Assessment explained

Explain

Explain' questions will only be found in Section A of both examinations and there will be six of them per exam paper equating to 36 marks out of the total of 180 marks across both exam papers. In the new specification, candidates will be expected to state **one** method/disadvantage/advantage/impact etc. and then provide two linked strands of development. Since these questions appear in Section A there is no requirement to provide context. We believe that this makes the command word of 'Explain' much more straightforward compared to the old spec since candidates do not need to worry about whether the 'Explain' question requires contextualisation or not. This is reinforced by the fact that this style of questioning will only ever refer to the generic term - 'business'.

Candidates who state **more than one** method/advantage/drawback etc. need to know that their answer will only be marked on the basis of their best developed response. Thus, use of the word **'also'** should be avoided, since this suggests that the candidate is going to provide more than one impact/disadvantage/benefit etc.

'Explain' questions: Mark Scheme - The mark scheme highlights the need for linked strands of development using linking words/phrases such as 'because', 'thus', 'therefore' and 'as a result of'. Candidates need to provide two linked strands after their initial statement of an impact/drawback/benefit etc. if they want to score 3 marks.

Explain one benefit to a business of or from X

Explain one drawback to a business

Explain one advantage to a business of

Explain one disadvantage to a business of

Explain one impact X may have on a business

Explain one impact on a small business of X

Explain one risk to a business from X

Explain one reason why a business may

Explain one way an entrepreneur might

Explain one way in which

Explain one possible objective of

Discuss

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	• Demonstrates elements of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues, with limited business terminology used (AO1b). • Attempts to deconstruct business information and/or issues, finding limited connections between points (AO3a).
Level 2	3–4	• Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues, including appropriate use of business terminology in places (AO1b). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding interconnected points with chains of reasoning, although there may be some logical inconsistencies (AO3a).
Level 3	5–6	• Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues throughout, including appropriate use of business terminology (AO1b). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding detailed interconnected points with logical chains of reasoning (AO3a).

- The final question in Section A

- a non-contextualised 'Discuss' question

- does not require any evaluation

  since the command word is designed to test 'understanding' and 'analysis' i.e. AO1b and AO3 respectively.

- 'Discuss' signals an extended 'Explain' question

  This question should be treated as if it were an extended 'Explain' question.

- 'Discuss' **has a different meaning to the current specification where an element of evaluation is required. This is an important difference to the current legacy specification.**

'Discuss' questions: Mark Scheme - This mark scheme is designed to assess the quality of 'Understanding' (AO1b) and 'Analysis' (AO3a) within a candidate's response. Within each level descriptor there are two bullet points, with the first bullet point relating to the quality of understanding and the second bullet point relating to the quality of the analysis.

This structure is also reflected in the 'Indicative Content' section where the first bullet point demonstrates an example of 'understanding' which is then developed by the third bullet point which highlights potential options for 'Analysis'.

Examiners will use this mark scheme to assess the quality of the candidates 'Understanding' separately to their powers of 'Analysis'. So, for the purpose of an example, if a candidate manages to reach Level 3 for understanding but only Level 1 for 'Analysis' the candidate would receive an overall mark in level 2 using a line of best fit approach. This example is obviously very unrealistic but it does demonstrate how the levels of response mark schemes will be used to assess each assessment objective independently. In order to better understand how to use the level descriptor for 'Analysis', it is worth pointing out that to reach level 2 candidates must generate at least two accurate linked strands of development and to reach level 3 at least five accurate linked strands of development must be in evidence. To see how this works in practise let's consider our first exemplar.

Discuss the impact of X on a business
- Impact could be singular or plural
- Best to do one impact or two impacts

Discuss the effect on a business of

Discuss is Explain Max

Identify an impact and make 5 linked development points

OR

Indentify an impact and make 3 development points, then indentify a second impact and make 2 linked development points

- Always **worth 6 marks.**

- Designed to **test understanding and analysis** (AO1b and AO3a).

- A '**levels-based' mark scheme** is used.

- Will **only appear in section A** – the non-contextualised section.

- Will always be of the nature 'Discuss what/the likely impact/benefit/drawback etc.'

- Only **one 'discuss' question at the end of Section A** in each paper.

- Candidates can **provide one or two impacts/benefits/drawbacks** etc.

- 'Interconnected points' means <u>at least two</u> linked strands (Level 2 AO3a descriptor).

- 'Detailed interconnected points' means <u>at least five linked strands</u> (Level 3 AO3a descriptor).

Outline

'Outline' questions – 'Outline' questions were amongst the most badly answered 'simple' questions on the old spec. 'Outline' questions will be marked in exactly the same way on the new spec. They are contextualised since they only appear in Sections B and C. Thus, candidates need to offer a method/impact/advantage/drawback etc. and provide a strand of development which is contextualised to score both marks.

Non-contextualisation was the biggest stumbling block on this style of question in the old spec and so it has proved to be again, with a high proportion of test centre candidates only scoring 1 mark.

