred to the case study in their responses
- used some business terminology and business knowledge.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- wrote limited responses or repeated their answers across questions
- repeated the question in their answer, with no additional insight
- could not identify the impact of an unethical practice on a business
- used general terminology and business knowledge.

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

- provided in-depth detail in their answer, considering the long-term consequences of each issue and solution
- gave different and thoughtful answers to each question, in order to provide as much evidence as possible
- applied information from the resource material throughout their responses

- included correct business terminology and sound business knowledge in their answers
- were able to identify suitable solutions to problems, but did not explain why one was a better option than the other.

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

- gave insightful and detailed evidence that was relevant to the case study, both for explaining solutions and justifying the most appropriate one
- justified their recommendations, using evidence that had not been previously used.

## [Business Studies subject page](#)

### Previous years' reports

[2020 \(PDF, 190KB\)](#)

[2019 \(PDF, 349KB\)](#)

[2018 \(PDF, 124KB\)](#)

[2017 \(PDF, 48KB\)](#)

[2016 \(PDF, 224KB\)](#)