



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Business Studies 3132 *Specification A* 2010

Material accompanying this Specification

- Past Papers and Mark Schemes
- Reports on the Examination

SPECIFICATION

This specification will be published annually on the AQA Website (www.aqa.org.uk). If there are any changes to the specification centres will be notified in print as well as on the Website. The version on the Website is the definitive version of the specification.

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Contents

Background Information

1	General Certificate of Secondary Education	5
2	Specification at a Glance	7
3	Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details	8

Scheme of Assessment

4	Introduction	10
5	Aims	12
6	Assessment Objectives	13
7	Scheme of Assessment	14

Subject Content

8	Summary of Subject Content	16
9	The Business Environment	17
10	Business Structure, Control and Organisation	19
11	Organising to Achieve Objectives	20
12	People in Organisations	22

Key Skills and Other Issues

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 13 | Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence | 24 |
| 14 | Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues | 30 |

Centre-Assessed Component

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 15 | Nature of the Centre-Assessed Component | 32 |
| 16 | Guidance on Setting the Centre-Assessed Component | 38 |
| 17 | Assessment Criteria | 40 |
| 18 | Supervision and Authentication | 47 |
| 19 | Standardisation | 48 |
| 20 | Administrative Procedures | 49 |
| 21 | Moderation | 50 |

Awarding and Reporting

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|----|
| 22 | Grading, Shelf-Life and Re-Sits | 51 |
|----|---------------------------------|----|

Appendices

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----|
| A | Grade Descriptions | 52 |
| B | Record Forms | 53 |
| C | Overlaps with Other Qualifications | 54 |

Background Information

1

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Following a review of the National Curriculum requirements, and the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework, all the unitary awarding bodies revised their GCSE syllabuses for examination in 2003 onwards.

1.1 Introduction

Key Skills

All GCSE specifications must identify, as appropriate, opportunities for generating evidence on which candidates may be assessed in the “main” Key Skills of Communication, Application of Number and Information Technology at the appropriate level(s). Also, where appropriate, they must identify opportunities for developing and generating evidence for addressing the “wider” Key Skills of Working with Others, Improving own Learning and Performance and Problem Solving.

Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, cultural, environmental, health and safety and European issues

All specifications must identify ways in which the study of the subject can contribute to an awareness and understanding of these issues.

ICT

The National Curriculum requires that students should be given opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capacity through the use of ICT tools to support their learning. In each specification candidates will be required to make effective use of ICT in ways appropriate to the needs of the subject.

The use of ICT in the internally assessed work is encouraged (see section 15.5).

Tiering

In most subjects the scheme of assessment must include question papers, targeted at two tiers of grades, ie A* - D and C - G.

A safety net of an allowed Grade E will be provided for candidates entered for the Higher Tier who just fail to achieve Grade D. The questions will still be targeted at A* - D.

Citizenship

From 2002, students in England will be required to study Citizenship as a National Curriculum subject. Each GCSE specification must signpost, where appropriate, opportunities for developing citizenship knowledge, skills and understanding.

2

Specification at a Glance

Business Studies A

This is one of two specifications in GCSE Business Studies offered by AQA.

This specification, Specification A, involves one written paper, based on a pre-released Case Study, and coursework chosen from six Options which are developments of Core Subject Content areas.

Specification B involves two written papers and coursework which can be on a theme taken from any area of the Subject Content. Candidates may, if they wish, choose to take a third paper rather than attempt coursework. Specification B also includes a short course which requires candidates to take one written paper with coursework or two written papers.

There are two tiers of assessment: Foundation (G–C) and Higher (D–A*).

GCSE Business Studies A	
Written Paper	75 % of total marks
Foundation Tier	2 hours
Higher Tier	2 hours
Coursework	25 % of total marks
Candidates must select and submit task(s) based on one Option only. Grades A* - G	
Business and change	Human Resources
Business Support Services	Information and Communication Technology
Enterprise	Production

Foundation Tier
3132F
Higher Tier
3132H

3

Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details

3.1 Availability of Assessment Units

Examinations based on this Specification are available in the June examination series only.

3.2 Entry Codes

Normal entry requirements apply, but the following information should be noted.

The **Subject Code** for entry to the GCSE award is 3132.

3.3 Classification Codes

Each specification is assigned to a national classification code, indicating the subject area to which it belongs.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code, will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

The classification code for this specification is 3210.

3.4 Private Candidates

This specification is only available for private candidates where a GCSE award has already been made. The coursework component result will be carried forward if the rest of the qualification is being retaken.

This specification is not available for private candidates who have not previously entered for the specification. Private candidates should write to AQA for a copy of “*Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates*”.

3.5 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

We have taken note of the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 in developing and administering this specification.

We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: Access Arrangements and Special Consideration: Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examination GCE, GCSE, Entry Level and Key Skills. This is published on the JCQ website.

We can make arrangements so that candidates with disabilities (under the terms of the DDA) can access the assessment. These arrangements are made **before** the examination. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment.

We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the examination. Where we do this it is given **after** the examination.

3.6 Language of Examinations

All units are provided in English only. Assessment materials will not be provided in Welsh or Gaeilge.

Scheme of Assessment

4

Introduction

4.1 National Criteria

This AQA GCSE in Business Studies (Specification A) complies with the following:

- the GCSE Subject Criteria for Business Studies and Economics;
- the GCSE, GCE, and AEA Code of Practice April 2008;
- the GCSE Qualification Specific Criteria;
- the Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria.

4.2 Rationale

Business Studies concerns the business aspects of organisations within their economic, political and social contexts. Business Studies involves the investigation of how enterprise adds value by organising the production of goods and services. The performance of business is studied from a range of perspectives. Using case studies, Business Studies ensures that candidates have experience of the real world of business organisations. The use of case study materials also requires that candidates use a variety of methods to analyse and evaluate this evidence and thus make reasoned judgements in the context of real business scenarios.

AQA has produced two distinctive specifications in Business Studies. These provide continuity with previously offered GCSE Business Studies courses and also permit teachers and candidates a choice of routes through assessment. Specification A requires candidates to take two assessment components. These are a single two-hour examination, based on a pre-released case study issued approximately eight teaching weeks prior to the examination, and coursework based on the study of one of six optional areas of the Subject Content. Specification B requires candidates to take three assessment components. These consist of two papers, each of an hour and a quarter, based on unseen case studies, together with either a coursework assignment based on a business problem or an examination paper based on a case study of a business problem. Each specification contains subject content arranged in a manner appropriate to its assessment package.

A Short Course specification has been devised based on Specification B which uses a written paper from the Specification B assessment package together with the coursework or alternative paper component. The Subject Content has been appropriately modified for the Short Course.

4.3 Prior level of attainment and recommended prior learning No prior learning or level of attainment is necessary for candidates to undertake a course of study based on this specification. However, candidates will be expected to demonstrate skills of literacy and numeracy commensurate with having followed a programme of study at Key Stage 3.

