



English for Business

Level 4

Past Papers **2004**

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SERIES 1 EXAMINATION 2004
ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS

LEVEL 4

(Code No: 4041)

THURSDAY 11 MARCH

Instructions to Candidates

- (a) *The time allowed for this examination is 3 hours.*
 - (b) *Answer **all 4** questions.*
 - (c) *All questions carry equal marks.*
 - (d) *All answers must be clearly and correctly numbered but need not be in numerical order.*
 - (e) *While formal accuracy is expected, adequate and appropriate communication is essential and candidates must judge the length of their answers in this light.*
 - (f) *When you finish, check your work carefully.*
 - (g) *The use of standard English dictionaries and cordless non-programmable calculators is permitted. Candidates whose first language is not English may use a bilingual dictionary.*
-

QUESTION 1(a)

Task

Read the following article and **answer the questions** that follow it. Credit will be given for answering the questions in your own words and demonstrating comprehension, rather than quoting directly from the text.

The Data Revolution

Managers use data the same way a drunk uses a lamp post: for support, not illumination.

We all know how to create a spreadsheet to support a business proposal. We start at the bottom right hand corner. So if senior management or investors want a return of 15%, we make sure there is a plausible-looking 15.7% in the bottom right-hand corner of the spreadsheet. With the wonders of spreadsheet software, we can go on changing assumptions, growth rates and costs until the desired result is achieved. We want the data to support us: whether it provides any real illumination on the business proposal is irrelevant to us.

It is not only middle managers – CEOs are just as guilty as the drunkard. Even reputable businesses use a whole panoply of accounting techniques to massage the figures. Goodwill write-offs, capitalisation of expenses and one-off charges alone give plenty of room for manoeuvre. Last year, 247 of the top 500 companies reported one-off items that never really seemed to be one-off. One blue chip company announced EBITDA profits (earnings before interest, tax and depreciation) of £7 billion. To the cynical these are earnings before the bad stuff: the next step is to announce earnings before costs. Closer inspection of the accounts showed that in the same period, the company announced a £10.6 billion loss, defined as retained loss for the company and its share of joint ventures and associated undertakings. There was nothing underhand about this – not surprisingly the company chose to highlight the £7 billion rather than the £10 billion, but hey! what's £17 billion between friends?

Playing the numbers game is as old as management itself. But there are three possible reactions: challenge, credibility and control.

Challenge

Most managers realise that spreadsheets are no more than a starting point for discussion. Experienced managers have highly-tuned garbage-detectors which can recognise rogue numbers and implausible assumptions in a plan. Managers should test assumptions in order to throw light on data which the spreadsheet itself does not illuminate.

Credibility

Venture capitalists and many senior executives judge a plan largely on the credibility of the people presenting it. If a successful executive with a track record of over-delivering against promises produces a marginal plan, it is likely to be more acceptable than an exciting plan produced by an executive who has not delivered in the past. This clearly makes it essential for managers and businesses to maintain their reputation for integrity and delivery.

Control

Greater control is a trap. A typical reaction to manipulated data is to seek ever tighter controls and ever more detailed rules about how data can be presented. But, like the generals who always fight the last war, the rules are rarely able to keep up. Increasing bureaucracy to enforce the rules slows down decision making, but does not prevent the creativity of management in finding ways to make the data support their case. Some control is essential, but it is not a substitute for intelligent challenge and high credibility.

QUESTION 1(a) CONTINUED

Effective managers will always be strong advocates of their business, so they will always use data to support their businesses. They should not be denied the right to be cheerleaders for their business through ever greater control and bureaucracy. Data only becomes illuminating when it is tested and the assumptions behind the data are challenged. While the drunk can only use the lamp post for support, strong managers know how to use data for support and illumination.

(Adapted from an article in *Business Age* magazine)

- (i) Explain in your own words the general meaning of the metaphor about the drunk. (2 marks)
- (ii) What is meant by the 'wonders of spreadsheet software' (Para. 2)? (2 marks)
- (iii) In relation to manipulating the figures:
- (1) What is the significance of the example about 'one-offs'? (2 marks)
- (2) Why is the next step 'earnings before costs'? (2 marks)
- (iv) Which two types of managers are contrasted in the paragraph on 'Credibility' and in what way are they contrasted? (2 marks)
- (v) Explain in your own words why, according to the writer, "Some control is essential, but it is not a substitute for intelligent challenge and high credibility". (2 marks)
- (vi) Explain what is meant in this context by the following phrases:
- (1) garbage-detector (paragraph 5)
- (2) generals who always fight the last war (paragraph 7)
- (3) cheerleaders (last paragraph) (3 marks)
- (15 marks)

QUESTION 1(b)

Situation

You are a senior manager in a company. You are becoming increasingly concerned about the way company results are being manipulated to present the best, but not always the most accurate, image of the state of the company. You feel that the credibility of the company is in danger of being damaged if this continues. The senior management have decided to hold a two-day discussion and training workshop on the issue which all middle management must attend.

Task

Using ideas from the text above, **write a memo** to the middle management of the company to outline the problem, the opinion of senior management and to give notice of the workshop intended to address it.

Invent any further content as necessary.

(10 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 2

Situation

You work in the marketing department of a major supermarket. You have sent out by mail a customers' survey to regular customers of your store. The survey has general questions and ones about specific products and activities which the supermarket is considering introducing or developing further.

Task

Write a report for the Board of Directors summarising the following findings from the survey. Draw any conclusions and make specific recommendations about improvements in what the supermarket offers which could increase customer satisfaction.

SOMERWAYS SUPERMARKET SHOPPERS' SURVEY – FINDINGS

Number of shoppers completing the questionnaire: 6,203
Period of survey: 1 – 30 November 2003

1 How far is the store you use from your house?

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| (a) Less than 1 kilometre | 25% |
| (b) 1-5 kilometres | 60% |
| (c) More than 5 kilometres | 15% |

2 How much do you spend on groceries every week?

- | | |
|-------------------|-----|
| (a) Under £15 | 5% |
| (b) £15-24 | 17% |
| (c) £24-£50 | 60% |
| (d) More than £50 | 18% |

3 How satisfactory overall do you find the store?

- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| (a) Poor | 2% |
| (b) Average | 14% |
| (c) Very good | 80% |
| (d) Excellent | 4% |

4 Why do you shop there?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| (a) Most convenient – distance, travel connections, parking etc | 56% |
| (b) Best quality of produce | 12% |
| (c) Best range of produce | 28% |
| (d) Other facilities – children's crèche, restaurant etc | 4% |

5 Have you bought the following products in the past 3 months?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| (a) Recycled | 30% |
| (b) Environmentally friendly | 30% |
| (c) Organic | 67% |

QUESTION 2 CONTINUED

- 6 Which of the following have you bought from or arranged through a supermarket?
- | | |
|----------------|-----|
| (a) Insurance | 14% |
| (b) Bank loans | 12% |
| (c) Mortgages | 13% |
- 7 If you have not bought from or arranged any of the above financial products through a supermarket, would you consider it?
- | | |
|---------|-----|
| (a) Yes | 28% |
| (b) No | 72% |
- If no, why not?
- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----|
| (a) Prefer to use a specialist | 84% |
| (b) Unaware of the availability of these products | 0% |
| (c) Do not need these products | 16% |
- 8 Do you have, or are you considering, an Internet connection in your home?
- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| (a) Yes | 54% |
| (b) No | 11% |
| (c) Considering it | 35% |
- 9 If you have an Internet connection, have you ever considered doing your weekly grocery shopping via the Internet?
- | | |
|---------|-----|
| (a) Yes | 53% |
| (b) No | 47% |
- 10 If your answer to 9 is *No*, why not?
- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| (a) Prefer to make decisions about purchases in the store, rather than on the computer, because of lack of information | 35% |
| (b) Enjoy the experience of shopping | 42% |
| (c) Practical difficulties eg delivery times are not convenient | 16% |
| (d) Other | 7% |

(25 marks)

QUESTION 3(a)

Situation

You are a financial advisor. One of your clients has written to you to ask why you have not recommended that he invest in a variety of companies which he has heard about that are currently showing high growth and paying large dividends. All of the companies he mentions (although they are not the ones mentioned in the text below), are small companies with a strategy of growth through acquisition.

