

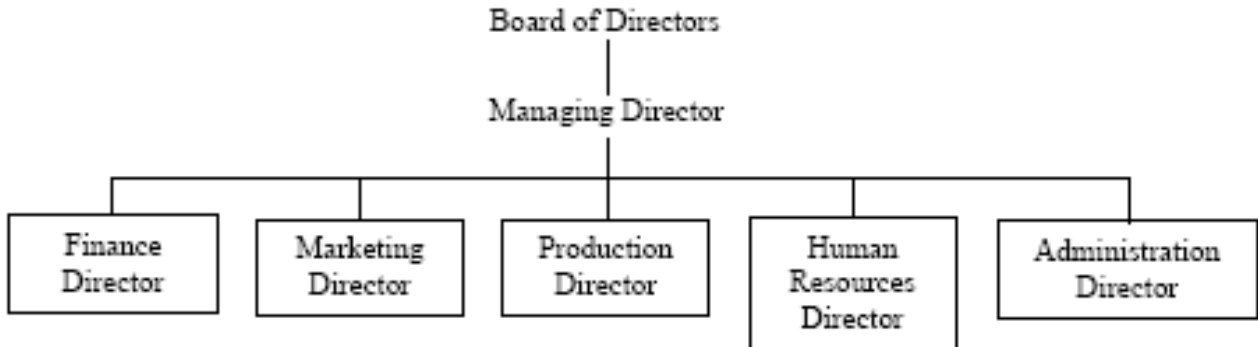
GCSE BUSINESS STUDIES COURSEWORK



GCSE Business Coursework

The problem

You have been appointed as a **consultant** to a medium sized manufacturing company **employing 120 people**. Part of the company organisation chart appears below:



The purchase of a new production site 50 miles from London has led to a **reorganisation** of the company and its personnel. *The Board of Directors, Managing Director, Finance Director and Administration Director* will now work from the London Head Office.

The Marketing Director, Production Director and Human Resources Director will be based at the company's new manufacturing facility 50 miles outside London.

Your task

As a consultant you are required to prepare a report for the Board of Directors outlining the following:

- What methods of communication they currently use?
- What methods of communication they potentially can use between the two sites?
- What problems are they likely to encounter?
- How can they resolve these problems?

Details of your assignment

- The report should be set in a business format.
- The length of the assignment should be about 1,500 words.
- This coursework accounts for 25% of the overall mark.
- The mark for the coursework is 36. This will be multiplied by 2 plus the QWC marks to give you the overall grade.

Assessment Objectives

The objectives of the assessment are to enable the students to:

AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified subject content
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding using appropriate terms, concepts, theories and methods effectively to address problems and issues
AO3	Select, organise, analyse and interpret information from various sources to analyse problems and issues
AO4	Evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions accurately and appropriately

Mark Grid

At the back of this booklet, there is a mark grid that we will use to mark your coursework. The grid is divided into 4 sections to reflect the above assessment objectives. Remember you will be marked out of 36. The table below gives approximate mark boundaries:

Approx. mark	Grade
19	D
24	C
28	B
30	A
33	A*

You all should be achieving above 24 marks.

Assignment Structure

Your assignment must have the following structure:

1. **Title page**

This must be laid out as:

Title of Report:

To:

From:

Date:

2. **Contents page**

3. **Introduction/Background**

This section should include the following:

- Outline what you have been asked to do and your role in the process. **This will gain you 1.1.**
- Reproduce original organisational chart and explain it. **This gains 2.1.**
- Outline how the company is dividing into 2 sites and produce one organisational chart for each site, i.e. 2 in total. **This gains 2.2.**
- Outline very briefly how you intend to structure the report and what you intend to achieve (i.e. to recommend a new communication system).
- Discuss generally what the objectives of most businesses are i.e. profit, sales growth, lowering costs, etc. Link this to good communication systems and explain how achieving any objective is difficult without good communication. **This will gain 1.3.**
- It would be preferable if you can give the organisation a name. This makes application of concepts much easier.

4. **Method**

This section should include the following:

- A description of what you are going to do.
- Description of different research methods you are going to use.
- Definition of primary and secondary research methods.
- What primary and secondary methods are you going to use and why?
- Why have you chosen these methods above something else.
- You need to carryout a questionnaire on 20 people, at least two interviews, write to the businesses for further information, and use other secondary methods to back up your points.
- How are you going to structure your report.

5. Research Analysis Section

This section must include the following:

- Write an introductory paragraph outlining what this section is about.
- You need to design and carry out a questionnaire which includes approx. 10 questions on methods of communication.
- You need to ask people to complete the questionnaire, around 20 people. **This will gain 2.2, 2.5 and 3.1**
- Your information must be tallied up and graphs made from a few of the questions. **This gains 3.2 and 3.3.**
- Analyse briefly what your graphs show. Have you identified a pattern or explained what the information means. **This gains 3.5.**
- Carry out an interview with at least one person, if you have now used 3 sources (electronic, people, text, organisations) **you will gain 3.4.**
- What other information could you have used or how else could you have found the information you need. **This will gain you 3.6.**
- Analysis of other researches carried out must be included in this section.
- In a final paragraph, summarise all the main points from the various researches you have used. This will help you with your conclusions.