4.4 Progression This qualification is a recognised part of the National Qualifications framework. As such, GCSE provides progression from Key Stage 3 to post-16 studies.

It lays an appropriate foundation for further study of Business Studies or related subjects at GCE Advanced Subsidiary or Advanced levels or Applied GCE Advanced Subsidiary or Advanced levels. It also enables candidates to progress to NVQs.

In addition, it provides a worthwhile course for candidates of various ages and from diverse backgrounds in terms of general education and lifelong learning.

Aims

A course based on this specification should give students an understanding of the dynamics of business activity. The understanding must be rooted in current business theory and practice and must reflect the integrated nature of organisations and their decision-making processes.

A course based on this specification should encourage candidates to:

- a. make effective use of relevant terminology, concepts and methods, and recognise the strengths and limitations of the ideas used;
- b. apply their knowledge and critical understanding to current issues and problems in a wide range of appropriate contexts;
- c. distinguish between facts and opinions and evaluate qualitative and quantitative data in order to help build arguments and make informed judgements;
- d. appreciate the perspectives of a range of stakeholders in relation to the environment, individuals, government and enterprise.

This specification allows students to gain knowledge and understanding of aspects of business activity, helping them in their comprehension of areas of life that will impinge on each of them. Emphasis is placed on students developing skills of analysis and application, as well as becoming discerning and critical in their thinking; skills that can be readily transferred to other areas. By viewing business from several perspectives, open-mindedness in the interpretation of situations and issues and the formation of judgements are promoted. The specification has been devised to make full use of real-world examples, which is intended to give a sense of relevance and purpose to its study.

6

Assessment Objectives

6.1 Assessment Objectives

A course based on this specification will require candidates to:

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified content;
2. apply knowledge and understanding using appropriate terms, concepts, theories and methods effectively to address problems and issues;
3. select, organise, interpret and use information from various sources to analyse problems and issues;
4. evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions accurately and appropriately;
5. present relevant information in a form that suits its purpose, use specialist terms appropriately and ensure text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear.

6.2 Quality of Written Communication

Where candidates are required to produce extended written material in English, they will be assessed on the quality of written communication. Candidates will be required to:

- present relevant information in a form that suits its purposes;
- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear.

Quality of written communication will be assessed in both the written paper and the coursework.

Scheme of Assessment

7.1 Assessment Units

The Scheme of Assessment comprises two components.

Written Paper	2 hours
75 % of the marks	105 marks

The written paper will assess areas of the Core Subject Content and will be based on a pre-released Case Study to be given to candidates approximately eight teaching weeks before the start of the examination timetable: the exact time may vary according to when Easter falls. It will consist of two sections and all questions will be compulsory.

Section A will mainly comprise a series of short answer questions, testing principally Assessment Objectives 1 and 2. Knowledge from **all** Core areas may be assessed, even if it is not included within the Case Study.

Section B will comprise between five and eight questions requiring more detailed responses. It will mainly test Assessment Objectives 2, 3 and 4. All questions in this section will relate to the Case Study.

Coursework	63 marks
25 % of the marks	

This component will assess the Options element of the syllabus and will have a Grade Range of A*- G. Candidates will be required to select and submit task(s) based on **one Option only**. The component code for all the coursework Options is 3132/C. The Options are as follows:

- Business and Change
- Business Support Services
- Enterprise
- Human Resources
- Information and Communication Technology
- Production

The coursework will be assessed according to the five Assessment Objectives (shown in Section 6) and the marking criteria (shown in Section 17). Marking will be carried out by teachers and will be subject to moderation by AQA at the end of the course.

7.2 Weighting of Assessment Objectives

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table:

Assessment Objectives	Component Weightings (%)		Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	Written Paper	Coursework	
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified content (AO1)	21	3.5	24.5
Apply knowledge and understanding using appropriate terms, concepts, theories and methods effectively to address problems and issues (AO2)	18	5.5	23.5
Select, organise, interpret and use information from various sources to analyse problems and issues (AO3)	15	8.5	23.5
Evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions accurately and appropriately (AO4)	17	6.5	23.5
Present relevant information in a form that suits its purpose, ensure text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear, and use specialist terms appropriately. (Quality of Written Communication - AO5)	4	1	5
Overall Weighting of Units (%)	75	25	100

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

Subject Content

8

Summary of Subject Content

Business Studies must relate to the real world of business and the community at large outside the classroom. This cannot be achieved by desk research alone. The dynamics of the business world will be appreciated best by visits to, and contact with, local and national organisations.

The use of graphs, charts, diagrams, tables and other means of presenting and interpreting numerical information relating to any part of the Subject Content should be encouraged, as should an integrated approach to delivering the subject.

The teacher is not expected to teach the specification in the order in which the Subject Content is presented. However, the schemes of work must enable candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of:

- (i) the relationship between business activity and the environment within which it takes place;
- (ii) the structure, organisation and control of the main forms of business.

The themes that make up the Core Subject Content are:

- The Business Environment;
- Business Structure, Control and Organisation;
- Organising to Achieve Objectives;
- People in Organisations.

9

The Business Environment

9.1 The Business Environment

The environment in which all businesses operate and make their decisions. The interdependence of all businesses and the implication of this for the way they operate.

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate understanding of wants in relation to scarce resources, and how they lead to the need for choice and hence the demand for goods and services;
- understand how wants can be satisfied through the supply of goods and services;
- demonstrate understanding of the terms *specialisation*, *trade* and *exchange* and how interdependence arises from them;
- demonstrate understanding of the concept of opportunity cost;
- understand differences between planned, market and mixed economies;
- demonstrate understanding of primary, secondary and tertiary sectors and the flow of activity between them;
- demonstrate understanding of the factors that influence the location of industry, such as tradition, demography and infrastructure;
- demonstrate understanding of the effect of external decisions, legislation and policies on business, including the impact of local and central government, public ownership and privatisation, and the European Union;
- demonstrate understanding of the impact of economic, social, environmental and technological effects on influencing business decisions;
- demonstrate an understanding of the impact on business of the growth of the use of the internet and e-commerce on;
- appreciate the importance of support and advisory services available to business, for example, trade associations, Chambers of Commerce and government agencies;
- demonstrate how business can be affected by moral, ethical, social, cultural and health and safety issues;
- demonstrate an awareness of how business behaviour is influenced by the degree of competition in the market.

9.2 Opportunities for Using and Developing ICT Skills

There are a number of websites that can be accessed to obtain up-to-date information on issues mentioned in the content above. Sites that might be accessed include:

www.bized.ac.uk – an excellent general site with some material on specific businesses;

www.enterprisezone.org.uk – a gateway site with information on business legislation and regulations;

www.europa.eu.int – an extensive site with information on how the EU affects business;

www.us.kpmg.com/ethics – part of the KPMG site dedicated to business ethics.