Beware the Acquisitive Small Company

One type of share that should come with a wealth warning is the fast-growing small company with a penchant for acquisitions. Unfortunately, novice investors are particularly attracted by such businesses. Enchanted by great earnings records and forecasts of further profit jumps, investors can end up paying top dollar for rather shaky growth prospects. More often than not, acquisition sprees undertaken by smaller companies eventually result in earnings growth disappointment.

A good example is Pendon Group. The accountancy group has made sixteen separate acquisitions over the past two years. However, the corporate activity came to a head late last year when the group issued a profits warning. Pendon admitted that “a consequence of the pace” of its acquisition process was the cost of integrating all of its businesses. The activity required greater than expected IT investment and caused the group’s fee-earning personnel to become sidetracked. Unsurprisingly, Pendon’s Finance Director recently resigned.

Another example is software firm Designations Group. It too made sixteen acquisitions over the past two years, with another announced this morning. A recent update from Designations stated that the group’s trading had remained positive with ‘significant’ new contracts having been signed. Nevertheless, trouble looks to be on the cards.

As Pendon proved, acquisition hungry companies can suffer indigestion pains. For small companies with limited resources, logistical and integration problems can dog even the most skilled of management teams. Furthermore, shareholder risks are enhanced by the chance of buying a bad business or diversifying into unfamiliar areas. In addition, acquisitive companies tend to have complex accounts. That gives additional scope for investors to miss a deteriorating ‘underlying’ performance.

Rather than get involved in the likes of Pendon and Designations, investors would do better searching for companies whose growth is largely organic. Such businesses generally present less operational risk and are not dependent on suitable purchases to keep their growth rate intact. Indeed, companies growing organically imply they have no need for their rivals’ people and products. That in itself suggests these businesses ought to be fundamentally stronger than their acquisitive counterparts.

(Adapted from ‘*Motley Fool*’ website)

Task

Write a letter to your client, summarising the text of the article to explain the reason for your advice.

You may assume that headed notepaper is used, but set out the rest of the text as a letter. The client’s name and address is John Bedding, 48 Martle Road, Swindon, Wiltshire SW12 9TT.

(12½ marks)

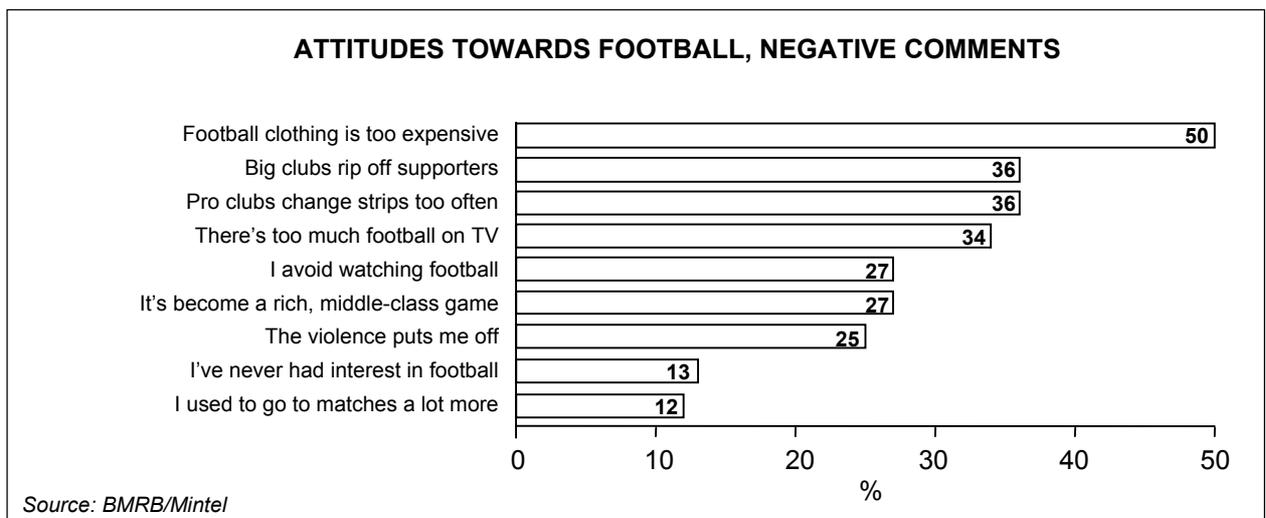
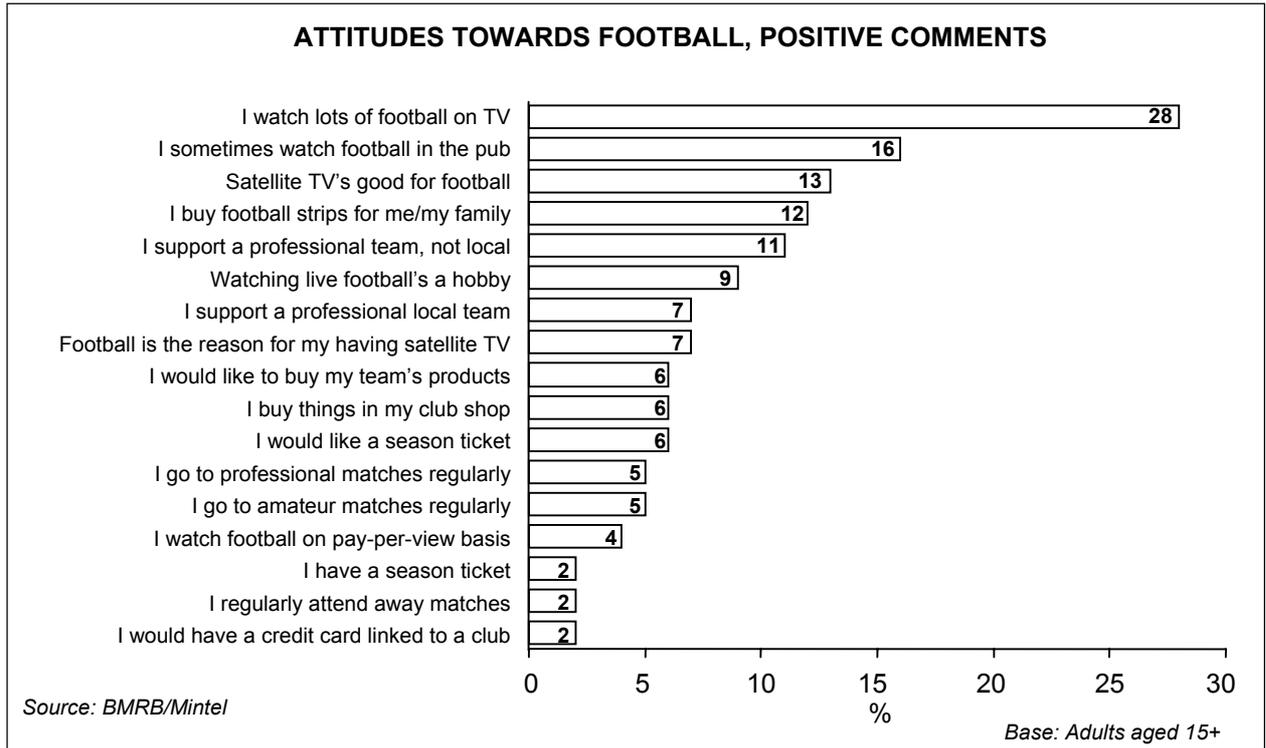
QUESTION 3(b)

Situation

You work in a consumer research company. You have been asked by your client, a major company which is considering sponsoring a professional football team, for some basic information about attitudes to football.

Task

Using the following 2 graphs, write a comparative analysis of people's attitude to football – focusing on the difference between the positive and the negative comments.



(12½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 4

On the basis of the two following openings and according to the instructions accompanying them, continue and complete each extract in an appropriate way.