6. Theory Section

Make sure you apply this section to your business.

- Explain what communication is. You can use the diagram from your text book, but you must write the source.
- Explain about vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication channels. You may find it useful to produce diagrams to illustrate these points. Make you state how your business can use them. **Do not just copy out the textbook.**
- Look at the different types of communication methods that can be used i.e. e-mail, letters, memos etc. Describe what they are and outline the main strengths and weaknesses of each method.
- Explain how they are different i.e. you can keep a hard copy of a letter but you have nothing at the end of a phone call. **This will gain you 1.5.**
- Explain the differences of each type of communication and their advantages and disadvantages. You may find it useful to break types of communication down into electronic, written, oral and visual. Go into more depth i.e. a fax is an alternative to a letter and is quicker, but not as good quality **you will gain 1.7.**
- Identify what a business will need to take into account before they device on a communication system e.g. the cost of the equipment, will they need to train staff to use it etc **this will gain 1.6.**
- Explain some of the barriers to communication i.e. the attitude of people and the jargon used. What will prevent the communications system you have suggested from working well. **This will gain you 1.4.**
- In addition you should differentiate between actual facts you have researched and the opinions of the people you questioned. An opinion may be that e-mail is unreliable, when a textbooks states it is quick, (you must reference where you got this from). **This will gain you 4.5.**
- **1.8 and 1.9** are in depth marks awarded for overall knowledge and understanding of the topic. Here, you need to bring different concepts together. For instance, how does a communication system affect the motivation of employees, reputation of the organisation, etc.

7. Conclusions

- You need to summarise what are the main points you have discovered from your research.
- Outline the possible implications of your findings.

8. Recommendations

This section needs to be introduced by saying you will now make some recommendations to the company.

- Refer back to the original problem i.e. to make recommendations for a communication system for an organisation that was splitting into 2 sites, **this will gain 4.1.**
- When you are making your recommendations you must include evidence from your research. In doing this you should draw on the results of your interviews and questionnaires. **This will gain 4.2**
- You need to consider your results and analysis and make conclusions from these results. **This will gain you 4.4**
- If you include the advantages and disadvantages of each method you have chosen and state that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages **then you will gain 2.7.**
- You now need to identify how each recommendation will affect the company and how it will improve the level of communication. An example could include using e-mail would improve communication because everyone will get the same message at the same time and it is quick. **This will gain you 4.7.**
- Suggest possible problems the company may have in implementing your recommendations and suggest possible solutions and improvements, **this will gain you 4.8**
- You will need to consider social (effects on people), economic (effects on resources) or environmental (effects on the working and the local environment) effects in your recommendations. You need to mention that decisions may affect profits, staff, the local area etc **this will gain you 4.3.**
- You then need to consider the social, environmental and financial effects deeper to and from the chosen communication method e.g. profits, economy, community, green issues, etc. **This will gain 4.6.**
- Describe what effects might occur as a result of your decisions i.e. if you suggest more memos are sent you may talk about the effect on the destruction of trees. You could mention how e-mail may make employees feel isolated because of the lack of social interaction, this could lead to them feeling demotivated, **this will gain 4.9.** (*Marks 4.3,4.6,4.9 should not be just one sentence*)
- If you make reference to the legislation your recommendation will involve i.e. Health and Safety at Work Act, The Data Protection Act etc, **and then you will gain 2.4.**

9. Action Plan

The action plan will take the form of a table in Word and will list the activities you need to carry out in order to complete the coursework. It should include the following information columns;

- Detail of task
- Intended completion date
- Actual completion date
- Reason for delay (if any)
- Action taken to rectify delay
- Doing the basic action plan **will gain you 2.3.**
- If you develop the plan and anticipate and solve problems **you will also gain 2.6**
- If you have collected evidence to show that you have completed the action, i.e. a letter/e-mail requesting and additional interview, or chasing up questionnaires, **this will gain you 2.9**

10. Appendices

- Bibliography
- Blank copy of questionnaire

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- A tally chart
- Copy of letters/e-mails
- Transcript of interview
- Action plan
- You must include a bibliography at the end of the assignment listing all books used; you must identify sources of knowledge: **name at least two** sources (electronic, people, text, organisations). **This will gain you 1.2**
- You must have gathered information from all four sources (electronic/websites, people/interviews, text/books, organisations/reports/brochures) **to gain 3.7**
- Check you have presented the information in a full business style report. **This will get you 3.9**

Place all work in one plastic wallet with mark sheet signed.

Action Plan for completing your coursework. You must observe these deadlines if you are to get a good grade in this coursework.