10

Business Structure, Control and Organisation

10.1 Business Structure, Control and Organisation

The various ways in which businesses may be organised and the appropriateness of each to different circumstances. The objectives of firms and the way in which they organise themselves to meet them. How the structure and organisation of business affect, and are affected by, the business environment, eg government policy.

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the aims and objectives of business (the criteria for judging success, for example, profitability, wealth creation, job creation and market share, should be considered from all stakeholders' perspectives);
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the different aims, objectives, forms of ownership, funding and liability of business organisations;
- understand how ownership, finance and control can become separated where liability is limited;
- understand the relationship between growth and objectives;
- understand how firms grow, diversification, integration; the effects of growth, economies and diseconomies of scale;
- demonstrate understanding of the nature of organisations, eg functional, product, geographical, centralised and decentralised;
- demonstrate understanding of the relationship between size, risk and profit. Candidates should appreciate the possible impact of changes in size on the business and its stakeholders, eg suppliers, shareholders, customers and competitors.

10.2 Opportunities for Using and Developing ICT Skills

Many of the banks have websites on business finance. It is possible to download business plans from various locations including www.3i.co.uk/ (which also has case study material on starting and growing a business) and the Business Bureau at www.u-net.com/bureau (a section on forming a limited company). Another interesting site is www.bnet.co.uk/ with more case studies and a free subscription for students.

Organising to Achieve Objectives

How businesses attempt to realise their objectives in an ever-changing business environment. How the functions of marketing, production and financial accounting are deployed to assist businesses achieve their objectives.

11.1 Marketing

Candidates should be able to:

- appreciate the importance of market research in identifying markets and market segments at home and abroad, and evaluate the suitability of the method by which the market research is undertaken;
 - apply techniques of market research within a range of simple contexts;
 - show understanding of the importance of the marketing mix and describe the principal methods of marketing;
 - show an understanding of the international dimension, particularly in the context of the European Union, and the impact of currencies;
 - demonstrate understanding of the product life cycle and the way it influences marketing strategy;
 - understand the role of distribution, in taking the product to the consumer, and the changing nature of the channels of distribution.
-

11.2 Production

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate understanding of the relationship between marketing, product development and production and the importance of quality and quality assurance;
 - understand the distinction between market and product orientation;
 - demonstrate understanding of the main ways in which production may be organised, including specialisation and the division of labour and how production may be improved through lean production techniques, automation and new technology;
 - demonstrate awareness of how production can influence companies' location.
-

11.3 Accounting and Finance

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the sources, uses and management of finance;
- demonstrate understanding of the nature and importance of financial and budgetary control, for example, stock control, cash flow forecasting;

- interpret, in an elementary way, the final accounts for a business: gross and net profit percentage, current and acid-test ratios, return on capital employed (ROCE);
- explain the importance of profit as a reward for risk-taking, and evaluate the ethics of profit-taking;
- classify the costs of a business, eg fixed and variable;
- compare costs with revenue to determine profit and distinguish between gross and net profit, and understand and apply the concept of break-even;
- demonstrate awareness of alternative ways by which a company can judge its success, eg return on capital employed, market share, ethical considerations.

11.4 Opportunities for Using and Developing ICT Skills

There are various sites that can be accessed to provide material to support teaching and research in these sections of the specification. There are many on-line company reports accessible via www.carol.co.uk and through www.bized.ac.uk so that students can analyse sources of company finance and accounts. There is an Interactive Finance and Accounts CD ROM which allows students to construct their own simple accounts. There is also a wealth of material on marketing: a useful source of up-to-date material is www.mad.co.uk/mw which is the Marketing Weekly magazine on-line. Other sites include www.marketingcouncil.org and www.dit.gov.uk/ots/emic for information on marketing overseas.

People in Organisations

12.1 People in Organisations

The different roles, aspirations and vested interests of people who represent companies' stakeholders. How businesses attempt to reconcile the conflicts of interest between groups to ensure the efficient operation of the organisation.

Candidates should be able to:

- distinguish between different types of roles in an organisation, for example, employee, manager and shareholder;
- demonstrate understanding of internal organisation structures, organisation trees, layers of management, hierarchies; delegation the span of control; channels of communication; the interdependence and specialisation of departments and why structures reflect the objectives of the business and facilitate decision-making;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of roles, relationships and management in business; (Where appropriate, such knowledge and understanding should be related to the structure, organisation and control of the main forms of business. Suitable subjects for investigation include recruitment, motivation, training and communication.)
- understand the process of personnel recruitment and appointment;
- understand the different forms and methods of remuneration, financial and non-financial motivators and benefits, working conditions and job satisfaction;
- demonstrate a basic awareness of motivation/management theorists, such as Maslow, Mayo and Taylor;
- understand the reasons for training and the benefits of training to employers and employees, the role of government in training and retraining;
- demonstrate awareness of the impact of groups that are able to influence business decisions, for example, consumers, pressure groups, trade unions;
- demonstrate awareness of the impact of consumer protection and health and safety regulations;
- demonstrate understanding of the need for effective communication in business;
- demonstrate understanding of the various methods of communication and suitable methods for internal and external situations;
- evaluate the ways in which developments in modern technology have affected the stakeholders of an organisation, for example, its impact on communication and employment.

12.2 Opportunities for Using and Developing ICT Skills

There are a number of websites that can be accessed for information on people in organisations. The site www.peoplemanagement.co.uk has links to many sites on human resources issues, www.ipuk.uk is the site for Investors in People with several case studies on its work in business organisations and www.ipd.co.uk is the site for the Institute of Personnel and Development. Many trade unions have their own sites, which can be found by entering their names into a search engine such as *Excite* or *Yahoo*.

Key Skills and Other Issues

13

Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence

13.1 Introduction

The Key Skills Qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of *Application of Number, Communication and Information Technology*.

The units for the ‘wider’ Key Skills of *Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others* and *Problem Solving* are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these ‘wider’ Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates, but they do not form part of the Key Skills Qualification.

Copies of the Key Skills Units may be down loaded from the QCA web site (<http://www.qca.org.uk/keyskills>).

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- A What you need to know.
- B What you must do.
- C Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this specification for Business Studies can be offered opportunities to develop and generate evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of *Application of Number, Communication, Information Technology, Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others* and *Problem Solving*. Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of the units, are signposted below.

13.2 Key Skills Opportunities in Business Studies

There are opportunities for developing and generating evidence of the application of **all of** the main and 'wider' Key Skills in this course, both in preparation for the written papers and in the coursework, as illustrated below.

