

NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Business & Enterprise (601/0048/5)

Assessment date: 5 – 16 November 2020

Paper Number: P001092

This report contains information in relation to the external assessment from the Chief Examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment window.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally perform well as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- grading information
- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- evidence creation
- interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria
- planning in the external assessment.

It is important to note that learners should not sit the external assessment until they have taken part in the relevant teaching of the full qualification content.

Administering the External Assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment. Learners may require additional pre-release material in order to complete the Tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our Regulations.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the Tasks and these are highlighted within the Qualification Specific Instructions Document (QSID).

Standard of learner work

This assessment used a case study from which the questions were based. At Level 2, learners must be able to apply their knowledge, thus demonstrating an understanding of the assessment criteria. Learners must be able to demonstrate skills such as: describe, explain, evaluate and compare as per the assessment criteria.

Evidence of good practice:

There were good examples of learner responses, demonstrating that learners are working at the correct level and are well prepared for the assessment, showing effective teaching and learning and clear knowledge of the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Business and Enterprise (601/0048/5) qualification specification.

The majority of learners are working at the correct level and nearly all are attempting every question. Where learners are attempting every question, many are accessing higher grades such as Merit or Distinction on individual assessment criterion.

Areas for improvement:

- Learners should answer all tasks. The first part of each task **MUST** be answered as this targets the Pass criteria for each assessment criterion. Failure to do this will result in a NYA. There were a small number of instances where candidates did not attempt each task and therefore a NYA had to be awarded.
- Answers for Paper 2 must show application to the case study, except for the questions relating to Assessment Criteria 3.2.
- Learners need to read all questions carefully and be aware of the different command words, e.g. identify, describe, explain, and the demands of each of these.
- Where responses are word processed, the centre must ensure that all sheets are printed and returned to NCFE. Any missing pages may result in a NYA grade.
- Where responses are word processed the learner must also ensure they make it clear to which question each answer relates.
- Where responses are word processed the learner must also ensure they have provided answers to all the tasks as the omission of one task will result in the award of a NYA grade.
- There were a small number of weak responses highlighting that some learners may not be working at the right level or are under prepared for the external assessment. Where this is the case learners are not answering all questions or are answering incorrectly, showing little or no understanding of the requirements of the question.
- In a small number of cases learners are writing far more than is required, with an apparent focus on quantity over quality. These extended responses did not always meet the assessment criteria and therefore did not improve the grades awarded. Learners should consider the space provided in the question paper. If additional sheets are included, they must clearly state to which questions(s) they refer.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment

Malpractice

There were no issues of malpractice raised this assessment window.

Maladministration

There have been no maladministration issues raised this window, however it is imperative that centres and learners continue to adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment, to ensure the integrity of the qualification and that maladministration does not take place

Referencing of external assessment tasks

The assessment criterion are clearly visible for each task and learners must be encouraged to refer to the assessment criteria and grading descriptors throughout the assessment, to ensure their answer fully meets this. The paper has been designed to incorporate some higher-level questions, learners hoping to achieve Merit and Distinction grades must attempt all questions and refer to the grading criteria. The first question of each task targets the Pass criteria and therefore must be answered.

Evidence creation

Learners should use the answer booklet, using the space provided, to answer questions. Where answers are typed or additional pages included, learners must ensure any extra paper is labelled clearly with their name, centre number, learner number and the task to which the evidence relates. Where any additional pages are included, they must be securely attached to the external assessment paper.

