

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

Assessment window: 1 February – 14 February 2017

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:

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

It's important to note that learners shouldn't be entered for the external assessment until they've taken part in the relevant teaching of the unit.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment must be independent from the teaching of the unit. Work completed during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Learners must complete all tasks independently.

The completion of the timed tasks must be invigilated and sat in accordance with the [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs](#)

It's also important that the external assessment is sat in accordance with the specified conditions outlined on the assessment paper.

No problems have been identified with the administration of the external assessments in this window and most learners have taken the allocated 5 hours to complete the assessment. Very few learners have submitted an incomplete assessment therefore the 5 hour duration period appears to be suitable.

Standard of learner work

There have been some great assessments submitted this window. Most learners have responded well to the paper and have interpreted the questions correctly.

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:

- Most learners appear to be working at the right level and are well prepared for the assessment, demonstrating effective teaching and learning at this level and clear knowledge of the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Business and Enterprise (601/0048/5) qualification specification.
- Most learners are attempting every question and higher performing learners are using the grading descriptors to help them achieve the higher grades.

Areas for improvement:

- Learners must answer all questions. Failure to do this will result in a Not Yet Achieved (NYA).
- All answers for Paper 2 must show application to the case study. Generic responses will not be awarded.
- Learners must read the question.
- There have been some weaker responses highlighting that some learners may not be working at the right level or are under prepared for the external assessment.
- There are some instances where learners have been incorrectly taught. For example some learners are incorrectly describing the different aspects of marketing (Mass, Niche, Product Orientated and Market Orientated Marketing).
- In some cases learners are writing far more than is required, with an apparent focus on quantity over quality. In many cases the extended responses did not meet the assessment criteria and therefore did not improve the grades awarded, due to lack of application to the case study.
- Some learners are focusing their answers on the Distinction element of the task before ensuring that they first cover the Pass and Merit criteria.
- Where critical judgement is required this has sometimes been written in the form of advantages and disadvantages, which were nearly always generic and not linked back to the case study. To demonstrate critical judgement learners must be able to **apply** their knowledge.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment- V Certs

Malpractice

Unfortunately there have been some malpractice issues raised this window which have been investigated. These have included changes of handwriting in learner responses, and identical learner responses. It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs, to ensure the integrity of the qualification and to ensure that malpractice does not take place.

Maladministration

Unfortunately there have been some maladministration issues raised this window which have been investigated. These have included evidence of teacher support in the form of 'crib sheets'.

It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs to ensure the integrity of the qualification and to ensure that maladministration does not take place.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

The assessment criteria 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 meets them. This is especially important for learners hoping to achieve Merit and Distinction grades.

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 the evidence relates to, and is securely attached to the external assessment paper.

Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

AC 1.1

The responses for this assessment criterion (AC) this window have varied significantly. There have been a number of great responses where learners are providing very detailed answers to describe 3 of the 4 aspects. Higher-level learners are providing examples to support their descriptions and some of the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen aspects.

Although it is great to have detailed answers (and this is not to be discouraged), some learners are writing too much. The space provided in the paper indicates the level of detail required. Learners aiming for higher grades should provide a correct definition of 3 of the 4 aspects, a correct example and correct advantage and disadvantage for each aspect, demonstrating detailed understanding.

There have also been some weak responses, indicating that learners have not been taught the 4 aspects correctly. Some of the descriptions have been weak or incorrect, as are the examples and advantages and disadvantages used.

Some learners are also confusing Market Orientated and Product Orientated Marketing.

It is important to note that learners must describe all 3 correctly in order to gain a Pass for this AC. Learners can choose 3 from Mass, Niche, Product and Market Orientated Marketing.

AC 1.2

Most learners have answered this question well, demonstrating their awareness of the importance of marketing. To achieve this assessment criterion, learners must give at least 2 correct reasons to **explain** the importance of marketing. Learners aiming for higher grades must be able to justify their reasons. Most learners were able to identify the benefits, however their explanation of such benefits lacked further understanding, required for the Merit criteria.

Some learners wrote a lot about why businesses need market research rather than why businesses need marketing.

Learners should be taught the benefits of marketing and the impacts that successful marketing can have on a business and/or enterprise. For higher grades learners should be aware of some different successful marketing strategies/campaigns and be able to provide examples. They should also be aware and be able to give examples of marketing strategies/campaigns that have been unsuccessful or have not met the needs of the business.

AC 2.1

A range of target markets were discussed in this case study and most learners were able to **identify** a minimum of 4 and therefore achieved a Pass for this assessment criterion.

More learners this window have been able to identify from the case study how Janet knows that the target markets identified are suitable for her business, as required for the Merit criteria. For example, Janet knows that local people who want a beginners' course in chalk paint are a suitable target market for her business, as this is her most popular course.