(a) **Situation**

You are the Survey Manager in the marketing department of the supermarket referred to in Question 2. You are responsible for mailing out the survey to the regular customers of the store.

Task

Write a short covering letter to go with the survey. You may assume headed notepaper is used, but set out the letter in an appropriate way for individually named customers. For the purpose of this task the customer is Jenny Blackman, 89 Tyler Road, London SE5 8GT.

Some or all of the following key words and phrases may, but do not have to be, used in your answer.

Key words and phrases:

Enclose the survey / largest in the country / improve our stores / improve our decision-making / incentive – vouchers / further incentive / data protection / free pen enclosed

<p>(Salutation etc)</p> <p>As a regular customer of Somerways Supermarket we are very glad that you appreciate the products and services available at our stores.</p> <p>However, we need your help in making the supermarket even more what you want it to be</p>

(12½ marks)

(b) **Situation**

You are a small business/start-up advisor in Harkney's, a major retail bank. You are trying to attract more customers to use your bank's advice and services to small business start-ups. To this end you are planning an open evening for current bank customers who are considering starting their own business.

Task

Write a flyer which will be available on the counter of the bank advertising the open evening. Invent any further content as necessary.

Some or all of the following key words and phrases may, but do not have to be, used in your answer.

Key words and phrases:

Get information / run your own business / open evening / expert presentation / informal meeting with successful entrepreneurs / small business advisory team available / contact details

<p>(appropriate heading)</p> <p>How often have you wished your boss were as nice as you?</p>

(12½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)



SERIES 2 EXAMINATION 2004
ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS

LEVEL 4

(Code No: 4041)

THURSDAY 29 APRIL

Instructions to Candidates

- (a) *The time allowed for this examination is 3 hours.*
 - (b) *Answer **all 4** questions.*
 - (c) *All questions carry equal marks.*
 - (d) *All answers must be clearly and correctly numbered but need not be in numerical order.*
 - (e) *While formal accuracy is expected, adequate and appropriate communication is essential and candidates must judge the length of their answers in this light.*
 - (f) *When you finish, check your work carefully.*
 - (g) *The use of standard English dictionaries and cordless non-programmable calculators is permitted. Candidates whose first language is not English may use a bilingual dictionary.*
-

QUESTION 1(a)

Read the following article and **answer the questions** that follow it. Credit will be given for answering the questions in your own words and demonstrating comprehension, rather than quoting directly from the text.

Sick? You will be when you ring the office.

Thinking of taking a sickie though you are not really sick at all? Think again. Most companies are adopting controversial measures to ensure that their staff come to work. What's more, they appear to be having an effect. New research by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) reveals that absenteeism levels are now 7.8 days a year – down by almost a full day since last year.

“Companies have had no choice,” says a spokesperson for the CBI. “Absenteeism can cost a company 3% of its payroll – a national total of more than £10 billion a year. In fact, over the past decade, absenteeism has become one of the biggest problems facing the British workplace.”

Among the latest ‘anti-sick’ strategies is paying staff not to be ill. “Workers with a full attendance during the year now receive a £100 bonus,” explains Deirdre Devereux, administration services manager for Marsden Building Society, who claims the figure is reviewed annually and the results have been highly successful. “Because there are only 200 staff, absence was having a major impact on day-to day business,” she says.

Other organisations have started providing a figure for the number of ‘acceptable’ days absence. Malcolm Smyth, a business psychologist specialising in absenteeism, claims this is particularly effective. “It sounds 19th century,” he admits. “You can imagine staff coughing away at their manager’s desk pleading ‘I know I’ve reached my quota of flu days but can’t you put this down as a virus or something?’ But in reality it is a simple way of monitoring patterns of time off. If, say, this is your sixth Monday off in 3 months, your manager has a right to ask questions.”

Surveys consistently show that the most common day for sickies is Monday, probably following an over-active weekend. This comes as no surprise to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. “Our research shows that just over a third of all sickness absence has nothing to do with genuine ill health,” says Diane Sinclair, adviser in employment relations. Younger staff have the worst reputation when it comes to attendance, according to the latest research from the Department for Education and Employment.

But Dr Martyn Dyer-Smith, principal psychologist at the University of Northumbria, and a specialist in absenteeism, is not convinced that today’s remedial methods are the solution. He says, “Monitoring does nothing more than dehumanise the workforce, and the policies that companies put in place seem to be based on fear and bribery which will in the end decrease loyalty and productivity rather than increase it.”

Instead, he suggests, employers must try to find the root of the problem. In fact, he cites one supermarket that has found that its efforts to understand why people take time off have cut absence rates by half in some of its stores. “Anyone who phones in sick is now put through to someone trained in managing absence rather than the colleague who happens to answer the call,” says human resources policy manager, Keith Ricks. “Their aim is to find out – in a caring way – why the employees isn’t in work, and if there is anything we can do to prevent it happening again.”

Andrew Marker, a business psychologist, adds that some companies need to go further still by assessing the culture of the organisation. “Consider”, he says, “the fact that absence rates in the public sector far outweigh those in the private sector. Studies show the reason could be that employees perceive the former as not being owned by anyone and so do not feel they are letting anyone down by taking extra days off.”

QUESTION 1(a) CONTINUED

However, one communications company, TST 2000, believes it has found the most innovative solution. It has introduced 'duvet days' – 2 extra days off a year for employees who occasionally just can't bring themselves to crawl out of bed. Unsurprisingly, it has an almost 100% take up rate. "We respect our employees' need to have those added sickies and they respect us for it. Everyone's happy," said a spokesperson.

(Adapted from an article in *The Independent on Sunday*)

- (i) What was the approximate figure for absenteeism last year and how does it compare to this year? (2 marks)
- (ii) What do the following figures represent in the article?
(1) 3%
(2) £10 billion
(3) 1/3 (= one-third)
(4) 100% (4 marks)
- (iii) In your own words explain what is meant by *19th century* in this context, and why Malcolm Smyth defends the policy discussed. (2 marks)
- (iv) Do younger staff take more time off sick? (1 mark)
- (v) Explain why Dr Martin Dyer-Smyth opposes these developments in absenteeism policy. (2 marks)
- (vi) Who is Keith Ricks and what is the policy of his company? (2 marks)
- (vii) Paraphrase Andrew Marker's contribution to the discussion. (2 marks)
- (15 marks)

QUESTION 1(b)

Situation

You are the owner and Managing Director of a small manufacturing company (100 employees). There has been increasing absenteeism during the last 2 years and you have decided to introduce an annual bonus for staff (excluding managers) who maintain 100% attendance throughout the year.

Task

Using ideas from the text above, **write a memo** to the staff explaining the background to your decision and giving details of the scheme.

(10 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 2

Situation

You are an assistant in the Small Business Advisory (SBA) Department of Harkney's Bank. You follow up initial meetings between your boss and people from start-up companies who are potential clients of the bank. You were recently present at a meeting between your boss, Mr Bob Adams, and Ms Patricia Brown who is interested in opening a corporate account for her new business with your bank. If she became a customer she would also benefit from the services of the SBA Department.

Task

Read the transcript of part of the meeting, at which you were present, and the memo, giving you instructions, from your boss.

- (a) Write the follow-up letter to Patricia Brown and
- (b) Write the memo to Mary Williams, including the note of the meeting for the SBA Department bulletin referred to in your boss's memo.

Use information from the 2 texts and invent anything else as appropriate. You may assume that letterhead paper is used from the bank, but lay out the rest of the letter appropriately.

Transcript of meeting – Tuesday 20 April 2004

Bob Adams: So, Ms Brown, the business has a fairly healthy start up capital from your own savings, I understand.

Patricia Brown: Yes, that's right – but I will probably be needing credit facilities and some financing at some point as well.

BA: Yes, and of course, that would mean a business plan – but we can help you with that. One typical pitfall with a business plan is that it doesn't take into account a lot of things which newer business people don't know so much about, such as tax laws and VAT*. You can overestimate and underestimate, both of which, of course, are bad for your plan and put off potential backers. Our tax advisers in the SBA Department are right up to speed on that sort of thing, particularly in relation to start-up companies which, of course, can get quite a lot of tax breaks in the first few years.