Responses of the Tasks within the Sections of the external assessment papers

Paper 1

AC 1.1 - The majority of learners were well prepared for tasks 1a and 1b which require a description of 3 aspects of marketing from the 4 provided - Mass, Niche, Product and Market Orientated Marketing. A learner must describe 3 aspects correctly to gain a Pass for this AC. The standard of responses continues to improve with only a minority of learners now having a NYA. The most common errors were those made in previous sessions and include:

- Confusing product orientated and market orientated marketing
- Confusing market orientated and niche marketing

One problem continues as some learners still provide what are “pass limiting” answer to “niche marketing as they suggest it is a “smaller” market rather than a “small market”. There were also a small number of learners that described a mass market as a “larger market” rather than a large market. Should a learner describe a 4th aspect this will not be marked or accredited

Where learners are aiming for a Distinction grade they must ensure they provide valid advantages and disadvantages rather than an extended definition of the aspect e.g. learners should make it clear why this is an advantage/disadvantage and avoid generalisations such as “mass marketing guarantees high sales / high profits”.

AC 1.2 - The majority of learners achieved at least a Pass on the criterion but only a small percentage achieved a Distinction. Learners needed to explain 3 reasons why a business needs marketing and how these benefit the business. At least 2 correct reasons are required for a Pass and to achieve a Merit the benefits to the business from these reasons must be explained. The most common error is repetition, where learners ascribe the same benefit to more than one reason – quite often the benefit suggested is “this will increase sales”. This benefit can only be awarded once.

Learners aiming for a Distinction need to explain what might happen if marketing goes wrong. Learners that achieved a Distinction either used a real life example to explain this or were quite definitive in asserting what it was that went wrong e.g. the wrong pricing strategy was used or the wrong advertising medium was used for their chosen target market. Weaker answers, that did not meet the criteria for a Distinction, tended to be answers that were quite general in nature and did not specifically identify what it was that actually went wrong with an aspect of marketing. Learners are provided with the opportunity to provide 2 answers to this question but only one must meet the Distinction criterion for a Distinction grade to be awarded

Paper 2

AC 2.1 - A number of target markets were present in this case study and most learners were able to identify the three needed to achieve the Pass for this assessment criterion e.g. hikers/campers, homeowners, medical professionals, building workers. A minority of learners did not achieve a Pass on this criterion as they named products rather than target markets e.g. the Outdoor Torch, the Home Torch. For the Merit criterion many learners were able to identify from the case study how Najma knew that the target markets she chose were suitable for her business e.g. hikers/campers were prepared to pay a high price; the Home Torch was a very profitable product.

AC 2.2- The majority of learners clearly identified the needs of two of Najma's target markets such as homeowners wanted a variety of sizes, hikers wanted a waterproof torch, medical professionals wanted a torch that could be easily wiped clean and building workers wanted a hardwearing torch. Many learners were also able to compare the needs of two target markets, indicating where the needs were similar and where they were different in order to achieve a Merit grade e.g. homeowners and hikers both wanted torches in a variety of sizes; hikers and building workers both wanted a torch that was waterproof; homeowners wanted a torch with rechargeable batteries but medical professionals did not need a torch with rechargeable batteries. Only a small number of learners had an NYA grade on this criterion and this was usually learners that also had an NYA on 2.1 – they also described products in AC 2.2 rather than the needs of two different target markets.

AC 2.3 - The majority of learners achieved at least a Pass on this criterion. It is now quite rare for a learner to confuse primary and secondary methods of market research used by the business in the case study. The number of learners achieving a Merit has also increased as learners appear to be well prepared in terms of explaining an advantage and disadvantage of the two methods of market research chosen. The overwhelming majority chose primary and secondary as their chosen methods with a very small percentage choosing qualitative and quantitative. A small number of learners described the same method twice e.g. they chose primary for both answers - this resulted in an NYA grade for this AC. Candidates must make use of the case study for their answers – answers that do not will not meet the requirements for a Pass grade.

To achieve a Distinction grade, learners needed to suggest two improvements Najma could make to improve her market research. Both improvements need to be at this level for a Distinction grade to be awarded. Some learners suggested an improvement but did not suggest for which product this should be used which is not sufficient if a Distinction grade is to be awarded. Occasionally a learner's suggestion was about marketing rather than market research and therefore could not be credited. Some of the rewardable answers suggested interviewing a greater number of workers from building sites, and the use of incentives to encourage more customers who purchased the Home Torch to return the questionnaires. Candidates that then explained how this additional data would benefit the business met

the Distinction grade criteria.