Learners who did not achieve this assessment criterion are unaware of target markets and were unable to identify a minimum of 4 target markets from the case study. Target markets must be identified from the case study. No credit will be awarded for target markets not taken from the case study.

Some learners are also overcomplicating this question and discussing target markets in relation to demographic, psychographic or geographic factors. This is not in the qualification specification and no extra credit is awarded for this, and in some instances this is working against the learners.

AC 2.2

Many learners are still showing weak comparison skills. Learners must understand how to make a comparison.

In some instances where good comparison skills have been demonstrated learners are comparing the products and services offered by Janet, and not the needs of the target markets, resulting in an NYA.

To achieve this assessment criterion, learners must be able to show how the needs of one target market differ to the needs of another. For example, how do the needs of the advanced learners compare to the needs of the beginner learners? How do the needs of learners attending the course in person compare to the needs of learners completing the course online?

Learners who have achieved this assessment criterion have been able to identify 1 or 2 differences between the **needs of the target markets**. Learners who have gained a Merit have developed their answer further to show a greater understanding of how their needs differ and therefore have demonstrated greater comparison skills.

AC 2.3

Most learners have been able to **describe** some of the primary and secondary research methods used by The Repainted Chair. It is important that learners make it clear in their answer which methods are primary and which are secondary.

Many have also demonstrated some understanding of quantitative and qualitative data, however they must be able to apply this knowledge to the case study to show an awareness of how this has been collected by The Repainted Chair, again making it clear which research methods have collected quantitative data and which have collected qualitative data.

Higher-level learners were also able to show **critical understanding** by evaluating the effectiveness of these methods by discussing some of the advantages and disadvantages of primary and secondary research and quantitative and qualitative data for The Repainted Chair. Some learners are also identifying areas where The Repainted Chair can improve their market research.

Many advantages and disadvantages have, however, been generic. To show critical understanding learners must apply their knowledge to the case study.

AC 3.1

Most learners were able to **identify** the 4Ps from the case study, however lots of information was simply copied from the case study.

The case study allowed many opportunities for learners to discuss the product life cycle, to discuss the Boston Matrix and make perceptive comments on pricing etc, however some learners did not do this. Ensuring the full range in the qualification specification is taught will help learners to do this.

Learners must also be able to apply their knowledge to the case study. Learners that simply define the 4Ps with no application will result in an NYA.

The presentation of this answer could have also been vastly improved by defining each of the 4Ps. Learners could then take one product/service and explain its marketing mix and then another etc. For example, learners could have discussed the marketing mix of the course, and then subsequently the marketing mix of the furniture and/or accessories sold.

AC 3.2

For this assessment criterion learners are required to **explain** the impact that social media and the Internet has on the **promotion** of The Repainted Chair. They may give examples of positive and/or negative impacts, but their responses must be in relation to The Repainted Chair and promotion.

Credit will not be awarded for answers that discuss how social media and the Internet can be used for market research or that simply describe social media.

Some learners discussed some advantages and disadvantages of social media in general, with no application to the case study and therefore achieved an NYA for this assessment criterion.

To achieve a Merit grade for this assessment criterion, learners need to compare The Repainted Chair's use of social media and the Internet with their use of traditional methods. Some learners failed to do this successfully, resulting in a Pass for this assessment criterion, despite having very good answers discussing the impacts.

AC 4.1

Many learners achieved a Pass for this assessment criterion as they were able to evaluate both the market research and the marketing mix used by The Repainted Chair. They have been able to state how effective these have been, their strengths and their weaknesses etc.

Some learners did not answer this question well and struggled to make evaluative comments, these learners simply repeated what was stated in the case study without making a judgment in terms of how effective these methods had been.

Some learners also confused market research and the marketing mix and only discussed one, despite both sections being complete. An NYA will be awarded if only one is evaluated.

Learners who achieved the higher grades expanded on their answer to make **critical judgments** about the success or failure of the marketing methods. They were able to suggest improvements that could be made to the market research **and** the marketing mix, and support their recommendations. Learners achieving higher grades were able to support their recommendations with examples of other businesses that have used these methods successfully. Some learners struggled to make valid references to real world businesses.

Weaker learners only stated 'where' the improvement could be made, eg 'the promotion could be improved', rather than offering a recommendation. Where this was done these learners were unable to achieve the Merit criteria.

Planning in the external assessment

Centres are reminded to give due attention to the assessment windows of the external assessment. It's not advisable for learners to sit the external assessment too early in their course, as they must have the relevant teaching to ensure they are well prepared.

Centres must also ensure that their learners are working to a Level 2 standard. Centres are reminded that they "are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of their learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfil the requirements of the assessment criteria of this qualification", as per the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Business and Enterprise (601/0048/5) qualification specification issue 6, October 2016, page 7.

Chief Examiner: Kelly Graham

Date: April 17