

New
Specification



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2025

Professional Business Services

Assessment Unit A2 2

assessing

Leadership and Management

[APS21]

THURSDAY 19 JUNE, AFTERNOON

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

The main purpose of the mark scheme is to ensure that examinations are marked accurately, consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for GCE Professional Business Services.

Candidates should be able to:

- AO1** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of terms, concepts, theories, methods and models used by professional business services firms and their client businesses.
- AO2** Apply knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories, methods and models used by professional business services firms and their client businesses.
- AO3** Investigate, analyse and evaluate concepts, theories, methods and models as used by professional business services firms and their client businesses.

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 17- or 18-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCE examinations.

Flexibility in marking

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 17- or 18-year-old GCE candidate.

Awarding zero marks

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

Marking calculations

In marking answers involving calculations, examiners should apply the 'own figure rule' so that candidates are not penalised more than once for a computational error. To avoid a candidate being penalised, marks can be awarded where correct conclusions or inferences are made from their incorrect calculations.

Types of mark schemes

Mark schemes for tasks or questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication. Other questions which require only short answers are marked on a point for point basis with marks awarded for each valid piece of information provided.

Levels of response

In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the 'best fit' bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement.

The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- **Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- **Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- **High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates' responses to all tasks and questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These tasks and questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within either three or four levels of response.

Where there are three levels of response, quality of written communication is distinguished as follows:

- Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.
- Level 2: Quality of written communication is good.
- Level 3: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below:

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate makes only a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is little use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Good): The candidate makes a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is some use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 3 (Excellent): The candidate successfully selects and uses the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make meaning clear.

Where there are four levels of response, quality of written communication is distinguished as follows:

- Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.
- Level 2: Quality of written communication is satisfactory.
- Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.
- Level 4: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below.

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate makes only a basic selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is little use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Satisfactory): The candidate makes a satisfactory selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some degree of clarity and coherence. There is some use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a satisfactory standard to make meaning evident.

Level 3 (Good): The candidate makes a good selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with good clarity and coherence. There is good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a good standard to make meaning clear.

Level 4 (Excellent): The candidate successfully selects and used the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of the highest standard to make meaning absolutely clear.

1 (a) AO1, AO2

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Responses may include:

Similarities between leadership and management may include:

- Operating in a position of authority, responsibility and accountability
- Assessing the needs and resource requirements for their area of responsibility
- Communicating a view of what needs to happen within their area of responsibility
- Developing and implementing plans
- Allocating resources to achieve their plan
- Communicating with employees
- Motivating employees
- Dealing with stakeholders
- Monitoring and reviewing performance against objectives
- Taking action to address variances in performance

Differences between leadership and management may include:

- Leaders are positioned at the top of the organisation. Managers are positioned lower in the organisation
- Leaders undertake a wide-ranging and in-depth external and internal analysis of their organisation's environment. Managers may take an in-depth analysis of their functional area
- Leaders set goals and objectives that affect the entire organisation. A manager sets goals and objectives that are usually limited to their functional area
- Leaders design and implement plans which cover the entire organisation. A manager would implement a part of the leader's plan
- Leaders communicate regularly to all employees in the organisation. A manager usually restricts their communication to employees within their function and a limited number of internal and external stakeholders
- The scale of resources used by a leader to complete an organisation's activities is much larger than the resources used by a manager
- Leaders can influence the performance of the organisation's employees by communicating a vision, which shows employees how they can contribute to the success of the business in the future. However, managers also have to work within the constraints imposed by leaders and consequently are often limited to motivating people through their style of management and the reward and remuneration system linked to their area
- Leaders can interact with internal and external stakeholders. Managers may also meet with internal and external stakeholders but contact is usually limited to discuss something specific
- Leaders monitor and review the performance of the entire organisation whereas managers are restricted to monitoring and reviewing the performance of their functional area

All valid responses will be given credit

[1] identification of a similarity

[2] identification and explanation of a similarity

(2 × [2])

and

[1] identification of a difference

[2] identification and explanation of a difference

(2 × [2])

[8]

(b) AO1, AO2

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Responses may include:

Transformational leadership

- Transformational leaders are typically charismatic and inspirational individuals
- They create a shared vision to obtain buy-in, inspire and motivate employees to achieve organisational goals, for example by coaching and mentoring, and by giving opportunities for employees to be innovative and creative
- Transformational leaders persuade employees to extend their goals and perform beyond expectations

