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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2021

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In Business (9BS0)

Paper 1: Marketing, people and global businesses

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### **Question 1(a):**

Some candidates achieved 4 marks, but some lower marks were awarded where candidates had attempted various additional calculations. A sizeable number attempted to calculate percentage change, which was not expected from the question. These types of questions require candidates to read the data from a graph and then complete calculations based on this – at least a two-stage approach.

Examiners' tip: be sure to read the title of graphs and the labels of each axis. This should help candidates to be clear about what the information is showing and the likely future demands of any follow-up calculations.

### **Question 1(b):**

This question required candidates to show a clear understanding of added value. Most didn't give a clear definition of thought, some gained credit by identifying a way Bon Bon do it, for example, through its packaging. There were a limited number of candidates who achieve the 4<sup>th</sup> mark for analysing the way added value was achieved.

Examiners' tip: with 4-mark analysis questions, try to explain the how and/or why the concept is the case. In this case, how is it that packaging, for example, adds value to the Bon Bon product?

### **Question 1(c):**

This question required candidates to assess the trade-offs Bon Bon's might face if not having 'mass market ambition'. While the advantages and disadvantages of mass marketing strategies were often analysed by candidates, most responses didn't show a full understanding of the trade off in this question. In this case, a discussion about what is potentially given up by Bon Bons is a means of accessing higher marks.

Examiners' tip: spend a few moments being clear about what the question is asking you to do. For example, what is the command word and how many marks is it worth? Also, make sure that you are fully aware of all key business terms in the question, and include these in your response in order to maximise your chances of gaining high marks.

### **Question 1(d):**

Some good candidate responses to this question. However, many were most focused on the negative consequences, so answers were one sided and therefore not able to access the higher-level marks.

Examiners' tip: remember that consequences (and also impacts) can be both positive and negative for a business. Questions of 12 marks, as this one is, will require you to answer both sides of the argument, so that you can produce balanced, and well-applied response.

### **Question 1(e):**

Again, with this question we saw some good answers. The best ones compared and contrasted these two approaches and showed a clear understanding of Bon Bon's current reasons for success. Answers that did less well didn't always fully balance their responses, with some focused more on one method or the advantages only of either B2B or B2C. Some answers lacked a good conclusion to really lift the quality of the response.

Examiners' tip: it is important to remember the 'recommend' aspect of the question for these 20-mark responses. Candidates should aim to make a detailed recommendation based on their evaluation of the two options. Candidates should avoid a summary conclusion.

### **Question 2(a):**

This question was completed to a higher standard than 1a, a question that also featured quantitative data. There were more correct answers and candidates mainly understood the calculation method. However, there were errors and marks were lower due to incorrect applying (selected the wrong data from the extract) rather than not knowing how to calculate the percentage growth.

Examiners' tip: as mentioned earlier, take a few moments to be clear about the title of the data, the labels of each axis and any trends in the data presented. Try to be clear about which aspects of the data are being tested in the question and try to select the data accurately.

### **Question 2(b):**

Candidates showed a good understanding of Ansoff's matrix and its possible application to international expansion of businesses. Where answers could be improved, this was due to weak or missing application to the extract.

Examiners' tip: to gain application marks, particularly with shorter answer questions, use examples from the extract to support your answer. In this case pick examples of products that have been used by Taco Bell as part of its Brazilian expansion.

### **Question 2(c):**

On the basis of candidates' responses, this question seemed to be the most challenging on the paper. There were a number of blank responses for this question and also the most incorrect answers. Some candidates incorrectly interpreted the exchange rate change and therefore could not analyse the impact on Tropicana's costs correctly.

Examiners' tip: remember the 'SPICED' (Strong Pound Imports Cheap, Exports Dear) acronym to help identify the effect of exchange rate changes. Even, as in this question, the currency is not the Pound, you can substitute the currency in question to identify the impact on importers and exporters.

### **Question 2(d):**

This was probably the question that had the highest proportion of strong candidate responses. The best answers drew on the examples from the extracts, of what the Brazilian governments and other stakeholders have been doing to influence the actions of Multinational Organisations

Examiners' tip: for a 12-mark question, aim for a conclusion of a few sentences only, but one which attempts to answer the question, using the extracts to support your judgement. In this case: are legal controls the best way of controlling Multinational Corporations or not?

### **Question 2 (e):**

Candidate success, or otherwise largely depended on them using the correct definitions of ethnocentric and geocentric marketing strategies. Some students mixed up the two methods, which limited their marks, even though in many cases answers developed contextual chains of reasoning. Again, in all cases there was a good use of the context to support candidates' responses.

Examiners' tip: There is not a prescribed expectation in terms of the numbers of points to be made in good answers. The emphasis is very much on applied, thorough and developed, chains of reasoning. The best answers take evidence from multiple extracts, link this to the specification content and the specifics of the question. So, in this example the question was asking the best way for Taco Bell to increase its sales: what features of Taco Bell products and/or the Brazilian fast-food market mean that an ethnocentric or polycentric approach is most suitable approach to adapt to achieve increased sales?

## **Paper Summary:**

Based on the exemplars that have been seen by the Principal Examiner, centres and candidates are offered the following advice:

- Learn the key terms in the specification. This could account for as much as 10% of the marks available on the paper.
- Learn the formulae in the specification and set out 'calculate' questions clearly. Across 9BS01, 9BS02 and 9BS03 at least 10% of the marks available must be quantitative based.
- In 'explain how' questions recognise that 2 of the 4 marks available are for 'application' or 'AO2'.
- If a question requires students to 'assess the consequences', the command word requires balance to achieve the top marks. In other words, are the consequences always negative? What does this depend on?