PB: That all sounds very encouraging. Initially, the company will have 3 employees, apart from myself – I'm slightly worried about staff taxes as well, paying over the odds and so on.

BA: Yes, that's quite a big area – in fact, everything relating to staff can be worrying and expensive, especially when, by necessity, you're maybe taking on people you don't know too much about. I'm sure you know sacking staff that aren't up to it can be pretty hard to do without getting into a lot of legal hassle. But we are experienced here in the employment law side of things too. Actually, another big legal area is Copyrights and Patents – you want to make sure your ideas are protected from the more established competitors, the big fish.

PB: Absolutely... What about IT – what are your thoughts there?

BA: Well, 2 big things in my experience for new companies are, first, if you're planning to launch on the web, getting the right URL is critical. The other thing is the simple initial investment in the equipment – computers can break or boost your business, so you really need the benefit of some expert research first. Which, of course, we can provide!

PB: Great. So where do we go from here?

QUESTION 2 CONTINUED

BA: Well, I'll send you a letter in the next couple of days, just putting in writing what we've been discussing and what I think we can offer you if you come to us as a new business client; and, actually, I'll bring it up at our next Department meeting to see if anyone has got anything to add – experience specific to your industry and so on. I think one of our strengths at Harkney's is that we do try to fit advisers to clients very closely.

PB: Okay, thanks, I'll look forward to getting your letter.

*VAT = UK purchase tax

MEMO

To: Jane Simson
From: Bob Adams
Date: 28 April 2004
Subject: PB Interiors Ltd.

Can you write a letter for me to sign to Ms Brown of PB Interiors Ltd who we had the meeting with last Tuesday? I just want you to summarise the advantages for her and the company of opening her account with us as we discussed at the meeting. Obviously, emphasise the services of the SBA Department to her – it seemed to me that her relative inexperience in business will make that quite key in her decision about where to bank. I think the Interiors/Home Décor market is a good one at the moment, so I feel quite positive about the company in general – you can indicate this to her. We'll know more when we get the full business plan in, she did suggest she would be looking to her bank for credit facilities

Also, can you write a couple of paragraphs about the meeting and what the state of play is now, for inclusion in the next Department bulletin to send out ahead of the next Department meeting? Just outline PB Interiors in general. Mention that we're interested in getting her as a client as I think her ideas are sound and financially it's low-risk. Also, outline the need for somebody industry-specific to be her adviser, if there is anyone.

Send it in a memo to Mary Williams – she's putting the bulletin together this month.

Thanks,

BA

(25 marks)

QUESTION 3(a)

Situation

You work in the publications department of a consumers association. You contribute to the regular newsletter of the association.

Task

Summarise the following fact sheet in the form of a short article about the improvement in consumer rights in the UK in relation to the purchase of faulty goods. The reason for the improvement is new European Union legislation.

The tone of the article should be simple and informal for a non-technical readership.

FAULTY GOODS – IMPROVED CONSUMER RIGHTS

Q1 What are the current UK rights?

A The immediate right to reject goods, and demand the money back, where they are of unsatisfactory quality or not as described.

Thereafter, the right to demand compensation, which usually means repair or replacement but can also be financial compensation, for up to 6 years in England and Wales and 5 years in Scotland. The purchaser is currently required to prove that the fault was present at the time the goods were sold to him/her.

Q2 How will the EU Legislation benefit UK consumers?

A They will now enjoy in the UK a specific right to a repair or replacement of goods purchased if the goods are faulty at the time of receipt of the goods.

If the goods develop a fault within the first 6 months and the retailer wishes to dispute the claim, the retailer will be required to prove that the fault was not present when the goods were sold.

Q3 Can the retailer blame the delivery company who delivers the product to the consumer?

A The consumer is responsible for his goods only after he has received them. A retailer will not, therefore, be able to blame a delivery company if the goods do not arrive or are faulty when they do.

If they are faulty on delivery the consumer will have the right to repair or replacement of the goods within a reasonable time and without causing significant inconvenience to the buyer. The buyer is entitled to cancel the contract if repair or replacement is unfeasible.

Q4 Does the legislation require manufacturers or retailers to provide a 2-year guarantee for all goods?

A No. It is not a guarantee but a 2-year limitation period, during which consumers can report and seek redress for a fault that was there at the time of delivery. However, this is less than the current 5 or 6 year limitation in the UK.

Q5 What does the legislation mean for shopping elsewhere in the European Union?

A The Directive will protect UK shoppers abroad by providing a minimum standard of protection throughout the EU that was not available before. It means they will have a right to demand redress for faults that become apparent, up to 2 years after delivery, provided the faults were there at the time of delivery and it is reasonable to expect the goods to have lasted as long as the period in question. You may have more powerful rights (as in the UK - see mention of 6 years at question 2 above) as this is a minimum standards Directive.

QUESTION 3(a) CONTINUED

Q6 If a consumer buys a faulty product abroad does the legislation provide for the item to be returned to an outlet in the UK?

A No. The supplier of the goods is directly responsible to the buyer as is the case at the moment in most European countries.

(12½ marks)

QUESTION 3(b)

Situation

You work in the statistical analysis department of a market research company. One of your clients is a subscription satellite/cable TV channel, *Femme Trend*. The channel is aimed at women and is particularly oriented to clothing and fashion. It is considering launching a customer magazine which will be sent to all subscribers to the channel. The company wants some background information about the readership of similar customer magazines. The 2 most relevant customer magazines to their viewers are M&S Department Store magazine and Sky Broadcasting Company magazine.

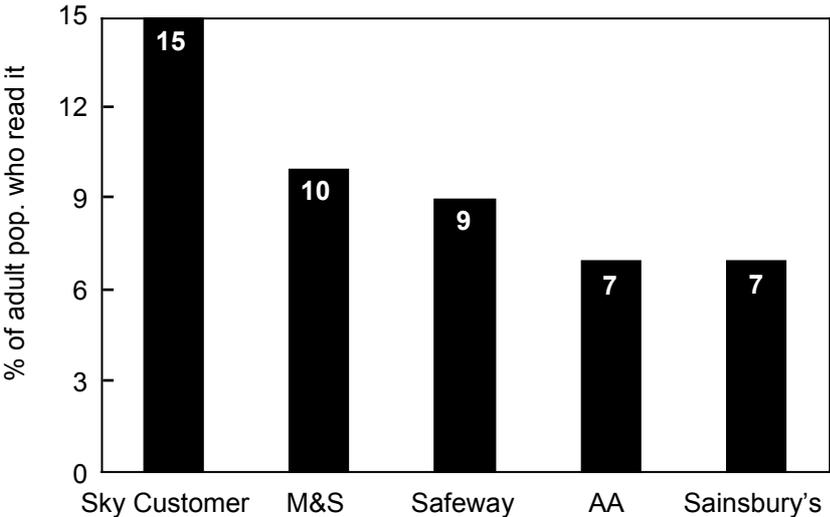
Task

Write a short text to accompany the 3 graphs below, focusing on the possible commercial benefits to the company of launching a customer magazine.

Notes

- 1 AB social grade is the highest social grades in the UK.
- 2 £30,000 is a high level of salary in the UK.
- 3 Sky Customer magazine and M&S magazine have the largest readership in the UK by virtue of having the biggest customer base.