Communication Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
C1.1 Take part in discussions		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C1.2 Read and obtain information		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C1.3 Write different types of documents		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
C2.1a Contribute to discussions		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C2.1b Give a short talk		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C2.2 Read and summarise information		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C2.3 Write different types of documents		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Application of Number Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
N1.1 Interpret information from different sources		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
N1.2 Carry out calculations		-	-	✓	-	✓
N1.3 Interpret results and present findings		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Application of Number Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content				
Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
N2.1 Interpret information from different sources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
N2.2 Carry out calculations	-	-	✓	-	✓
N2.3 Interpret results and present findings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Information Technology Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content				
Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
IT1.1 Find, explore and develop information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT1.2 Present information, including text, numbers and images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Information Technology Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content				
Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
IT2.1 Search for and select information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT2.2 Explore and develop information and derive new information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT2.3 Present combined information, including text, numbers and images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Working with Others Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content				
Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
WO1.1 Confirm what needs to be done and who is to do it	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO1.2 Work towards agreed objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO1.3 Identify progress and suggest improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Working with Others Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content				
Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
WO2.1 Plan work and confirm working arrangements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO2.2 Work cooperatively towards achieving identified objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO2.3 Exchange information on progress and agree ways of improving work with others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Improving own Learning and Performance Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content				
Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
LP1.1 Confirm short-term targets and plan how these will be met	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP1.2 Follow plan to meet targets and improve performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP1.3 Review progress and achievements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Improving own Learning and Performance Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
LP2.1 Help set short-term targets and plan how these will be met		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP2.2 Use plan, and support from others, to meet targets		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP2.3 Review progress and identify evidence of achievements		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Problem Solving Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
PS1.1 Confirm understanding of given problems		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS1.2 Plan and try out ways of solving problems		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS1.3 Check if problems have been solved and describe the results		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Problem Solving Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	Section	9	10	11	12	Cwk
PS2.1 Identify problems and come up with ways of solving them		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS2.2 Plan and try out options		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS2.3 Apply given methods to check if problems have been solved and describe the results		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

13.3 Further Guidance

More specific guidance and examples of tasks that can provide evidence of single Key Skills, or composite tasks that can provide evidence of more than one Key Skill are given in the AQA specification support material, particularly the Teachers' Guide.

Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

14.1 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

A study of GCSE Business Studies gives students the opportunity to encounter and address moral, ethical, social and cultural issues. The Subject Content sections Business Environment and Business Structure, Control and Organisation, for instance, in part explore the moral and ethical stances adopted by those who control businesses. This can be seen, for example, when studying the criteria used for judging the success of organisations and how companies respond to the actions of behaviour moderators, such as pressure groups and other external agencies. Students will be expected to form judgements on the acceptability of different types of corporate and organisational behaviour. Social issues are broached, for instance, when studying the non-financial reasons why people work in the People in Organisations section of the Subject Content. A consideration of the senses of belonging and purpose within groups are also essential parts of the study of production. The actions undertaken by organisations also reflect the cultural standpoint of their decision-makers and the values attached to the possible alternatives. These differing value systems manifest themselves when students explore the workings of multinational companies that operate across cultural divides.

14.2 European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers. European examples should be used where appropriate in the delivery of the subject content. Relevant European legislation is identified within the specification where appropriate.

14.3 Environmental Issues

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report *“Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education”* 1993 in preparing this specification.

The specification has been designed so that it can be used as a medium for improving environmental education within the curriculum.

14.4 Citizenship

The specification will assist with the development of candidates’ reflection on and sense of, social and moral responsibility. Opportunities will be available for the development of knowledge and understanding of responsibilities. The specification will assist with the development of the skill of enquiry and communication of topical issues.

14.5 Avoidance of Bias

AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and associated specimen papers to avoid bias of any kind.

14.6 Health and Safety

This specification will encourage the development of a sense of responsibility for the health and safety of the self and others. Particular opportunities should be exploited to promote these issues.

Centre-Assessed Component

15

Nature of the Centre-Assessed Component

Business Studies must relate to the real world of business and the community at large outside the classroom. This cannot be achieved by desk research alone. The dynamics of the business world will be appreciated better by visits to and contact with local and national organisations.

Primary research should not be interpreted to mean the use solely of questionnaires. It can involve information gathered by in-depth interviews, observation and visits.

Coursework should be seen as an integral part of the learning process. The Options available give candidates the opportunity to study in greater depth an area of Business Studies covered in the Core Subject Content.

The coursework accounts for 25% of the total assessment. The coursework must be set within a business context and can be approached in TWO ways:

- a. a single item of work;
- b. a collection of items.

There is no specified length for either (a) or (b) although a single item would have to be considerably more substantial than each of the individual pieces in a collection. The single item should be in the form of a task that will enable candidates to demonstrate **all** skill areas to the highest possible level. It is perfectly possible to meet all the assessment criteria within a piece of work of between 2000-3000 words. The collection of items should include the best example in terms of meeting each marking criterion.

Assignments set should be based on ONE Option, although there are clear overlaps between Options. It is not a requirement to cover all the elements of an Option, but to set assignment(s) based on the essence of the Option. All Options could include a European or global dimension, eg the problems of marketing abroad.

The Options are:

- Business and Change
- Business Support Services
- Enterprise
- Human Resources
- Information and Communication Technology
- Production

15.1 Business and Change

The ever-changing environment of business necessitates decisions being made by organisations. The pressure for change may come from within the organisation or from external forces.

The suggestions below are not definitive and are only intended as guidance on possible areas or issues that candidates might like to explore.

Internal pressures for change may arise for example from:

- changes in costs, eg wages, materials;
- new product developments;
- new processes or methods of production.

External pressures for change may arise for example from:

- decisions made by central or local government, eg new regulations/laws;
- actions by competitors;
- changing technology;
- changing markets, eg new markets opening up, changes in the nature of the market (demographic trends);
- the actions of pressure groups;
- changes in the specific business environment, eg takeovers or mergers.

Coursework arising from this Option should:

- identify possible pressures on a specific business or businesses which could either be internal or external;
- describe, explain and analyse the ways in which the business(es) might respond to these pressures;
- comment on and evaluate the possible impact of these responses on the business(es).

15.2 Business Support Services

Business needs to deliver products to consumers at the right time, to the right place and at the right price. So, they need the support of other commercial services. The developing business scene has led to the emergence a number of new services that provide a range of specialist services to business organisations, eg computer services firms and venture capital companies. These take their place alongside the traditional business support institutions and organisations such as banks, insurance companies and transport firms, each having had to adapt to the challenges of a continuously changing business environment.

In this Option candidates should study at least one service that provides support to business. Among the services that might be studied are:

- banking and financial services;
- insurance;
- distribution including transport, wholesaling and warehousing;
- computer services;
- government, local government and European agencies, for example, the Small Business Support Service;
- retailing, including franchising;
- communication services.

These suggestions are not exhaustive, but are intended as guidance to give an indication of possible areas of study. In all instances, candidates will be expected to relate the service to a specific business or business problem and to show how the selected service provides practical support and a possible solution to the issue.