AC 3.1 - The majority of learners achieved at least a pass on this AC. They were able to explain in some detail the 4ps of the marketing mix for the Build Torch. Very few learners explained the marketing mix for one of Najma's other products e.g. the Home Torch. A small number of learners provided explanations of the 4ps's without any references to the case study and such answers are not sufficient for the award of a Pass grade.

Learners who achieved a Merit were able to explain Najma's marketing mix for the Build Torch in sufficient detail to demonstrate they could identify key features from across the 4ps of the mix. Learners aiming for a Distinction for this AC are required to correctly answer questions 4b and 4c. In this examination they needed to explain in which stages of the product life cycle should the Build Torch and the Medi Torch be placed – the correct answers were the growth stage for the Medi Torch and the decline stage for the Build Torch. Learners that achieved a Distinction grade needed to explain the reasons for these choices of life cycle stages for both products. Some candidates included detail from the case study that was essentially irrelevant which suggested that their answers lacked perception. The more perceptive answers included information such as: “for the Medi Torch sales were increasing at a faster rate than in the introductory stage ; sales increased by 400% in 4 weeks (after a best buy review in a medical journal); Najma expects sales continue to rise rapidly; the only UK competitor went bankrupt, so sales are likely to continue to increase”. “For the Build Torch sales were falling steadily and despite a 5% discount offered for a month, sales continue to fall. There is no indication that this is likely to change”.

AC 3.2 - Most learners were able to explain at least one positive and / or negative impact of social media and the internet for promotion to achieve at least a Pass on this assessment criterion. To achieve a Merit grade for this assessment criterion, learners need to compare the use of social media and the internet for promotion with traditional methods of promotion. This must be more than a simple statement e.g. it is not sufficient to simply suggest that advertising on social media is cheaper than advertising on TV – a learner would need to go into some detail e.g. for TV the advertisement needs to be created which can be expensive and then they need to pay TV companies to broadcast each time it is shown. Learners that use the umbrella term “traditional methods” and do not name the traditional methods they are using for the comparison such as television, leaflets etc. cannot achieve a Merit.

When discussing the negative consequences that can arise from the use of social media and the internet for promotion some learners are still incorrectly suggesting that social media and the internet are only used by the younger generations. They then often suggest that if the product is targeted at “older people” then as they are not users of the social media they will therefore not be reached. This is incorrect. Similarly suggesting “a poor choice of image” as a fundamental weakness of social media is insufficient as the same point could be made of any advertising medium.

AC 4.1 - Many learners were able to explain what went well and what did not go well for Najma's use of the Price and Promotion elements of the marketing mix and thus were able to achieve a Pass for this assessment criterion. To achieve this AC it is important that learners explain the impact on the business. E.g. Promotion: A pass answer might read “for the Out Torch a voucher was placed in hiking and camping magazines but only 1% of customers using the voucher and so this did not stimulate sales”. If a learner only wrote “the voucher in hiking and camping magazines did not go well” then this would not contribute towards a Pass grade as no impact has been stated on the business.

E.g. Price: A pass answer might read “for the Out Torch the use of cost-plus pricing ensures a profit is made on each torch sold.”

However, if a learner only wrote “the use of cost-plus pricing for the Out Torch went well” then this would not contribute towards a pass grade as no impact has been stated on the business.

To achieve a Merit grade, learners needed to suggest two realistic improvements Najma could make to her marketing mix and give reasons for the suggestions. Some learners however suggested things that lacked validity e.g. Najma should open a shop – given the breadth of Najma’s product range opening a shop would be unlikely to be profitable. Similarly, learners who suggested a use of social media, but did not name the social medium being suggested such as Instagram, were not rewarded. This has been stated in previous Chief Examiner reports but is still a quite common error in answers produced by learners. If learners suggest using a different pricing strategy, then the product for which this is being suggested must be named and needs to be an appropriate strategy for that product. Simply suggesting charge a higher or lower price is insufficient.

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