MOST READ CUSTOMER MAGAZINE TITLES IN UK

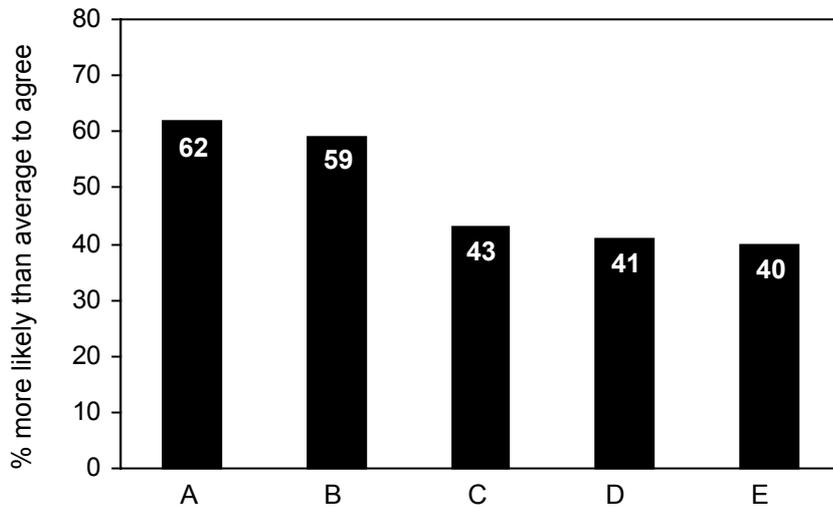


Source: TGI 2002 Winter

Base: All adults

QUESTION 3(b) CONTINUED

SKY CUSTOMER MAGAZINE – READERS’ ATTITUDES

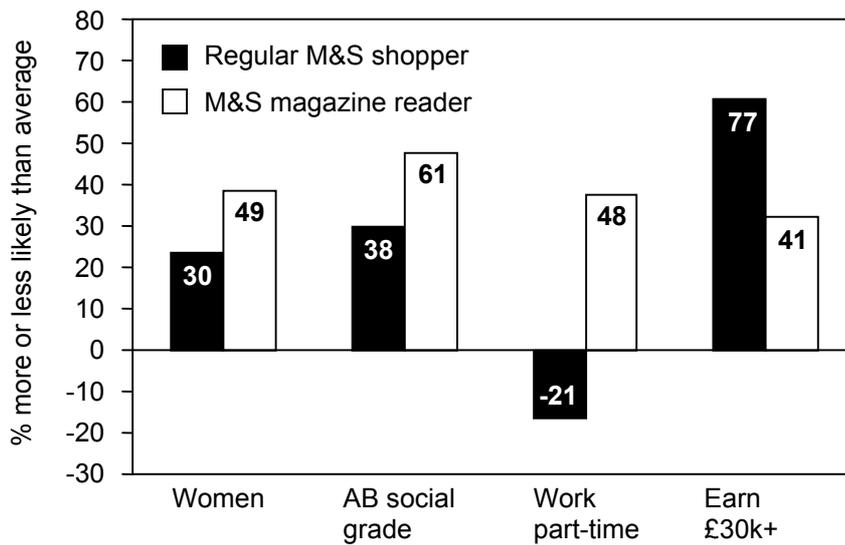


- A – Look forward to services like home shopping on TV
- B – Like the idea of digital TV
- C – Like the idea of a large selection of TV channels
- D – Shop online if there was a safe way to pay
- E – Often refer to Internet before making a purchase

Source: TGI 2002 Winter

Base: All adults

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REGULAR M&S SHOPPERS AND M&S MAGAZINE READERS



Source: TGI 2002 Winter

Base: All adults

(12½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 4

On the basis of the 2 following openings and according to the instructions accompanying them, continue and complete each extract in an appropriate way. Some or all of the key words and phrases may, but do not have to be, used in your answer.

(a) **Situation**

You work in the marketing department of a company, OFFICETRONICS, which produces software and offers consultancy advice for office administration and management systems. The target audience is office managers of medium-sized businesses.

Task

Write an advertisement to place in a business magazine to advertise a free seminar/software demonstration to be given by your company.

Key words and phrases:

Office Dynamics Course / significant improvements in office systems / professional staff management / greater efficiency / software demonstrations / eliminate mundane tasks / staff control systems / office communication / early booking incentive

FREE SEMINAR
OFFICETRONICS proudly presents their one-day.....

(12½ marks)

(b) **Situation**

You work in a large city-centre restaurant (Delaney's) that has until recently been popular with office workers from the surrounding companies who require a simple, but freshly cooked, lunchtime meal served in a fairly short period of time. You suspect that these customers have started to go to one of a number of self-service, fast-food style cafes and restaurants which have opened in the area.

Task

You have been asked to **design a short welcome message** in the form of a note to the customers which will be left on the tables. It should stress the strengths of the restaurant, without admitting there is a problem from the competition. It will incorporate an invitation to fill in a feedback form on the restaurant. This will help the owners to decide what their future strategy should be. Offer some incentive to the diners to fill in the accompanying survey form. (You are not required to write the survey form itself.)

Key Words and phrases:

Warm welcome / hectic day / table service / seasonal ingredients / light alternatives / local sourcing / maximum waiting time / attached survey form / improvements in food or service / complimentary desserts voucher

A WARM WELCOME TO DELANEY'S
Here at the Delaney's we know you appreciate the importance of taking a little time out ...

(12½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)



SERIES 3 EXAMINATION 2004
ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS

LEVEL 4

(Code No: 4041)

THURSDAY 10 JUNE

Instructions to Candidates

- (a) *The time allowed for this examination is 3 hours.*
 - (b) *Answer **all 4** questions.*
 - (c) *All questions carry equal marks.*
 - (d) *All answers must be clearly and correctly numbered but need not be in numerical order.*
 - (e) *While formal accuracy is expected, adequate and appropriate communication is essential and candidates must judge the length of their answers in this light.*
 - (f) *When you finish, check your work carefully.*
 - (g) *The use of standard English dictionaries and cordless non-programmable calculators is permitted. Candidates whose first language is not English may use a bilingual dictionary.*
-

QUESTION 1(a)

Read the following article and **answer the questions** that follow it. Credit will be given for answering the questions in your own words and demonstrating comprehension, rather than quoting directly from the text. (Answers in note form are acceptable).

Why Admen Don't Understand Women

Marketing departments are struggling to advertise effectively to the *fairer sex*. Women make 80 per cent of purchasing decisions, yet they are disregarding – or worse – ads aimed at them, thanks to the patronising and outdated attitudes and old-fashioned humour that is still widespread. That is a claim made in a report based on research into the views of 500 women.

Few people would argue that advertising has not moved on since the interwar period, when Palmolive ads could ask: "Would your husband marry you again?" suggesting that women should use their product to retain their youthful looks and allure. Nonetheless, the survey found that 65 per cent of women aged between 35 and 45 years old think that advertising aimed at them is patronising. The survey also revealed that 47 per cent of all women think that ads aimed at them are not as funny as other advertising.

The Ad agency that commissioned the research believes that the advertising industry has fallen behind. It claims that categorising women by age or traditional occupations, such as "middle-aged", "housewife" or "mum" no longer works: women do not have a shared agenda, are staying "mentally youthful" for longer, and combine their jobs with housework and child-rearing. There is especially worrying news for TV advertisers in the research, as well: it claims that, because women shun hard-sell tactics and notice more detail than men, they pay greater attention to poster and magazine advertising, local sponsorship and their peers for guidance on what to buy.

The report also criticises the use of "man-bashing" in ads aimed at women. These ads usually involve groups of sassy women mocking or humiliating men. A number of alcohol brands have tried this tactic in the past. According to the researchers "man-bashing" stemmed from the ad industry's fear of being politically incorrect – women in ads had to be *handled with care* to avoid the accusation of sexism. One way to avoid the criticism was to pick on men and the result is "bland, 'vanilla' advertising". One contributor to the report says that political correctness has now gone so far that advertising fails to use the full range of human characteristics when it comes to portraying women – they are *never* portrayed as slower or less clued up than men.

The scarcity of women in creative departments and at creative director level is, according to one eminent marketing director, one of the main reasons why communication with women is hampered. 1.8 per cent of copywriters and 2.2 per cent of art directors are women. Most creative departments are staffed by young men. When they get a brief saying that the target group is women over 40, they simply never think to themselves, 'She could have been a punk once!'