Analyse

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	• Limited application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context (AO2). • Attempts to deconstruct business information and/or issues, finding limited connections between points (AO3a).
Level 2	3–4	• Sound application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context although there may be some inconsistencies (AO2). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding interconnected points with chains of reasoning, although there may be some logical inconsistencies (AO3a).
Level 3	5–6	• Detailed application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context throughout (AO2). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding detailed interconnected points with logical chains of reasoning (AO3a).

'Analyse' questions -

- a contextualised extended 'Explain' question. In this style of questioning, excellent generic answers with five or more accurate linked strands may not score as highly as first thought if there is no context in evidence. Candidates need to remember that they must demonstrate the correct blend of skills to propel themselves up the mark scheme.

- the first bullet point in each level descriptor reflects 'Application' and the second bullet point is the 'Analysis' descriptor.

- Always **worth 6 marks.**

- Designed to **test application and analysis** (AO2 and AO3a).

- A **'levels-based' mark scheme** is used.

- Will **only appear in section B** – the first contextualised section.

- Will always be of the nature 'Analyse an/the impact/advantage etc…'

- Only **two 'analyse' questions in Section B** in each paper.

- 'Interconnected points' means at least two linked strands (Level 2 AO3a descriptor).

- 'Detailed interconnected points' means at least five linked strands (Level 3 AO3a descriptor).

Justify

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• Limited application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context (AO2). • Attempts to deconstruct business information and/or issues, finding limited connections between points (AO3a). • Makes a judgement, providing a simple justification based on limited evaluation of business information and issues relevant to the choice made (AO3b).
Level 2	4-6	• Sound application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context although there may be some inconsistencies (AO2). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding interconnected points with chains of reasoning, although there may be some logical inconsistencies (AO3a). • Makes a judgement, providing a justification based on sound evaluation of business information and issues relevant to the choice made (AO3b).
Level 3	7-9	• Detailed application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context throughout (AO2). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding detailed interconnected points with logical chains of reasoning (AO3a). • Makes a judgement, providing a clear justification based on a thorough evaluation of business information and issues relevant to the choice made (AO3b).

'Justify' questions –

- There are two of these questions in each exam paper, one in Section B and one in Section C.

- The 'Justify' question will always be worth 9 marks and candidates will have to make a choice between the two options provided.

- **Note that there is no requirement to consider both options and full marks can be achieved through the consideration of just one option**.

- Candidates need to demonstrate 'Application' (AO2), 'Analysis' (AO3a) and 'Evaluation' (AO3b) within their answer.

- To mark these questions examiners will independently assess where the answer is in terms of 'Application' (AO2), 'Analysis' (AO3a) and 'Evaluation' (AO3b).

- To award the final level and mark, examiners then have to take a line of best approach.

- Always **worth 9 marks.**

- Designed to **test application, analysis and evaluation** (AO2, AO3a and AO3b).

- A 'levels-based' mark scheme is used.

- Will **only** appear in sections B and C (one in each section).

- Will **always involve a choice between two** options.

- 'Interconnected points' means **at least two linked strands** (Level 2 AO3a descriptor).

- 'Detailed interconnected points' means **at least five linked strands** (Level 3 AO3a descriptor).

Evaluate

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	• Demonstrates elements of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues, with limited business terminology used (AO1b). • Limited application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context (AO2). • Attempts to deconstruct business information and/or issues, finding limited connections between points (AO3a). • Draws a conclusion, supported by generic assertions from limited evaluation of business information and issues (AO3b).
Level 2	5–8	• Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues, including appropriate use of business terminology in places (AO1b). • Sound application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context although there may be some inconsistencies (AO2). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding interconnected points with chains of reasoning, although there may be some logical inconsistencies (AO3a). • Draws a conclusion based on sound evaluation of business information and issues (AO3b).
Level 3	9–12	• Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues throughout, including appropriate use of business terminology (AO1b). • Detailed application of knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to the business context throughout (AO2). • Deconstructs business information and/or issues, finding detailed interconnected points with logical chains of reasoning (AO3a). • Draws a valid and well-reasoned conclusion based on a thorough evaluation of business information and issues (AO3b).

'Evaluate' questions –
- This aims to test 4 skill areas 'Understanding', 'Application', 'Analysis' and 'Evaluation'.

- Examiners will assess each skill independently according to these level descriptors and then use a line of best approach to arrive at the final level and mark.

- Always **worth 12 marks.**

- Extended writing designed to **test application, analysis and evaluation.** (AO1b,AO2, AO3a and AO3b)

- A **'levels-based' mark scheme** is used.

- Will **only** appear in section C (the final question on each paper).

- 'Interconnected points' means **at least two linked strands.** (Level 2 AO3a descriptor)

- 'Detailed interconnected points' means **at least five linked strands.** (Level 3 AO3a descriptor)