The coursework should enable the candidate to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the services provided by the institution(s) or organisation(s) selected;
- apply the knowledge gained to a specific business situation, problem or issue and analyse how it may be resolved through the use of the selected support service(s);
- offer a possible solution to the business problem, issue or situation, having weighed up the information and evidence collected.

15.3 Enterprise

This option gives candidates an opportunity to identify, study and analyse a business opportunity or idea. Coursework arising from this Option should:

- identify and describe a business opportunity or idea;
- explain and analyse an appropriate strategy/strategies to realise the potential of the business opportunity or idea;
- comment on and evaluate relevant business strategies that might be appropriate.

The suggestions below are not definitive. However, candidates might like to explore one or more of the following:

- a business plan for a mini-enterprise, including the market, cash and resource needs (concepts such as break-even might be included);
- marketing strategies for a new or existing product/service, addressing the 4 'P's (Price, Place, Product and Promotion including packaging);
- sources of finance for a variety of business ventures;
- assessment of the performance of specific businesses, using a variety of criteria, eg accounting ratios, market share, dividends, number of employees, turnover, etc.

15.4 Human Resources

The people who work for a business are an important resource. How they are recruited, trained, motivated and remunerated are key business decisions.

Candidates choosing this Option might like to address one or more of the following:

- an analysis of the human resource needs of a specific business or businesses, if appropriate identifying the increasing role of technology;
- an explanation of the ways in which the business(es) has (have) or could have recruited, trained, motivated and remunerated its workforce;
- a study and evaluation of the ways the workforce has been recruited, trained, motivated and remunerated.

15.5 Information and Communication Technology

Coursework under this Option could fall into one of two categories:

The impact of ICT on business activity

Coursework should:

- identify and describe ICT used in specific business(es), eg e-commerce, e-business, payroll software, databases, spreadsheets, word processing, video conferencing, e-mail, the internet, etc;
- explain and analyse the use of ICT in a variety of specific businesses;
- comment on and evaluate the use of ICT in a variety of specific businesses.

The applications of ICT to resolve a business problem or issue

ICT could be used as a tool to address a business problem/issue. The following are examples:

- the internet to gather information/data;
- the graphic display of data;
- databases to record and analyse market research results;
- spreadsheets to produce cashflow and break-even.

It is essential that candidates do not simply demonstrate ICT capability but:

- **explain and analyse a business problem or issue;**
- **comment on and evaluate possible solutions to the problem or issue which are linked to ICT.**

15.6 Production

Industry is constantly required to increase productivity and responsiveness to consumer needs. This involves the need to use land, labour and capital ever more effectively and flexibly.

Coursework arising from this Option could:

- identify and investigate ways in which productivity can be improved in specific business situations;
- describe, explain and analyse ways in which resources can be used more effectively in specific business situations;
- comment on and evaluate the merits of different production methods in specific business situations;
- suggest, research, analyse and evaluate effective motivational packages in specific business situations.

Areas for exploration could include:

- The Environment:
stakeholders; secondary activity; interdependence; location; STEEP factors; economies of scale.
- Organisation:
the relationship between production and marketing;
job, batch, mass and flow production;
specialisation and the division of labour;
roles in the workplace; health and safety issues;
introduction and use of new technology; concentration;
new product development.

- Behaviour:
teams and teamworking; trade unions; communications;
motivation; methods of payment.
- Costs:
types of cost;
budgets.

Guidance on Setting the Centre-Assessed Component

16.1 Devising assignments

When devising assignments for coursework teachers **must** ensure that candidates have ample opportunity to provide evidence against the marking criteria. Assignments set in the form of a study must have a clear focus in terms of a business problem or issue to resolve.

Assignments should require candidates to analyse and interpret information and make judgements and reach conclusions. If the file of work approach is adopted, teachers must be wary of candidates providing superficial answers that merely show low level skills repeatedly. Some tasks need to be open-ended so that candidates can demonstrate what they know and understand. Such tasks enable differentiation to be shown.

The use of ICT should be encouraged in **all** Options. The internet, for example, can be a useful source of information and data. Spreadsheets, charts and graphics can enhance presentation. Wherever possible, candidates should employ ICT to address the business problems they are attempting to solve.

The coursework in GCSE Business Studies accounts for 25% of the total coursework mark and candidates will be required to submit task(s) based on **one Option only**. There are only two subject codes, 3132F and 3132H, irrespective of the Option chosen.

The chosen Option should be seen as a vehicle enabling candidates to meet the marking criteria. It cannot be overemphasised that the starting point for devising suitable coursework assignments should be the marking criteria.

Largely descriptive pieces, eg the history of a business or local shopping centre, will gain only limited credit.

It is difficult (though **not** impossible) for candidates to provide sufficient breadth of evidence to meet fully the marking criteria if they submit work which covers a very narrow area of the specification's content.

It is important that candidates have a business problem or issue to resolve. Teachers may, therefore, wish to set assignments in the form of a question. For example, does the local shopping centre meet the needs of the consumer? Teachers must, however, be wary of assignment titles that do not give candidates ample scope to explore a range of issues in sufficient depth to enable them to reach the higher bands of the marking criteria.

It is important the candidates understand the evidence they need to provide to meet the marking criteria.

It is important to remember that this is a business studies course and coursework assignments must reflect this. In order to judge whether an assignment is suitable, teachers should ask themselves the key questions which follow:

Knowledge and Understanding	<p>Is the candidate required to carry out relevant research using primary and secondary sources?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to present his or her work in a number of different ways?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to make full use of the information collected to answer a problem?</p>
Application	<p>Is the candidate required to use a number of business terms and concepts?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to apply the terms to the problem or issue being looked at?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to justify/give reasons for his or her use of the terms, concepts and research?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to be selective in the terms used?</p>
Selection/Organisation/ Interpretation/Analysis	<p>Is the candidate required to choose carefully the information/data needed to answer the problem?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to interpret the information collected, rather than simply describe it?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to analyse/explain the information collected?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to produce an argument/case giving reasons for statements made?</p> <p>Is the candidate's work well organised/easy to follow?</p>
Evaluation/Judgement	<p>Is the candidate required to make judgements after weighing up relevant information/data?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to reach conclusions after weighing up relevant information/data?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to make recommendations after weighing up relevant information/data?</p> <p>Is the candidate required to give reasons/evidence for his or her judgements, conclusion and recommendations?</p> <p>In order to achieve the highest marks, the answer to all of the above questions should be yes.</p>

16.2 Coursework Advisers

Coursework Advisers will be available to assist teachers with any matters relating to coursework. Details will be provided when AQA knows which centres are following the specification.

Assessment Criteria

17.1 Introduction

In practice the marking criteria are not mutually exclusive – there are overlaps.

17.2 Criteria

Knowledge and Understanding

Research should be for a particular purpose, ie to resolve a business issue or problem.

There should be evidence of collecting research from a variety of sources. It should be well presented, with a clear use of information, to reach the highest mark band.

Little credit is given for simply collecting lots of leaflets – reference should be made to them.

