

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
Cambridge International Diploma Standard Level

MARK SCHEME for the October 2006 question paper

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS

5162 Effective Business Communication
Maximum mark 100

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

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The grade thresholds for various grades are published in the report on the examination for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level syllabuses.

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1 You have just joined the Institute of Banking Education as a junior administrative assistant. You have been asked to give your opinion about the best way to communicate the launch of the new qualifications to internal staff and to potential students.

(a) Explain why it is important for internal communications to be effective.

[8]

Answer to include:

Internal communications

- Necessary for a business to operate successfully at all levels.
- Need to consider the individuals within the organisation and consider appropriate methods, i.e. Directors, shop floor, admin staff etc.
- Need to consider the immediacy of the communication.
- Need to consider the importance of the communication i.e. disciplinary interview, notice about canteen opening times.
- Need to consider the level of feedback required i.e. one-way or two-way communication.
- Need to consider methods of recording the communication i.e. copies to etc.
- Need to consider timings and costs involved.
- Need to consider use of electronic methods.

[1 mark per point or 2 marks per expanded point up to 8 marks]

(b) Suggest the best method of communication which should be used for the following situations. Give brief reason to support each answer.

(i) A large college in Sri Lanka has just emailed an enquiry about the new qualifications.

Accept: formal telephone call, email or visit followed up by business letter.

Reasons: need to be formal in approach, but letter may not be able to fully communicate the complexity of the range. Need to build relationship.

[4 marks for method and reason]

(ii) The Institute of Banking Education wants to get a good article printed about the new qualifications in an international daily business newspaper.

Accept: email or post a press release, with follow up phone call to journalist/editors.

Reasons: need to ensure information is accurate and used as the basis of the article also need to build relationship with editors/journalist.

[4 marks for each method and reason]

(iii) As a new administrative assistant, you need to find out more information about these new qualifications.

Accept: informal discussion with colleagues, telephone or email appropriate department.

Reasons: method must be easy and quick to find out information – mainly informal.

[4 marks for each method and reason]

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2 You have been asked to undertake two communications tasks.

- (a) **Write a promotional letter to potential students who have previously contacted the Institute of Banking Education, telling them about the two new qualifications and the website. You can 'create' any details that you think are necessary.**

[10]

The letter should conform to the following format:

- Logo or letter heading of the company
- Date
- Reference number
- Appropriate salutation – Dear Mr/Mrs
- Letter Heading – New Qualifications
- The body/content of letter
- Relating to how the new qualifications can help their career
- Appropriate closure
- Signature and position

The content and tone of the letter should be persuasive. The letter should also summarise by explaining what the next stage is if students want to register for the qualifications. Good letters will include a response mechanism.

[up to 5 marks for correct layout and up to 5 marks for content]

- (b) **Write a memo for the internal staff about the launch and targets for the two new qualifications. You can 'create' any details you think are necessary.**

[10]

The memo should conform to the following format:

- Logo of the company
- Date
- To: Internal Staff
- From: Education Director
- Subject: Launch of New Qualifications and Targets
- The body/content of memo
 - Tells staff about new qualifications confirms date of launch
 - Stresses the target registrations
- Appropriate conclusion
- Initials or signature only

The content and tone of the memo should be persuasive and impress upon the staff how important these new qualifications will be as they should lead to potential big business.

[up to 5 marks for correct layout and up to 5 marks for content]

[Total: 20]

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3 Dr Butcher, the Education Director at the Institute, has set up an internal staff group to investigate negative attitudes that some of the internal staff have towards the new qualifications and the targets set.

(a) Identify, with reasons, two methods of communication which Dr Butcher could use to discuss this issue with the staff group. [4]

Dr Butcher could use the following methods:

- One to one interview – to identify individual perceptions, avoid embarrassment, look for personal explanations.
- Regular meetings with the staff – to investigate and discuss as a group, brain storming, etc.
- One-off presentation to staff with group feedback – to air the problem and seek thoughts before deciding on next course of action.
- Set a group project to investigate – to set a time-scale for the group to identify and come up with proposals.