However, there is also an established opinion that it is not entirely the advertisers' fault. For example, despite the fact that young men dominate the creative side of advertising and bring with them a young man's perspective, one agency insider says that it is the clients themselves who often refuse to break the mould when it comes to new types of creative execution: "You can't lay all the blame on the advertisers – the clients can also be deeply conservative." Similarly, another marketing director finds that it is the nature of women themselves which causes problems for marketers. He comments that to target 'thirty-something' women is nearly impossible: "You don't communicate with an age-group, you communicate with a mindset and yet a single woman can have a number of different mindsets depending on her role at the time. The secret is to catch her at the right time."

Women have throughout history been described, usually by men, as contrary and difficult to please. Whether this is true or not – or whether the problem instead lies with the creative departments – it seems there is no sure way to advertise effectively to women.

(Adapted from an article in *Marketing Week magazine*)

QUESTION 1(a) CONTINUED

- (i) In the context of advertising why is it important that women make 80% of the buying decisions?
(3 marks)
- (ii) “Women do not have a shared agenda” (paragraph 3). What does the writer mean by this and what difficulties does this cause to advertisers?
(2 marks)
- (iii) Why is TV advertising less effective for women than other forms of advertising?
(2 marks)
- (iv) Advertisers were afraid of being politically incorrect. What were the results of this?
(3 marks)
- (v) Young men in marketing departments never think about a 40-something woman ‘She could have been a punk once.’ What does this imply about these young men?
(2 marks)
- (vi) Give two examples of how it is not entirely the advertisers’ fault that advertising to women is generally ineffective?
(3 marks)
- (15 marks)

QUESTION 1(b)

Situation

You are a Senior Manager (in the Communications Department) of a drinks manufacturing company (Kings Drinks Ltd) and you believe that the company does not advertise effectively to women. The senior management have decided to hold a two-day workshop on the issue for all staff in the company involved with marketing.

Task

Using ideas from the text in question 1(a), write a memo to the Marketing Department outlining the issues and giving notice of the workshop intended to address it.

Invent any other details as necessary.

(10 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 2

Situation

Your company, which provides corporate professional training services, wants to relocate its premises. It has drawn up a shortlist of three possible sites:

- Crowther Square
- Rotherham Mansions
- York Place

A team of property consultants, Apex Ltd, have prepared a feasibility study on each of the three sites and after reading the study, the senior management team are meeting to discuss and decide which property they wish to take forward to further negotiations with the owners.

Task

You are acting as clerk to the meeting and have been asked to write a summary report of the discussion that will be sent to Apex Ltd, giving the details behind the management's decision.

(The report will be sent with a covering letter, explaining what Apex Ltd is required to do next. You **do not** have to write the covering letter.)

The following is the transcript of the relevant parts of the meeting:

Felix: Okay, so we're looking at costs, location and development potential, I think.

Salleh: Yes, let's start from there and see where we get to.

Felix: The Crowther and Rotherham buildings' rents are quite a bit cheaper than York Place – but maybe York Place is not so expensive if we can get them to bring down their service charges and we can reduce other overheads; it's a modern building, it doesn't need much doing to it. I think we could manage that. Do you think there's going to be any movement in their charges?

Salleh: No, I think that Apex tried everything and what we've got here is rock bottom. But if we really like York Place, it's worth trying to negotiate – but I'm not hopeful.

Felix: A pity really because, at first sight, York Place looks like the best of the three.

Magda: Why do you say that, particularly?

Felix: Well, it's about the same size as where we are now and the location is excellent. That will be important in terms of keeping our current staff, particularly secretarial/admin. folk. The senior people will come with us anywhere so long as we stay in London – but convenience matters more to the others.

Magda: True, but, if in the long run, one of the others is cheaper, we can offset the recruitment and training costs for new secretaries and so on.

Felix: No, that would be a big headache – I think the location issue is an important one.

Salleh: Let's look at space-development potential. For me, the best for that is Rotherham Mansions – we can fit all the departments in and have space for bigger meeting rooms – that will save a lot of money on hiring venues. It also means quite a lot of the promotional stuff can be done from there.

QUESTION 2 CONTINUED

Felix: But still we come back to the location issue. As soon as we try to use it for training, we'll hit problems and people won't come. It's just not central enough.

Salleh: Yes, but the other thing about the Rotherham building is that we can take the kitchen and canteen with us. The others simply haven't got the layout to allow for a staff restaurant.

Magda: How important is the restaurant?

Salleh: Pretty important for a lot of staff.

Magda: But we could do a food voucher or some kind of concession scheme for staff, even if we don't have an in-house restaurant.

Felix: Yes, but we need to think about the catering for training events as well.

Salleh: So, actually, that is one way we could move forward. If we take the Rotherham, although it's not central, we've got the space to make the training environment really exceptional and the catering excellent. That in itself could be a big selling point – move the training peripherals upmarket, but keep the costs down.

Magda: Yes, I like that idea.

Felix: So, we've ruled out Crowther, it's not central and it doesn't have a great deal of space or anything else to recommend it, although it's cheap. York Place is a great location, good in lots of ways, but expensive and getting even more expensive when you look at the cost of room hire and outside catering – on account of its size.

Salleh: And we're really coming round to Rotherham Mansions.

Magda: Well, it's got the advantage of being cheap enough to allow us spare cash to make the place really special – which is taking the business in the direction we want it to go. And doing so much more stuff in-house is going to save as well. Come to that, we could really start thinking laterally – like providing transport to the training events from more central locations.

Felix: Yes, limo service, minibuses – whatever is appropriate.

Magda: Actually, some kind of company bus service from the centre is a possibility for the staff as well, isn't it?

Felix: Yes, true, although I think even quite a lot of the junior staff might move with us – we could maybe offer some incentives and make it a really nice environment to work in – good canteen, maybe even gym facilities. We've got the space.

Salleh: Yes, all right, but let's agree the building first. So we're moving forward with Rotherham Mansions and we'll deal with those other issues once that is sorted out. Thanks.

Write the report.

(25 marks)

QUESTION 3(a)

Situation

You are a financial adviser. One of your clients, Astrid Evans, has telephoned you and asked you to give an opinion as to whether she should sell her property and move into rented accommodation for a period of time because she believes that there will soon be a fall in property prices and that she will be able to make a profit by buying another property at a lower price at a later date. You have a conversation with your firm's property expert who gives you the following opinion.

"Yes, a lot of people are talking about doing that at the moment...it might have seemed like an outlandish idea a few years ago selling your home and renting for a while to avoid a possible house price crash – but it is becoming increasingly mainstream.

The problem is that no one knows what will happen to house prices, although everyone you ask seems to have [an opinion](#). It's true that property prices are a lot less volatile than share prices and price falls have certainly been scarcer than stock market dips in the last 30 years. For example, I know that in the UK, house prices have fallen in only four years since 1973 (but actually they were all in the early 1990s, when prices fell almost 20% overall), whereas the stock market has notched up seven annual losses at different times over the same period.

Still, selling your home to rent seems a bit risky to me. After you account for government taxes of [up to 4%](#), fees for [agents](#) and all the moving costs and the fact that it usually costs more to [rent than to buy](#), prices have to fall quite a way before the whole process becomes worthwhile – and you might even end up without any home, given how little security there is in the rented sector.

On top of that, you need to be pretty precise with your timing. Sell up one year early, for example, and miss a further year of gains and you could still lose out overall, even if you did correctly predict a fall that came a little later. If prices are already falling, there is also the danger of selling too late. Of course, if you were planning to move anyway, so that you were always going to incur these costs, then renting for a little while and waiting for the perfect property to come up at a lower price makes some sense.

You'll also need to get your crystal ball out to tell you when to buy back into the market. If you stay pessimistic for too long, you could see any gains you did make wiped out completely. I would say timing any sort of market is 10% skill and 90% luck and most people should just avoid it."

(Adapted from 'Motley Fool' web-site)

Task

Write a letter to your client, summarizing the property expert's opinion and explaining the reason for the advice you choose to give.

You may assume that headed paper is used, but set out the rest of the text as a letter. The client's name and address is Astrid Evans, 48 Martle Road, Swindon, Wiltshire SW12 9TT.

(12 ½ marks)

QUESTION 3(b)

Situation

You work in the Market Analysis Department of a perfume company which has recently started an online shopping facility.