It is not necessary for candidates to include every questionnaire. Furthermore, this is not the **only** form of primary research. Candidates may also make use of in-depth interviews, company reports and accounts, visits and observation.

Application

Large amounts of text simply copied from textbooks and other sources will gain little credit.

Evidence of using relevant business terms and language to address the problem or issue is required.

Justification of the use of relevant concepts is needed to reach the middle of the mark band.

To reach the higher mark bands, there must be clear evidence of selection of a range of concepts and theories, precisely linked to the problem or issue under discussion. For example, marketing elements must be linked to the candidate's own study.

ICT, wherever possible, should be used as a tool to address an issue or problem.

Selection/Organisation/ Interpretation/Analysis

There should be evidence of interpretation and analysis of information collected: questionnaire research results should attempt to explain what has been shown, reasons for the results, any limitations, etc.

Marks for answers which are simply descriptive will fall in the lower bands.

Evidence of the ability to produce a detailed, reasoned argument, with justified comments, is required to reach the highest mark band.

Well organised answers do not by themselves warrant high marks.

Candidates should be encouraged to use ICT in their research. They should be rewarded for appropriate use of information and data available on the many web sites related to these topics.

Evaluation/Judgement	<p>There should be evidence of reaching conclusions, making judgements and recommendations as a result of information/data collected. This evidence can appear anywhere in the coursework.</p> <p>To reach the highest band, candidates will be required to provide evidence of well-supported conclusions, with clearly justified recommendations. This is largely dependent on candidates having a suitable problem or issue to resolve, eg choosing a site for a business, problems associated with supermarket loyalty cards, judging the performance of a business, etc.</p> <p>Self evaluation gains little credit. This is often a problem with mini-enterprise assignments and work experience reports.</p>
Quality of Written Communication	<p>Candidates will be required to meet all the criteria for a particular mark, including the use of specialist terms. It is not sufficient simply to make few or no spelling mistakes.</p> <p>To obtain a mark of 3, a candidate should show evidence that he/she can express him/herself clearly, precisely and have a good understanding of business language/terminology.</p>

17.3 Skills and Abilities

	<p>The coursework task(s) should reflect the following range of skills and abilities, which relate to the Assessment Objectives for the specification as a whole.</p>
Knowledge and Understanding (Assessment Objective 1)	<p>Demonstration of knowledge and understanding of the specified business content <i>Maximum 8 marks</i></p>
Application (Assessment Objective 2)	<p>Application of knowledge and understanding using appropriate terms, concepts, theories and methods effectively to address problems and issues <i>Maximum 14 marks</i></p>
Selection/Organisation/ Interpretation/Analysis (Assessment Objective 3)	<p>Selection, organisation, interpretation and use of information from various sources to analyse problems and issues <i>Maximum 22 marks</i></p>
Evaluation/Judgement (Assessment Objective 4)	<p>Evaluation of evidence, making reasoned judgements and presentation of conclusions accurately and appropriately <i>Maximum 16 marks</i></p>
Quality of Written Communication	<p>Presentation of relevant information in a form that suits its purpose, ensuring text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear, and using specialist terms appropriately <i>Maximum 3 marks</i></p>

17.4 Marking the Coursework

All coursework is assessed according to the Assessment Objectives and the Coursework Marking Criteria. The coursework file/single item of work should be marked as a whole.

Notes for Marking the Coursework

The following are descriptors for each mark band.

Knowledge and Understanding (Maximum 8 marks)

This involves collecting relevant information/data and using it to resolve a business problem or issue. Sources of information should be clearly identified. Work should be presented in a variety of ways, including the use of ICT wherever possible.

0 The candidate presents no relevant knowledge/information.

1-2 Minimal information has been gathered, eg textbook information only. The candidate shows limited knowledge of **relevant** business terms.

3-5 Information has been gathered from a number of primary and secondary sources, eg textbook, company accounts, market research, interviews, observations, visits, etc. Appropriate presentation techniques are demonstrated, eg reports/graphs/videos. There is some evidence of use of information/data collected.

The candidate makes good use of relevant knowledge to answer a problem/issue, eg explaining the location of a business. To achieve the higher marks the candidate should refer to and use **relevant** factors.

6-8 Substantial research is not about quantity but quality: for example, collecting leaflets from a bank will not gain much credit. The quality of the research and **how** it is used are the key factors.

The candidate's work should be easy to follow and well presented, eg with use of an index, contents page and appendices where appropriate. Sources and presentation techniques must be clearly linked to the assignment set. Information/data/knowledge must be effectively and clearly used to resolve a business problem or issue.

Notes for Guidance

To gain marks in this section, candidates should show they know and understand the appropriate business concepts, techniques and terms in the context of the task set. Candidates following the ICT Option could demonstrate their knowledge of valid ICT techniques **as well as** showing they have the business knowledge appropriate to the problem set. Presentation techniques should also be evident, eg graphs and tables, if appropriate within the context of the task. In all coursework options, candidates should be encouraged to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through the medium of ICT.

Application
(Maximum 14 marks)

This involves using **relevant business** knowledge and understanding to address a **business** problem/issue. For example, the study of a local retailing centre should focus on a specific problem/issue. A largely descriptive piece of work will gain little credit. The study of a business's accounts should not simply involve calculations or ratios; they should be **interpreted** and their relevance explained. The use of business concepts and theories and the research carried out should be justified. A demonstration of ICT skills will by itself gain little credit.

- 0 The candidate makes no attempt to apply knowledge to the problem set.
- 1-4 There is some use of some business ideas and concepts, but the task is basically descriptive.
- 5-6 The candidate shows some selectivity in his or her use of relevant business concepts. He/she starts to use a limited range of relevant terminology/language in understanding and resolving a business problem/issue. There is only limited justification of ideas and concepts used.
- 7-9 The candidate makes good use of relevant business concepts, with some justification. He/she uses a good range of relevant terminology/language in understanding and resolving a problem/issue.
- 10-11 The candidate is clearly selective in his or her use of relevant concepts and theories. For example, a candidate might be asked to look at "Motivation at Work". To achieve a mark of 10-11 it would be necessary to show understanding of relevant theories, eg Maslow and Herzberg, use knowledge of the theories to collect relevant information, and then test the theories. The candidate shows good justification of the business concepts and theories and research he or she has used.
- 12-14 The candidate applies a wide range of relevant concepts and theories. There is **precise** use of terminology and methodology. The candidate clearly and fully justifies the business concepts and theories and research he or she has used.

Notes for Guidance

The purpose of this assessment is to allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to apply business knowledge and skills to a particular issue or problem. Candidates following the Enterprise Option might, for example, use a break-even chart or cash flow table to demonstrate the potential viability of their business opportunity. Candidates following the ICT Option might use a spreadsheet and graphics to achieve a similar result, or use a database to organise information collected from a market research questionnaire or a study of their local labour market. Candidates following the ICT Option may also show their application skills by applying their business theories and concepts to the data they have collated, using ICT techniques. Likewise, candidates following the other options should be encouraged to use ICT skills in the application of their knowledge.