[1 mark for method of communication + 1 mark for reason up to 4 marks]

(b) Dr Butcher has decided to run weekly briefing meetings with staff to monitor the situation. Write a guide to help ensure that these meetings are successful. [10]

Dr Butcher will need to consider:

- The nature of the meeting – i.e. is it solely to give or to receive information or both? Is a facilitation of a discussion important?
- Who should be invited to the meeting and what is to be each individual's role or relative contribution?
- A notice of the meeting must be issued.
- An agenda must be prepared.
- An approximate time-scale for the duration of the meeting should be decided – a guillotine approach to agenda items may need to be undertaken.
- Minutes should be taken, produced and circulated after the meeting has taken place.
- Action points must be detailed in the minutes which must be referred to in the following meeting.
- A chair for the meeting must be appointed and his/her agenda drawn up – is the chair to rotate?
- A suitable room/location must be prepared and ready to receive the participants.
- Preparation of appropriate information must be ready for each meeting.
- The date of the next meeting should be decided at the end of each meeting.
- The timing of the meeting in terms of the time of day should be decided.

Level 1: demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding	[1-2 marks]
Level 2: demonstrates a clearer understanding of most of the issues	[3-5 marks]
Level 3: analyses of each point which is fully applied to the scenario	[6-8 marks]
Level 4: full analysis of each area which is applied fully	[9-10 marks]
	[up to 10 marks]

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- (c) Dr Butcher decides to give a presentation to inform the staff about the two new qualifications and the website. Identify three verbal/oral issues and three non-verbal issues that Dr Butcher will need to consider when planning the presentation.

[6]

Dr Butcher could consider the following:

Verbal Communication:

- Decide on the aim of the message.
- Select and deliver the important facts and figures.
- Identify and stress the key points of the message.
- Choose an appropriate verbal style – sincerity, warmth, assertiveness, diplomacy.
- Choose an appropriate articulation – tone, enunciation, emphasis, volume, projection.
- Monitor feedback constantly – adjust delivery accordingly.
- End on a positive note.

Non-verbal Communication:

- Need to decide on body stance and gestures – ease, physical presence, enthusiasm.
- Need to ensure eye contact.
- Need to be prepared to listen to feedback and show this.
- Need to check facial expression.
- Need to choose most effective methods of presenting data – charts etc.

[1 mark per point for each up to 6 marks]

[Total: 20]

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4 Dr Butcher needs a new Publicity Manager for the new products. He decides to recruit internally and has received four suitable applications from members of staff seeking promotion for the post. He is now planning to interview these applicants.

(a) Explain what Dr Butcher will need to plan for this type of promotion interview.

[12]

Dr Butcher will need to plan the interviews:

- Consider the aims and purpose of the interview.
- Need to decide who should be present at the interview.
- Need to consider type of questions – open, probing, scenario base, etc.
- The discussion should largely go backwards and forwards from the interviewer to the interviewee so that the interviewer maintains the position of controlling the proceedings.
- The interviewer will also need to set the general tone of the interview which will reflect the relationship of the parties and nature of the discussion.
- Need to choose an appropriate location and time and collect all necessary background data that will set the structure for the interview i.e. personal specification, job specification, selection criteria.
- Need to listen carefully for information expressed by the interviewee. Need to consider how this is to be recorded.
- Need to make notes on critical issues during the course of the interview and close with a summary of the main points raised, highlighting the next stage of the process i.e. when the decision will be made.
- After the interview, need to spend a few minutes making additional notes that may be useful for reference later, whilst the interview is fresh in the mind.
- Need to consider the acceptance and rejection letters after the interview to the appropriate people.

Level 1: demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding

[1-2 marks]

Level 2: demonstrates a clearer understanding of planning stages

[3-5 marks]

Level 3: analyses appropriate stages which are fully applied

[6-8 marks]

Level 4: fully analyses all appropriate stages which are applied

[9-12 marks]

(b) After three months Dr Butcher will undertake a performance appraisal review with the successful candidate. Explain the purpose of a performance appraisal review.