Transactional leadership

- Transactional leaders use psychological rewards (for example, positive feedback and praise) or tangible rewards (for example, financial incentives, promotion and time off) to motivate employees and achieve organisational goals
- Transactional leaders will establish systems and structures to set targets and monitor employee performance

All valid responses will be given credit

[1] identification of a difference between transformational and transactional theories of leadership

[2] identification and a basic explanation of a difference between transformational and transactional theories of leadership

[3] identification and a good explanation of a difference between transformational and transactional theories of leadership

[4] identification and an excellent explanation of a difference between transformational and transactional theories of leadership

(2 × [4])

[8]

16

2 AO1, AO2

Responses must include:

1. Planning – involves an assessment of past performance and external and internal influences; a forecast of future business needs; a layout of actions to be taken to meet business objectives
2. Organising – entails confirming the lines of authority and responsibility and providing resources (human, physical, financial, time) structures, systems and policies to meet business objectives
3. Co-ordinating – maps out the timing and sequencing of activities
4. Commanding – is when leaders/managers put the plan into effect
5. Controlling – involves the monitoring of activities and making adjustments to address any variances within the agreed plan

All valid responses will be given credit

[1] identification of a Fayol's Function of Management

[2] identification and explanation of a Fayol's Function of Management

(5 × [2])

[10]

10

3 AO1, AO2, AO3

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Responses may include:

The benefits of team working may include:

- Increased productivity
- Provision of emotional security (shared responsibility)
- Overview of the big picture
- Increased ownership of the work
- Increased employee motivation
- Greater learning and development for all
- Enhanced organisational co-ordination
- Raised level of problem solving
- Enhanced decision making through new perspectives
- Business's aims and objectives achieved
- Better product/service
- Improved communication
- Enhanced communication skills
- Builds trust
- Encourages risk-taking
- Career development opportunities
- Division of labour (specialisation)
- More flexibility
- Fosters creativity
- Facilitates innovation
- Creates a support network

All valid responses will be given credit

[12]

[0] is awarded for a response not worthy of credit

Level 1 [1]–[4] Basic

- Knowledge and understanding of at least one benefit of team working.
- Application of the benefits of team working in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is basic.
- Analysis of the benefits of team working in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is basic.
- The quality of the candidate's written communication is basic.

Level 2 [5]–[8] Good

- Knowledge and understanding of up to three benefits of team working.
- Application of the benefits of team working in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- Analysis of the benefits of team working in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- The quality of the candidate's written communication is good.

Level 3 [9]–[12] Excellent

- Knowledge and understanding of three benefits of team working.
- Application of the benefits of team working in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- Analysis of the benefits of team working in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- The quality of the candidate's written communication is excellent.

12

4 AO1, AO2, AO3

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Responses may include:

Performance standards

- Inform an employee of the performance level that they need to reach
- Establish a benchmark whereby the employee's performance can be measured on a consistent basis
- Internal/external customers know the level of service that they should receive
- Indicate potential deficiencies in service/output levels delivered by an employee
- Help protect the corporate brand which symbolises a level of quality

Effective feedback

- Provide guidance and direction for the appraiser and the appraisee – action and effort are orientated towards goal-related activities and away from unconnected activities which ensure that the manager makes effective use of the employees time and resources
- Facilitate planning – work activities can be allocated deadlines for completion which enables the manager to monitor progress and take action if there is a delay in the activity being completed
- Allows work to be prioritised – the manager and the employee can rank the objectives and decide which take priority
- Provides a basis to set budgets – funds can be allocated to the employee's objectives
- Motivate and engage employees – objectives can challenge and stretch an employee to exert more effort which results in increased performance
- Help the appraiser and appraisee to evaluate and control performance

Setting objectives

- Enhances understanding for the appraiser and appraisee as to what has been done and needs to be achieved in the future. This reduces the likelihood of conflict as the appraiser and appraisee can discuss and address matters that may be causing problems
- Creates learning and development opportunities for both parties – the appraiser may discover, for example, that the appraisee has had to work with faulty equipment which has adversely affected their performance. The appraisee may identify training that they need to fully use equipment
- Strengthens the relationship between the appraiser and appraisee as both parties can see the benefits of sharing information openly (trust)

All valid responses will be given credit

[12]

[0] is awarded for a response not worthy of credit

Level 1 [1]–[4] Basic

- Knowledge and understanding of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process is basic.
- Application of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process to Nutts and Bolts Ltd is basic.
- Analysis of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process to Nutts and Bolts Ltd is basic.
- The quality of the candidate’s written communication is basic.