Task

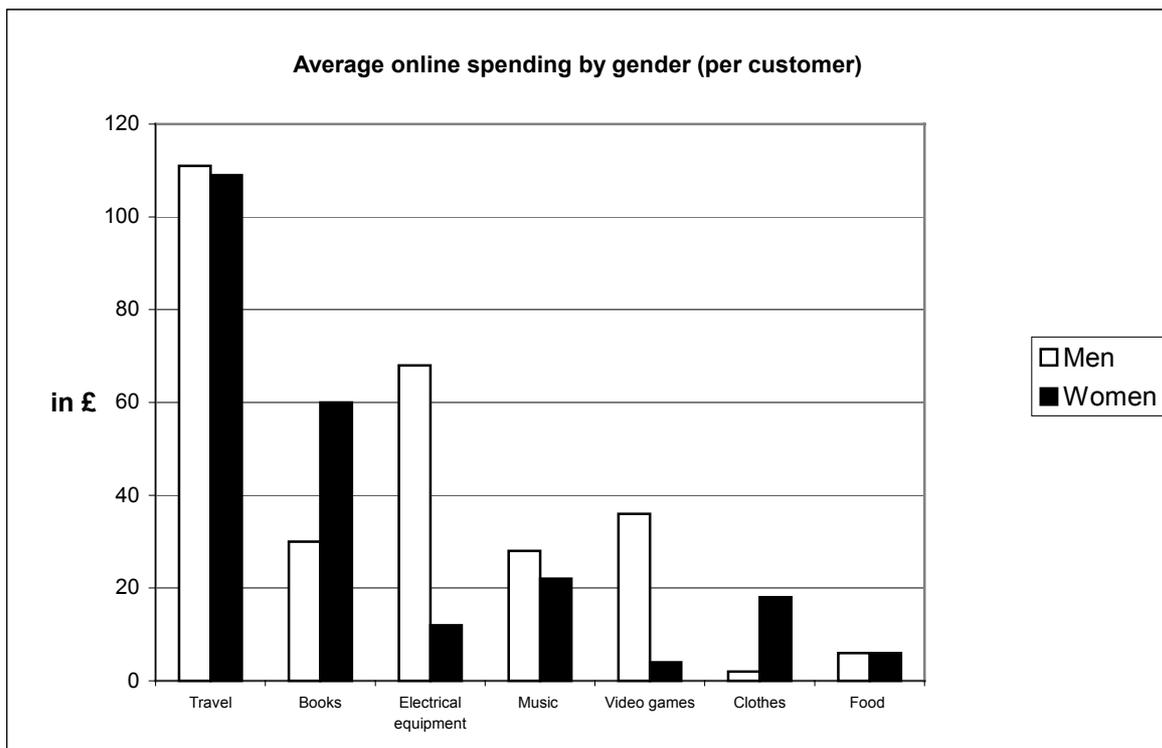
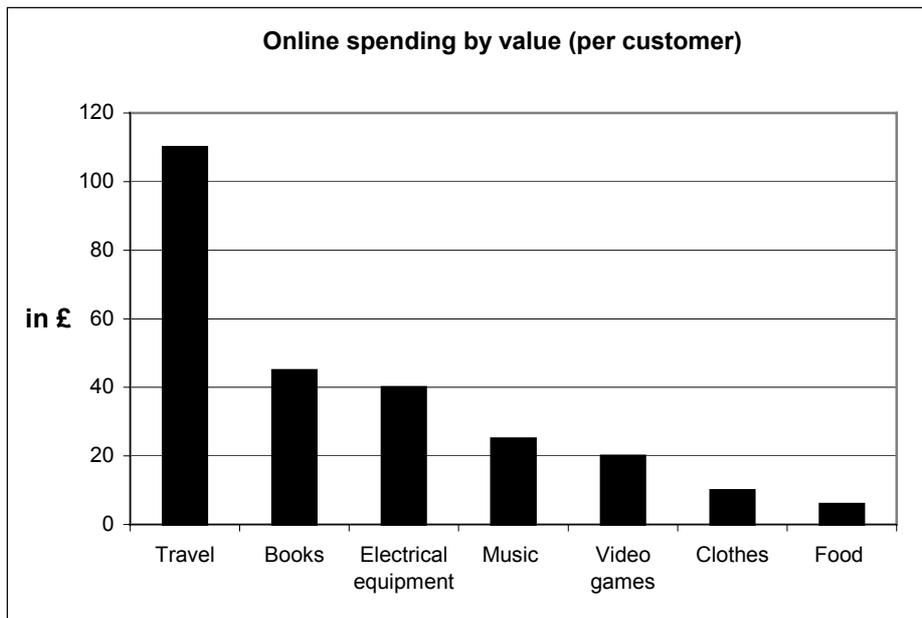
You have been asked to write a short commentary to accompany the following data about trends in the gift market in online shopping.

Figures

Total online sales in UK (this year): £14 bn
 Total online sales in UK (last year): £7.6 bn
 4 million adults shopped online last year
 8.4 million adults shopped online (this year)



QUESTION 3(b) CONTINUED



Write the short commentary.

(12½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 4

On the basis of the two following openings and according to the instructions accompanying them, continue and complete each extract in an appropriate way.
The list of key words and phrases should be used for guidance, some or all the words may, but do not have to be, included in the texts.

(a) **Situation**

You work for the Senior Manager in the Communications Department of the company (Kings Drinks Ltd) referred to in Question 1(b). As a result of the 2-day workshop described in that question, it was decided to restructure the marketing activities of the company and to appoint a woman, Annie Price, as joint Head of Marketing in the Marketing Department of the company. Her brief is to market the company's products effectively to women, by fundamentally changing the company's advertising approach to women as a target group.

Task

Write a press release for immediate distribution to magazines and journals in the marketing and drinks industries, giving news of the appointment.

[Headings etc]

Kings Drinks Ltd has appointed Annie Price to the newly created post of joint Head of Marketing in a radical restructuring of the company's marketing team.

Key words and phrases:

Former position / Kings now targeting women / Managing Director, Derek King says, 'For too longmiss out on women' / language / images of women / major growth / frontline of this trend.

(12½ marks)

(b) **Situation**

You work in the publications department of a chain of supermarkets, Somerways. The supermarket publishes a magazine which is sent through the post to regular customers (eg store card holders) and can be collected from the stores by shoppers. The magazine contains information about the stores, details of special offers, news items of general consumer interest and seasonal recipes.

Task

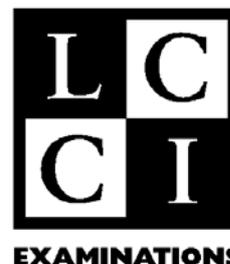
Write the welcome message from the editor (Hannah Kelly) for the April issue of the magazine.

<p>Hello, Somerways' shoppers!</p> <p>Welcome to the April issue of Somerways' magazine.</p>

Key Words and phrases:

News and developments / upgrade of seven regional stores / family shopping enjoyable / children's menus / crèches / Family Friendly week / recipes / new season's produce / birthday party catering / nutrition adviser in every store / vouchers and special offers / bargains this month

(12½ marks)



SERIES 4 EXAMINATION 2004
ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS

LEVEL 4

(Code No: 4041)

TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER

Instructions to Candidates

- (a) *The time allowed for this examination is 3 hours.*
 - (b) *Answer **all 4** questions.*
 - (c) *All questions carry equal marks.*
 - (d) *All answers must be clearly and correctly numbered but need not be in numerical order.*
 - (e) *While formal accuracy is expected, adequate and appropriate communication is essential and candidates must judge the length of their answers in this light.*
 - (f) *When you finish, check your work carefully.*
 - (g) *The use of standard English dictionaries and cordless non-programmable calculators is permitted. Candidates whose first language is not English may use a bilingual dictionary.*
-

QUESTION 1(a)

Read the following article and **answer the questions** that follow it. Credit will be given for answering the questions in your own words and demonstrating comprehension, rather than quoting directly from the text.