[8]

The answer should consider the purpose of an appraisal interview:

- To ask positive and thought-provoking questions.
- Need to consider which parts of their job they do well.
- Need to identify if there could be any changes made to their job which might result in improved performance i.e. identify if the member of staff requires further training or retraining in certain aspects of their work.
- Identify the key skills, knowledge and aptitudes which could be made better use of.
- Identify the employee's career plans and methods of achieving these.
- Identify the employee's ambitions.
- Conclude positively with the action points being drafted and going back to the employee for approval before they are written fully.

Level 1: demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding

[1-2 marks]

Level 2: demonstrates a clearer understanding of contents

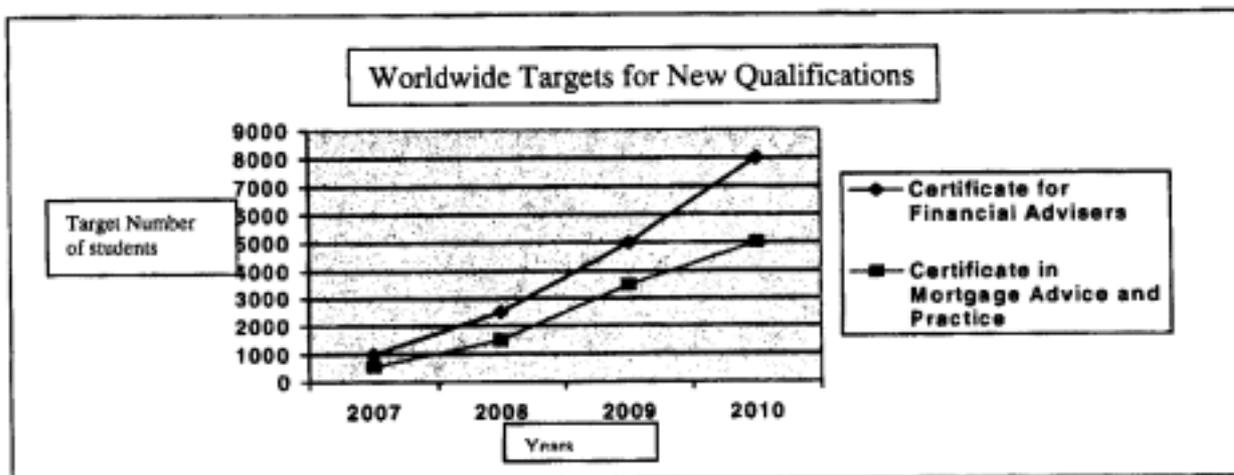
[3-5 marks]

Level 3: analyses appropriate issues which are fully applied

[6-8 marks]

5 You have been asked to prepare a pack of information on the new qualifications for any enquiring students. You need to include the target recruitment figures within the pack.

(a) Prepare the data in Table 1 and present it as a line graph.



Correct grid used.

[2 marks]

Correct values plotted on axis, with '0' as the common factor.

[2 marks]

Correct shaded areas to illustrate key.

[2 marks]

Clarity of chart and correct labelling.

[4 marks]

(b) Explain the following types of visual aid which you could use to present the data:

- (i) table
- (ii) line graph.

[6]

(i) Explanation of table: difficult to read information accurately and to observe comparisons easily. Can be produced in word documents though and very common method of producing information.

(ii) Explanation of line graphs: these are a series of points joined together to form a straight or curved line and are usually used to reflect a trend over a period of time, or the interaction of two variables. Similar to column or bar charts, but with the lines instead of columns to represent the value of the variables.

Level 1: basic description of each

[1-2 marks each]

Level 2: good description and analysis of each

[3 marks each]

(c) Explain one advantage and one disadvantage of using a slide-based presentation to show the target data to potential students.

[4]

Slide-based presentation i.e. Powerpoint

Advantage: shows information in a variety of formats, moving, sounds, colour etc, very powerful and can import information from other files into the show. Can be used as an unmanned rotating presentation.

Disadvantage: can be over packed with information – information overload. Powerpoint presentations are becoming very passé and boring for the audience. Limited if power fails, difficult if no power available, possible technical problems can hamper presentation.

[1-2 marks per advantage and disadvantage up to 4 marks]