Level 2 [5]–[8] Good

- Knowledge and understanding of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process is good.
- Application of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process to Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- Analysis of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process to Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- The quality of the candidate’s written communication is good.

Level 3 [9]–[12] Excellent

- Knowledge and understanding of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process is excellent.
- Application of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process to Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- Analysis of the importance of performance standards, effective feedback and setting objectives in the performance review process to Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- The quality of the candidate’s written communication is excellent.

12

Responses may include:

Fear

- an employee's fear of the unknown
- an employee's thought of experiencing some type of loss
- little to no consultation with employees in the early stages of the change process
- employees may feel isolated and suspicious that something negative is going to happen
- the fear may grow within the employee/s after the change review process is completed and no information is provided as to why the change is needed and what exactly the change entails
- the employee/s do not know the extent of the change to be implemented
- levels of employee stress and feelings of isolation builds within the employees as they may feel their only option for self-preservation is to resist the change
- the employee's level of fear maybe amplified as time passes if there are negligible communications received from management
- employees may fear the change programme because they think that they do not have the skills or capacity to cope with the change initiative

Insufficient information

- employees may resist change as they may perceive that they are provided with insufficient information by management
- the employee's perception may lead them to the conclusion that they are being deprived of information because the planned change will have a determined impact on their position, status and well-being within the business
- the employee may think that if they were in full possession of the facts pertaining to the change programme then management may fear that the employee/s may engage in activities that would resist the planned change

Uncertainty

- employees may face uncertainty about the future if the business continues to make change after change
- this could result in the business having to restructure and employees may worry about what their future circumstances may be
- while the need for change may have been communicated, if there is a lack of detail in terms of the number of jobs that may be lost, the types of jobs, and the location, this is likely to create an atmosphere of uncertainty
- such uncertainty can create pressures on employees who may have financial commitments, for example loans, mortgages and dependents

Peer pressure

- this can bring about resistance from employees for change
- any stakeholder group can exert influence over members which results in resistance to change
- each group will try to protect their particular interest and may view the change as a threat or in a negative way
- employees within the group will allow the views/opinions of other employees to influence their thoughts and decisions

All valid responses will be given credit

[20]

[0] is awarded for a response not worthy of credit

Level 1 [1]–[5] Basic

- Knowledge and understanding of the reasons for resistance to change is basic.
- Application of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is basic.
- Analysis of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is basic.
- The quality of the candidate's written communication is basic.

Level 2 [6]–[10] Satisfactory

- Knowledge and understanding of the reasons for resistance to change is satisfactory.
- Application of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is satisfactory.
- Analysis of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is satisfactory.
- The quality of the candidate's written communication is satisfactory.

Level 3 [11]–[15] Good

- Knowledge and understanding of the reasons for resistance to change is good.
- Application of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- Analysis of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- The quality of the candidate's written communication is good.

Level 4 [16]–[20] Excellent

- Knowledge and understanding of the reasons for resistance to change is excellent.
- Application of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- Analysis of the reasons for resistance to change by the employees in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- The quality of the candidate's written communication is excellent.

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Responses may include:

Possible advantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model may include:

- Objectivity – an external, objective perspective of employee behaviour is observed and their team roles are identified through the Belbin model. The application of an external model reduces the bias that may occur from preconceived views that a manager may have developed about an employee if they were undertaking a standalone assessment of an employee.
- Counter to discrimination – the potential for discrimination cases being taken against the business by an employee may be reduced as externally validated objective assessments in the form of the Belbin model are being used. This applied model reduces the likelihood that a manager's negative view of an employee would influence their assessment of an employee.
- Selection process – the effectiveness of team roles that an employee can play within a team are identified and ranked through the combination of the Belbin self-evaluation questionnaire and 360° observation report. This ranking enables managers to decide which people should be selected to be members of a team and the role that they should play within the team. The combination of the team members and the roles they play should enhance the performance of the team. For example, the Belbin model can be employed in assessment centres to assess applicants team role behaviours. The most desired team role behaviour identified in the person specification can be matched against those revealed during the assessment process. This helps the organisation to select and appoint the best applicant and reduce the need for training once the person is in the job.
- Employee development – the model allows the employee to objectively identify their strengths and weaknesses. The employee is able to understand how they could be effectively employed within a team by utilising their strongest team roles. The employee may also want to address the team roles where they are weaker through learning and development programmes. Engaging in learning and development activities affords the employee the opportunity to enhance their overall work and team competence portfolio which extends their versatility to undertake a wider range of team roles in the future.
- Management tool – a team manager can objectively identify and rank an employee's team roles capabilities. This enables a manager to decide which team an employee could be deployed to and the team roles that an employee would perform within the team. The model helps a manager to effectively combine and deploy employees with their respective team roles to a team.
- Learning and development aid – a manager can ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of an employee which gives them the opportunity to address the employee's weaknesses and build on their strengths. A manager could provide learning and development programmes that remedy an employee's team role weaknesses and enhance their strengths. Employees who successfully completed these learning and development programmes would have a greater range of team role capability and subsequently give the manager more scope and flexibility in deploying employees to teams in the future.
- Conflict resolution – the applied model helps to reduce conflict between the manager and the team and conflict among team members. The team role assessments provide evidence to managers and employees about each employee's team role capability. This knowledge informs the discussion as to the team role(s) most suited to an employee within a team and may result in