Selection/Organisation/
Interpretation/Analysis
(Maximum 22 marks)

This involves selecting appropriate information/data to answer the problem or issue being studied. Information/data should be well organised. There should be interpretation and analysis of information/data collected, involving a detailed examination of the factors related to the problem or issue being studied.

- 0 The candidate makes no attempt to select, organise, interpret or analyse data.
- 1-3 There is very limited evidence of selection and organisation of relevant information/data, with little or no evidence of analysis.
- 4-7 There is some evidence of selection and organisation of relevant information/data, but limited analysis of few of the factors.
- 8-11 The candidate demonstrates clear evidence of selecting relevant information/data in an organised way. There is limited interpretation and analysis of some of the factors.
- 12-15 There is good selection of relevant information/data, with limited reasons given. The candidate gives a well organised answer to the problem/issue set. Some reasonable interpretation and analysis of a range of key factors is present. The reasons for, and justification of, comments made are limited.
- 16-18 There is very good selection of relevant information/data with good reasoning. The answer is very well organised. There is evidence of good interpretation and analysis. The candidate demonstrates good reasoning and gives justification of comments in some detail.
- 19-22 The candidate has made a well-reasoned selection of relevant information/data. Interpretation and analysis of most of the key factors are excellent. The candidate shows clear reasoning and can succinctly justify comments and explain implications to the problem/issue.

Notes for Guidance

In this section marks are gained by candidates showing how they can use the data they have collected, as they attempt to answer the problem set. Candidates following any Option must be selective about the information they have gathered, perhaps by showing its relevance to the problem. Justification should be given. They should also show organisational skills by collating the information and putting it into an appropriate format, eg graphs, charts, tables or written prose. The latter will, in order to gain the higher marks, need to contain some analysis of the data/information and candidates following the ICT Option need to interpret the results of their work, ie their database or spreadsheet. For example, those who have used a spreadsheet may use it to help analyse or examine possible implications of changes in costs or revenues. Candidates might interrogate and analyse, for example, a market research database to determine a consumer profile or to help identify the qualities of a product consumers are seeking. The demonstration of ICT skills alone will not gain many marks in this section, but appropriate application of these skills should be encouraged and rewarded.

Evaluation/Judgement (Maximum 16 marks)	<p>This involves reaching conclusions, making judgements or recommendations after weighing up relevant information/data. Possible “solutions” to the problem or issue, should be compared and contrasted.</p> <p>0 The candidate makes no attempt to draw conclusions.</p> <p>1-3 The candidate attempts to draw a few conclusions based on limited or no reasoning.</p> <p>4-5 The candidate draws simple, superficial conclusions using basic reasoning.</p> <p>6-8 The candidate makes a few supported conclusions but his or her reasoning lacks detail. Recommendations tend to be superficial. There is limited evidence of judgements/“solutions” being put forward.</p> <p>9-11 Candidate makes supported conclusions and his or her reasoning is more detailed. Recommendations are more detailed, with some justification. There is some evidence of judgements/“solutions” being put forward.</p> <p>12-14 The candidate clearly relates conclusions and judgements to the problem/issue. Recommendations are based on knowledge/data collected. There is clear evidence of judgements/“solutions” being put forward, with justification.</p> <p>15-16 Conclusions and judgements are well supported, showing critical examination of the key factors involved. Recommendations are very well justified and communicated effectively, with clear reference to information/data collected. Judgements/ “solutions” are very well justified.</p>
Notes for Guidance	<p>The purpose of this assessment is to reward the candidates for making relevant comments, drawing reasoned conclusions and making valid judgements on their data/information. This may be evident at various points within the body of the coursework or at the end in the form of a conclusion or summary. For example, candidates, following the ICT Option and carrying out market research, might have gathered their information, put it on a database and then produced graphs and/or tables. These might have been analysed individually and judgements made about the nature of the typical consumer of their product, and conclusions drawn on the most appropriate advertising medium. Alternatively, candidates might make judgements on the ICT process used in the market research itself, eg on the database and how it was constructed, commenting on the improvements they might make, with the benefit of hindsight. It is the judgement skill that is being assessed, whether in relation to the data, the analysed information or, in the case of ICT, the process used to help in the completion of the coursework task.</p>

17.5 Evidence to Support the Award of Marks

Teachers should keep records of their assessments during the course, in a form which facilitates the complete and accurate submission of the final assessments at the end of the course.

Teachers should annotate coursework using K (Knowledge and Understanding), A (Application), S (Selection, Organisation, Interpretation), E (Evaluation and Judgement). Brief comments should also be included either on the coursework or on the Candidate Record Form, in the boxes provided.

Eg, E – well supported conclusion
A – poor application.

A copy of the assignments which have been set should be forwarded to the moderator with the sample of coursework requested by AQA.

18

Supervision and Authentication

-
- 18.1 Supervision of Candidates' Work** Candidates' work for assessment must be undertaken under conditions which allow the teacher to supervise the work and enable the work to be authenticated. If it is necessary for some assessed work to be done outside the centre, sufficient work must take place under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate each candidate's whole work with confidence.
-
- 18.2 Guidance by the Teacher** The work assessed must be solely that of the candidate concerned. Any assistance given to an individual candidate which is beyond that given to the group as a whole must be recorded on the Candidate Record Form.
-
- 18.3 Unfair Practice** At the start of the course, the supervising teacher is responsible for informing candidates of the AQA Regulations concerning malpractice. Candidates must not take part in any unfair practice in the preparation of coursework to be submitted for assessment, and must understand that to present material copied directly from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be regarded as deliberate deception. Centres must report suspected malpractice to AQA. The penalties for malpractice are set out in the AQA Regulations.
-
- 18.4 Authentication of Candidates' Work** Both the candidate and the teacher are required to sign declarations confirming that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own. The teacher declares that the work was conducted under the specified conditions, and records details of any additional assistance.

Standardisation

19.1 Standardising Meetings

Annual standardising meetings will usually be held in the autumn term. Centres entering candidates for the first time **must** send a representative to the meetings. Attendance is also mandatory in the following cases:

where there has been a serious misinterpretation of the specification requirements;

where the nature of coursework tasks set by a centre has been inappropriate;

where a significant adjustment has been made to a centre's marks in the previous year's examination.

After the first year, attendance is at the discretion of centres. At these meetings support will be provided for centres in the development of appropriate coursework tasks and assessment procedures.

