QUESTION TYPES



All exam questions in Business Studies can be answered using this triangle, and here is how it works!!

First of all, there are four different levels to exam questions.

Level 1: State a fact/ write a description- With level 1 questions you are required to state a fact, or give a definition

Level 2: Application of knowledge- For level 2, you need to state a fact, the apply. So for example, a sole trader is a company which is set up and controlled by one person, for example a window cleaner

Level 3: Research and analysis- For level 3, you must show that you have read or understood the case study which you are given, and then apply your answer to the case study. In other words pick out key facts from the case study to help your answer.

Level 4: Evaluation- Level 4 questions require you think about two sides of an argument, the advantages and disadvantages, the pros and cons, etc, etc. You then need to give you opinion at the end to sum up. For examples based on all of the advantages, I think that this business should go ahead with a merger, etc,etc.

The levels are like building blocks, so to get full marks for a level 2 question, you must also state a fact

To get full marks for a level 4 question, you need to ensure that you have stated a fact (L1), given an example (L2), read the case study and applied you answer to it (L3) stated advantages and disadvantages, then given your informed opinion (L4).

In other words you must do L1, L2 and L3 then you can start to pick up the L4 marks.

How to spot the level of response required

There are three question types:-

Short answer questions which will target assessment objectives L1 & L2.

Structured response questions which will target all four assessment objectives, but will focus mainly on L1, 2 & 3.

Open-ended questions target all of the four levels.

Marks are also given for the quality of written communication.

Short answer questions

**Marks:** Usually worth a small number of marks e.g. **2-3 marks**

**Command:** Define, Describe, Explain, Give, List, Identify, Outline, State, What is meant by, Name, Apply, Calculate, Demonstrate, Examine,

Give an example, Using examples, With reference to the evidence, How, Show how, Why, Which, Using, Draw on your knowledge, Using your knowledge of, Graph, What trends, etc.

Structured response questions

**Marks:** Usually a mid- range number of marks e.g**. 4- 6 marks**

**Command:** State the advantages and disadvantages of, What would be the benefits/costs of, Analyse, Calculate and comment upon, Compare and contrast, Discuss, Explain, Show how, Which, What factors, Examine, Identify, Organise, What, etc.

Open ended questions

**Marks:** Usually the high mark questions e.g. **10- 16 marks**

**Command:** Advise, Evaluate, Assess, Consider, Discuss, Explain why, To what extent, Assess the extent, Weigh up, Suggest, Justify, Predict, Do you think, How far, Would you agree, Why, Suggest, Evaluate the suggestion, Critically assess, Assess the relative importance, etc.

How to get the top marks

Right, so how does all this fit together?

Short answer questions L1 & L2

For these lower marks questions, you need to show that you know the answer to the question and can give an example; you should also try to apply your answer to the case study

For example:

**Define the term Public Limited Company [2 Marks]**

*A public limited company is one which is owned by shareholders, and run on a day to day basis by a board of directors. A PLC can sell it’s shares on the stock exchange. For example ITV plc which provides a TV service.*

L1- A clear definition

L2- The use of an example

Structured response questions (L1, L2, L3)

For this question type you must demonstrate L1 and L2, and that you have analysed the case study (L3)

For example:

**Explain the difference between fixed and variable costs using examples relevant to *Home Service*. [4 Marks]**

*Fixed costs are those that are always there, regardless of how much or how little you sell, for example rent, salaries and business rates, however variable costs are different types of cost*

*because variable costs those that rise as your sales increase, such as additional raw materials, extra labour and transport. In the case of Home Service the fixed costs are the lease of the van which James will use to run his business, the variable costs are the fuel costs of transport of the goods to the customer’s houses.*

L1- The candidate clearly understands the terms fixed and variable costs. The candidate demonstrates that they know the difference between fixed and variable

L2- Examples are used to apply the knowledge and understanding

L3- The answer is clearly applied to the case study

Open Ended Questions (L1, L2, L3 & L4)

These questions will require you to demonstrate all of the skills; stating your knowledge (L1), application (L2), using evidence from the case study (L3), and making a reasoned judgement (L4)

L1/ L2- Showing a thorough understanding of sources of finance, specifically bank loans

L3- Showing advantages & disadvantages that are relevant to

James

L4- Giving James some overall advice, based on AO3. Should he take out the loan or not?

For example:

When James carried out some financial planning he discovered that he needed £5000.He is considering taking out a bank loan for this amount. Explain the advantages and disadvantages to James of a bank loan for £5000. You should justify your opinion. [12 Marks]

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**To sum it up**

Right so before you even begin to start answering exam questions, you need to do the following:

1. Read the whole exam paper first
2. Pick out your confidence questions (the ones you know how to do really easily), this wakes up your brain, once you have done these you will find that the more difficult questions start to make better sense!
3. Read the question carefully.
4. Identify the level of response, which the question is looking for, is it Level 1, Level 2. Level 3 or Level 4…. Write a quick note next to the question to remind you.
5. Look at the marks, this will help you to identify the level of response, and the amount that you need to write
6. identify the keywords, I recommend you to underline them. What does the question want you to actually talk about?
7. Plan, if it is a L4 question, just jot down three points for and three points against… this will then remind you when you are answering the question, rather than ‘going off on one!!’