an employee being more accepting and committed to their designated team role. As employees within the team are aware of their team role(s) and that of their team members they will focus on their role and supporting the role of other team members rather than spending time arguing over who is best suited to a particular role.

- Facilitates change – employees and managers may be more adaptable to change. The results generated from the assessments may give the employee and manager a better understanding about behaviour and how it affects, and is affected, by people you interact with. If it is shown that a behaviour is having a negative impact on the employee or other colleagues then there is an opportunity to amend the negative aspects of the behaviour. This revised behaviour may positively affect the employee and other people and possibly result in improved individual and team performance.
- Culture change – the model can be employed to change business culture and performance. If the business wanted to create a continuous learning culture or high-performance team ethic then the Belbin model enables the team role capabilities of individuals and teams to be assessed. The organisation learns which individual and team weaknesses need to be addressed. The provision of learning and development to address these weaknesses demonstrates that the employee, the team and the organisation are open to learning and take on new learning. The expectation is that this acquired learning will result in improved employee, team, and organisation performance.

Possible disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model may include:

- Licence fee – the organisation will have to pay a licence fee if it wishes to use the Belbin assessment processes.
- Assessment costs – assessment costs will be incurred. Will a member of staff be trained in the use of the Belbin assessment processes or will external consultants be employed to undertake the assessments.
- Logistic issues – time delays and limited flexibility may be encountered in using the model. Consultants may only be available at certain times that may not suit the work needs of the organisation.
- Assessors debate – conflict may occur in relation to who is undertaking the assessments. Employees may argue that the 360° observations should be undertaken by a consultant as they are perceived as being objective. Alternatively, employees may argue that 360° observations should be undertaken by a manager as this person who is most knowledgeable about the work an employee is required to do.
- Imprisoned role – employees may be or become unhappy if they perceive that they are required to perform the same team role(s) on a regular basis. If an employee is consistently undertaking the same roles then they may become frustrated and demotivated. This in turn may cause the employee to underperform or be disruptive.
- Technical skills deficit – the employee may have the required team role behaviour but not the technical skills and abilities to do the job.
- Frozen in role – there is the potential that if employees are cast in a certain team role then this will lead to inflexibility or unwillingness to contribute outside of the role over the longer term. This may restrict the capacity of the employee to grow and develop.

All valid responses will be given credit

[20]

[0] is awarded for a response not worthy of credit

Level 1 [1]–[5] Basic

- Knowledge and understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model is basic.
- Application of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is basic.
- Analysis and evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts is basic.
- Judgement is basic.
- The quality of the candidate’s written communication is basic.

Level 2 [6]–[10] Satisfactory

- Knowledge and understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model is satisfactory.
- Application of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is satisfactory.
- Analysis and evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is satisfactory.
- Judgement is satisfactory.
- The quality of the candidate’s written communication is satisfactory.

Level 3 [11]–[15] Good

- Knowledge and understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model is good.
- Application of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- Analysis and evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is good.
- Judgement is good.
- The quality of the candidate’s written communication is good.

Level 4 [16]–[20] Excellent

- Knowledge and understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model is excellent.
- Application of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- Analysis and evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Belbin Nine Team Roles Model in Nutts and Bolts Ltd is excellent.
- Judgement is excellent.
- The quality of the candidate’s written communication is excellent.

Total**AVAILABLE MARKS**

20

90