Task	Completed by
Prepare Action plan	Before going to work experience
Prepare questionnaire & Print out 20 copies	Before going to work experience
Carry out at least 2 interviews	During work experience
Collate questionnaire	First week after work experience
Draw graphs	Second week after work experience
Write Introduction	Second week after summer holidays
Complete research section	Third week after summer holidays
Write theory section	Fourth week after summer holidays
Write conclusions & recommendations	Fifth week after summer holidays
Put together front page, contents page and appendix	Sixth week after summer holidays
Hand in first draft	Before Half term
Feedback and further improvements	Third week after half term
Final Draft	Fourth week after half term

Further information on mark scheme

1.1	Write a few sentences about the business situation e.g. set the scene and explain business communication	1.4	What will stop the business communicating? E.g. barriers to communication like jargon, site, location etc	1.7	After the differences have been established, you must compare the methods and select those that could be used in place of others e.g. instead of phone, use a fax.
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1.2	Identify sources of knowledge: candidate names at least two sources (electronic, people, text, organisations).	1.5	Recognise the differences between different methods of communications, verbal, electronic etc from all those available (relate to companies with examples).	1.8	Have you fully explained business relationships, communication methods and application to the given company, effects on the company and its efficiency and finance
1.3	What is the business working towards, what would this and any business want to achieve e.g. survive, grow, profit, improve quality etc	1.6	Influences on the system that could be chosen, e.g. finance, training, staff attitude, relevance to a 2 sided business	1.9	If you understand the concepts, have used described and fully thought about the given situation, have you compared methods, situations, differences and opinions, 2 sides

2.1	Use and define key business terms related to this business and the problem you are trying to solve.	2.4	Have you applied the law to the communication situation e.g. data protection act, data misuse act, then apply to the situation	2.7	When discussing your decisions for the communication system (s) you must have thought about their strengths and weaknesses, to justify why you have chosen them, but what problems could exist.
2.2	Have you used business terms and ideas, e.g. defining and drawing new hierarchy diagrams	2.5	Have you used any business techniques, market research, hierarchies, record keeping etc	2.8	Have you explained all the aspects of the task, e.g. the problems that exist and how could they be solved by this company in their situation.
2.3	Have you prepared an action plan at the outset of the coursework detailing all the activities you are going to carry out with dates. Include columns to write reasons and changes.	2.6	Have you shown how your ideas have been taken further by thinking about other factors and developing the activities of the plan further, e.g. additional actions and / or problems.	2.9	Have you linked you actions on the plan to the specific part of the report, where that action exists. Plus do you have evidence to prove that you carried out that action, plus where is it.

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3.1	Have you gathered basic information. Where has it come from? Can you justify the source, e.g. from a book or through an interview.	3.4	Gather additional information from a range of sources: candidate names at least three sources (electronic, people, text, organisations).	3.7	Candidates name all four sources (electronic, people, text, organisations) and demonstrates the systematic gathering. 3.7 can not be correctly credited if 1.2 and 3.4 have not already been credited correctly.
3.2	Have you prepared a tally chart to summarise the results of you questionnaire questions.	3.5	Review, interpret and analyse the information in the graphs and charts and how that information would relate to the company, e.g. what are the charts showing, methods, tastes etc	3.8	The whole project, results and analysis MUST be related to the split site company. Look at the results from the company's point of view.
3.3	Prepare graphs and charts to demonstrate the collection of data from you research	3.6	Have you thought about other methods of collecting data and other ways of displaying it. You must discuss what alternatives you could have used from the ones you did actually use.	3.9	Prepare a report in business report format, e.g. 'to / from / date / ref' , page numbers, numbered sections and a content page will help.

4.1	Have you made comments that relate to the chosen communication system e.g. why you chose the method(s) you did.	4.4	Have you thought about the results you gathered and have you drawn the conclusions from it? 'from the results fax is shown as being most effective ...'	4.7	Have you looked at the outcomes and THOUGHT about improvements to your recommendations, e.g. telephones But could be made more effective if an internal switchboard was set up'
4.2	The conclusions you have come to MUST be related to the business situation e.g. 'I think this method is most appropriate as it will be effective over 2 sites'. Must be throughout conclusion and recommendations	4.5	Have you explained the difference between the opinions gathered on questionnaires and the facts that can be proven from the secondary research. Discuss how both facts and opinions have been used to come to the conclusions you have. Evidence !	4.8	Have you fully described your main decisions and conclusions and clearly stated WHY you made them. Should use proper business terms and language. <i>Justify improvements</i> and relate more to the company situation
4.3	Have you mentioned that decisions or actions might affect prices, profits, world economy, staff, managers, community, local area, ozone layers, green issues etc? (<i>You do not have to mention all of them.</i>)	4.6	Have you thought about what the effect will be on prices, profits, local or world economy, staff, managers, community, local area, ozone layer, green issues, etc? and make recommendations for improvements(<i>You do not have to consider the effect on all of them.</i>)	4.9	Have you explained any economic, social or environmental effects that might occur <i>because of your decisions</i> and recommendation about the business?, e.g. mobile phones may cause radiation which in turn could cause illness, this may reduce their acceptance by this company