

Exam Structure & Timing

Shorts - 8/10 (80 marks) - 20 minutes - Answer ALL questions

**ABQ - 80 marks - 40 minutes - From 3 Units each year -
Compulsory Question to Answer**

Section 1 - 3 Questions, you must answer 1 and can choose to answer 2. Units examined are Unit 1, Unit 6 and Unit 7 - 30 mins per Q / 60 marks each

Section 2 - 4 Questions, you must answer 2 and can choose to answer 3. Units examined are Unit 2, Unit 3, Unit 4 and Unit 5 - 30 mins per Q / 60 marks each

S.E.R. - How to Answer every question

State: Give a heading for every point

Explain: Each point must be explained, using keywords from the LC text and also showing understanding of the concepts dealt with in the course

Relate: Link the question back to whatever the question has asked you. E.g. "impact on the Irish economy".

The relate part may also involve the following terms:

Illustrate - Give an example in your answer. One word examples aren't enough e.g. Coke, they must be expanded on e.g. Coke when they launched Cherry Cola. An example doesn't always have to be a real life example, but it must show understanding of the concept to the examiner. E.g. if you were asked to illustrate Stages in New Product Development, it doesn't need to be an actual product, but your examples must show you understand each stage with whatever product you choose to use.

Evaluate - "In my opinion..." state a preference, giving a reason for your choice – the Chief Examiner has noted evaluations need to be a genuine attempt to actually give an opinion, not just text book knowledge.

Analyse - State what is good and bad about the term

Contrast/Distinguish Between - For this, you should individually explain or define each term, which will show a contrast between them from

their definitions, choosing to highlight differences rather than similarities.

****Give a minimum of 2 key terms/points for each explanation of any term, especially in your shorts section****

Shorts:

Give two points of information per explanation

Use headings for each point

Watch for verbs e.g. "illustrate"

Mini-ABQs

These are appearing more frequently in Q6 and Q7 each year. The student is presented with a short piece about a business and then asked questions about it. It is crucial to treat this like an ABQ where you either reference or quote (if they've given enough information in the piece to quote) the business/text in each part of your answer.

E.g. 2012 Q7 (C)

Read the information supplied below and answer the question which follows.

SuperToys Ltd, a large retail chain with 45 shops throughout Ireland, had sales of €100 million in 2011. It has just commissioned a firm to design and manufacture a new range of soft toys for babies. These will be available for sale in its shops from Summer 2013. SuperToys Ltd plans to open its first shop in the UK in 2014.

Discuss the possible reasons for business expansion and growth at **SuperToys Ltd.** (20 marks)

MS: 2 @ 7 marks (3+3+1) 1 @ 6 marks (3+2+1)

You can see in the marking scheme, there are marks for the reason and then the textbook knowledge/explanation. Then there is a +1 for linking SuperToys Ltd. in your answer. So if you failed to do this anywhere in your answer, you would lose 3 marks out of a possible 20 for the question.

Breaking it down to the import things for Exam Management – 4 Key Things.

Key 1: Understanding the verb – check and know what the question requires from you, know the difference between all the verbs LC Business uses.

Key 2: No waffle. The marks are only given for accurate business keywords and terms. Marks won't be given for filling a page, so don't waste your time (or ink!)

Key 3: Structure. Use the S.E.R. mentioned above in almost every answer. State the heading, give two points for each heading, relate the question if needed, then move in! The A1 student isn't the one that has used the most ink.

Key 4: Time Management. Watch the clock constantly, stick to it, this links in with Key 2 and 3 above, if you're only giving two points of information and 4-5 lines for each point, you won't run out of time. This specifically applies to the ABQ where every year students spend far too long with it and suffer later on.

Other thoughts for the exam:

Answer stages questions in order e.g. New product development or Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Current trends and examples are very important, especially for Unit 6 and Unit 7 (EU, economic variables, mergers/takeovers...). Read the Business supplement every week and take down one point and add it to the back of your copy, over a year this will result in a great list of examples and facts to use in your exam.

Chief Examiner's Report – A Summary from the Chief Examiner from the last time he reviewed LC Business

The term "distinguish" requires candidates to highlight the difference between both concepts. Candidates should practise writing direct, concise and precise answers.

Problem with waffling/essay answers: While the majority of candidates earned good marks, some responses were very poorly structured and presented some difficulty for examiners to mark. Candidates should present

answers in point form and thereby avoid over development of one point to the exclusion of other relevant points.

A lack of meaningful evaluation by candidates continues to be a problem. Some evaluations/judgements tended to be superficial.

There was some evidence of candidates trying to fit a planned answer into this question. An over-emphasis on preparation for the examination through rote learning of particular answers may result in low marks being awarded to candidates.

Some candidates wrote answers which were far too long for the marks available. Some candidates gave surplus points, indicating the importance of aligning efforts to the marks available and giving more detailed answers when required.

Conclusions

Examiners reported that candidates who performed well had a detailed knowledge of business theory and showed a clear understanding of its significance, in the specific context of the questions asked.

Candidates who performed less well on the Higher Level paper tended to do so because they had not engaged fully with the questions asked, failed to read the questions carefully, and their answers lacked structure or appropriate development.

An over-emphasis on preparation for the examination through rote learning of answers resulted in low marks being awarded to some candidates in certain questions.

Note For Students:

- *definitions of business terms must be precise and accurate*
- *separate paragraphs should be used for each point developed and essay type answers should be avoided*
- *writing long passages of irrelevant material should be avoided*
- *include key points and avoid repetition of points*
- *start each question on a new page*
- *number each question, section, sub-section correctly.*