19.2 Internal Standardisation of Marking

The centre is required to standardise the assessments across different teachers and teaching groups to ensure that all candidates at the centre have been judged against the same standards. If two or more teachers are involved in marking a component, one teacher must be designated as responsible for internal standardisation. Common pieces of work must be marked on a trial basis and differences between assessments discussed at a training session in which all teachers involved must participate. The teacher responsible for standardising the marking must ensure that the training includes the use of reference and archive materials such as work from a previous year or examples provided by AQA. The centre is required to send to the moderator the Centre Declaration Sheet, duly signed, to confirm that the marking of centre-assessed work at the centre has been standardised. If only one teacher has undertaken the marking, that person must sign this form.

20

Administrative Procedures**20.1 Recording Assessments**

The candidates' work must be marked according to the assessment criteria set out in Section 17.4. The marks and supporting information must be recorded in accordance with the instructions in Section 17.5. The completed Candidate Record Form for each candidate must be attached to the work and made available to AQA on request.

20.2 Submitting Marks and Sample Work for Moderation

The total component mark for each candidate must be submitted to AQA on the mark sheets provided or by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) by the specified date. Centres will be informed which candidates' work is required in the samples to be submitted to the moderator.

20.3 Factors Affecting Individual Candidates

Teachers should be able to accommodate the occasional absence of candidates by ensuring that the opportunity is given for them to make up missed assessments.

Special consideration should be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances. Information about the procedure is issued separately.

If work is lost, AQA should be notified immediately of the date of the loss, how it occurred, and who was responsible for the loss. AQA will advise on the procedures to be followed in such cases.

Where special help which goes beyond normal learning support is given, AQA must be informed so that such help can be taken into account when assessment and moderation take place.

Candidates who move from one centre to another during the course sometimes present a problem for a scheme of internal assessment. Possible courses of action depend on the stage at which the move takes place. If the move occurs early in the course the new centre should take responsibility for assessment. If it occurs late in the course it may be possible to accept the assessments made at the previous centre. Centres should contact AQA at the earliest possible stage for advice about appropriate arrangements in individual cases.

20.4 Retaining Evidence and Re-using Marks

The centre must retain the work of all candidates, with Candidate Record Form attached, under secure conditions, from the time it is assessed, to allow for the possibility of an enquiry upon results. The work may be returned to candidates after the issue of results provided that no enquiry upon result is to be made which will include re-moderation of the coursework component. If an enquiry upon result is to be made, the work must remain under secure conditions until requested by AQA.

Candidates re-taking the examination may carry forward their moderated coursework marks. These marks have a shelf-life which is limited only by the shelf-life of the specification, and they may be carried forward an unlimited number of times within this shelf-life.

Moderation

21.1 Moderation Procedures

Moderation of the coursework is by inspection of a sample of candidates' work, sent by post from the centre to a moderator appointed by AQA. The centre marks must be submitted to AQA and the sample of work must reach the moderator by the specified date in the year in which the qualification is awarded.

Following the re-marking of the sample work, the moderator's marks are compared with the centre marks to determine whether any adjustment is needed in order to bring the centre's assessments into line with standards generally. In some cases it may be necessary for the moderator to call for the work of other candidates. In order to meet this possible request, centres must have available the coursework and Candidate Record Form of every candidate entered for the examination and be prepared to submit it on demand. Mark adjustments will normally preserve the centre's order of merit, but where major discrepancies are found, AQA reserves the right to alter the order or merit.

21.2 Post-Moderation Procedures

On publication of the GCSE results, the centre is supplied with details of the final marks for the coursework component.

The candidates' work is returned to the centre after the examination with a report form from the moderator giving feedback to the centre on the appropriateness of the tasks set, the accuracy of the assessments made, and the reasons for any adjustments to the marks.

Some candidates' work may be retained by AQA for archive purposes.

Awarding and Reporting

22

Grading, Shelf-Life and Re-Sits

22.1 Qualification Titles	The qualification based on this specification has the following title: AQA GCSE in Business Studies (Specification A).
22.2 Grading System	<p>The qualification will be graded on an 8-point grade scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.</p> <p>Candidates must be entered for either the Foundation Tier or Higher Tier. For candidates entered for the Foundation Tier, grades C–G are available. For candidates entered for the Higher Tier A*–D are available. There is a safety net for candidates entered for the Higher Tier, where an allowed Grade E will be awarded where candidates just fail to achieve Grade D. Candidates who fail to achieve a Grade E on the Higher Tier or Grade G on the Foundation Tier will be reported as unclassified.</p>
22.3 Re-Sits	Individual components may not be retaken but candidates may retake the whole qualification more than once.
22.4 Minimum Requirements	Candidates will be graded on the basis of work submitted for assessment.
22.5 Carrying Forward of Centre-Assessed Marks	Candidates re-taking the examination may carry forward their moderated coursework marks. These marks have a shelf-life which is limited only by the shelf-life of the specification, and they may be carried forward an unlimited number of times within this shelf-life.
22.6 Awarding and Reporting	This specification complies with the grading, awarding and certification requirements of the current GCSE, GCE, and AEA Code of Practice April 2008 and will be revised in the light of any subsequent changes for future years.

Appendices

A

Grade Descriptions

The following grade descriptors indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the given grade at GCSE. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at each specific grade. The descriptors should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives (as in Section 6) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

- Grade A** Candidates demonstrate in-depth knowledge and critical understanding of the full range of specification content. They apply this knowledge and critical understanding, using terms, concepts, theories and methods effectively to address problems and issues. They select and organise information from a wide variety of sources and interpret and use this information effectively to analyse problems and issues with a high degree of accuracy. They also evaluate evidence effectively, making reasoned judgements and presenting conclusions accurately and appropriately.
- Grade C** Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of most aspects of the specification content. They apply this knowledge and understanding, using terms, concepts, theories and methods appropriately to address problems and issues. They select, organise, interpret and use information from a variety of sources to analyse problems and issues with some accuracy. They also make reasoned judgements and present conclusions that are supported by evidence.
- Grade F** Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of some aspects of the specification content. They begin to apply this knowledge and understanding, using some terms, concepts, theories and methods to address problems and issues. They show some ability to select, organise, interpret and use simple information from a variety of sources to analyse problems and issues. They also make judgements and present simple conclusions that are sometimes supported by evidence.

B

Record Forms

Centre Declaration Sheets and Candidate Record Forms are available on the AQA website in the Administration area. They can be accessed via the following link http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_course.php

C

Overlaps with other Qualifications

Some of the Subject Content of this specification can be found in other AQA GCSEs. To enable some co-teaching, this appendix outlines Subject Content areas which match. However, credit cannot be transferred between the GCSE examinations. No marks or grades relating to the assessment of completed units can be transferred.

Link with AQA GCSE Business and Communication Systems

Section 11: Human Resources

Section 12	People In Organisations (remuneration, training)
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Link with AQA GCSE Economics

Section 10: Basic Economic Problems and Decisions

Section 9	The Business Environment (opportunity cost, specialisation)
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Section 12: Business Behaviour

Section 10	Business Structure, Control and Organisation (objectives of business, business performance)
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