This is a man's world

.....at least in finance. There can be little doubt about male dominance in business when only one in 100 of the UK's largest companies is headed by a woman. That company is Pearson, the media conglomerate that owns the Financial Times. Even in the US the proportion of women who head Fortune 500 companies is similar. Yet recent research shows that 46 per cent of all US businesses are owned by women, while employment at women-owned businesses is growing at a rate of 18 per cent, compared with 8 per cent for all other companies.

Research shows that women also make better investors than men. Luckily for men, there is much they can learn from women. What is it women do in stock picking and research trading that produces better results?

In a study of more than 35,000 investors by the University of California at Davis, women's portfolios earned 1.4 per cent annually more than men's. Indeed, single women earned 2.3 per cent a year more on their investments than single men. Furthermore, a 10-year study by the National Association of Investors Corporations found that all-female investment clubs outpaced all-male ones, producing 23.8 per cent average compounded lifetime annual returns compared with 19.2 per cent for the men.

The study primarily blames over-trading for the poor male performance. Men trade their accounts 45 per cent more often than women, and single men shuffle their holdings 67 per cent more often than single women. Perhaps the old adage about men being afraid of commitment has something to do with it.

There must be lessons in all this for us men. So, what are they?

- Save transaction costs by not churning your portfolio. If you can't resist the gender imperative, then at least choose a cheap online broker with a low flat rate for all trades.
- Men should spend more time researching before investing. Fear of making a mistake was much higher among women according to the study. Consequently, women spend 40 per cent more time than men researching and are also less likely to trade on a "hot tip".
- Men need to rein in their over-confidence. A total of 52 per cent of men express confidence in their ability to invest wisely compared with just 38 per cent of women, according to the American Savings Economic Council. This in turn often makes women better traders – more risk averse, awaiting clearer market signals for good trading opportunities and more diversified. With so much genetic advantage, it's unfortunate that, according to one poll, twice as many women (48 per cent) as men indicated "investing is scary for me". Women need a little more confidence to start investing, but not so much as to make them bad investors.

To help redress the situation, there are financial websites designed specifically for women that aim to narrow the gender confidence gap. But in the same way that the Bank of Scotland has announced initiatives to overcome some of the challenges women face in starting up businesses, do we need gender-based broker services, too? We already have insurance services for women only. Women investors seem to think so. The daughter of the founder of the world's largest online brokerage, Charles Schwab, set up an investment centre online for women on Schwab.com a couple of years ago.

(Adapted from an article in the *Financial Times*).

QUESTION 1(a) CONTINUED

- (i) Based on the facts given in the first paragraph, why is it surprising that there are not more women in senior business positions in large US and UK companies?
(3 marks)
- (ii) Explain in your own words what the following figures refer to:
(1) 52%
(2) 48%
(2 marks)
- (iii) In what sense is *being afraid of commitment* a large part of the problem for male investors?
(2 marks)
- (iv) Are the following statements True or False or Not Specified?
(1) Women use online brokers more
(2) Women are more cautious
(3) Confidence is an advantage in share dealing
(3 marks)
- (v) What two examples does the writer give of business areas, apart from investing, where there have been *women-only* initiatives?
(2 marks)
- (vi) Explain the following expressions in your own words. They are all in paragraph 5.
(1) churning your portfolio
(2) a hot tip
(3) risk averse
(3 marks)
- (15 marks)

QUESTION 1(b)

Situation

You work in the training department of a firm of financial advisors. After having read the article in (1a) you decide to arrange a day training seminar for the financial advisors entitled 'What men can learn from women investors'. You book a leading female investor, Francine Brun from Faithful Investments, to speak at the event.

Task

Write a memo to the Financial Advisors giving details of the training seminar. Include some of the ideas from the text and invent any other details as necessary.

(10 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 2

Situation

You work in the Corporate Communications Department of a steel pipe manufacturing company and are responsible for public relations. The company claims to follow a number of ethical and social policies. For example, the company is committed to not discriminating against older applicants and it aims for at least 20% of all new recruits to the workforce to be over 55.

There has been controversy because of a recent alleged case of age discrimination in the company. The case has been reported in a national newspaper and you have been given responsibility for dealing with the bad press that has resulted.

Read the newspaper article and the relevant part of the transcript of a conversation that you had with the head of Human Resources; then write the two texts as indicated below.

From the Daily Chronicle

On the Scrap Heap

Sanjiv Kapur thought he was admirably well-qualified for the job of Warehouse Supervisor at Montague Metals PLC and knowing about the company's commitment to positive age discrimination, he thought that, even at 56, he had a good chance of getting the job. He was in for a rude awakening.

Mr Kapur had worked for 32 years as Warehouse Supervisor at Blex Conglomerates in nearby Castleton before the company closed down 18 months ago, leading to 220 redundancies. Many people in later life would be happy to settle for early retirement, but Mr Kapur was still hopeful that his long experience and excellent working record would mean that he could find another job. He believed his luck had finally turned when he saw the vacancy at Montague Metals. Three weeks after his application, he had received no acknowledgement or reply. When he phoned the company, an assistant in the Personnel Department told him that his application was good but that as the job was quite physically demanding, they had appointed a younger person.

"I could not believe it!" says Mr Kapur. "They hadn't contacted me, hadn't interviewed me, hadn't checked my references – I'm fitter and stronger than most of the 30 year olds I know – and I'd like to have another ten years, at least, in the work I enjoy. So much for a positive attitude to older workers."

A representative of the company told us that age was *not* the main factor in the decision not to call Mr Kapur for interview.

QUESTION 2 CONTINUED

Transcript

Head of HR (A): I don't know who it was who took the call – there are 13 people here and of course now there's no way of finding out.

Corporate Communications Officer (you – B): So what do you think happened?

A: I think they just said something off the top of their head, kind of trying to be nice. It's true though that we haven't been keeping up with the anti-age-discrimination policy recently – it's something we could be open to criticism about, we need to handle this very carefully.

B: Okay, well the first thing I'll do is write to the guy and apologise. Why didn't he get an interview?

A: I actually don't know – I suppose someone wasn't concentrating properly, I mean, with hindsight, his experience looks good – maybe they did just pass over him because of his age.

B: So, basically, we've got to go for damage limitation now.

A: Yes, he's been talking to the press.

B: I think we'll have to admit we got it wrong – that seems to go down well these days.

A: Yes. I'll speak to whoever it was that handled that vacancy and tell them they've got to be more careful when they're first going through applications, especially when it's a matter of policy like this.

B: Well, maybe I'll invite Mr Kapur in and see if there are any openings that he might be suitable for – obviously no guarantees until we meet him – but you reckon he looks good?

A: Yes, on paper, certainly. Maybe we can find him something and that would be good for public relations.

B: Okay, and can you write a memo to all the staff emphasising the importance of corporate image? We need to make it clear that we mean it. Tell them that there will be serious consequences if they don't keep it in mind all the time. Also, in future, I don't want them giving out informal feedback over the phone like this. If we are asked for feedback about why someone didn't get interviewed, the member of staff should put it in writing and get approval from one of the Human Resources Team Leaders first.

Task 1

Write the letter of apology/explanation/invitation to Mr Sanjiv Kapur, as referred to in the conversation. (His address is: 222 Harbour Road, Valetton, Oxon OX4 3UJ.) You may assume that the company letterhead is used, but lay out the rest of the letter appropriately.

(12½ marks)

Task 2

Write a memo to all staff summarising what has happened and emphasising the importance of maintaining the corporate image at all times when dealing with the public. You should also explain the new policy for providing feedback. It is not necessary to go into the details of what happened in the processing of Mr Kapur's application.

(12½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 3(a)

Situation

You work for a newspaper that runs a *problem page* for its readers giving advice and information about their rights at work. You receive the following:

I was employed for a probationary period of six months. During that time I was dismissed for poor performance and was given a week's pay instead of the notice in my contract. I had no warnings and the first I knew was when I was called in to a meeting and given a letter terminating my employment. Do I have a claim against my employer?

Julie, Manchester.

You discuss the case with the lawyer at your company, who gives you the following information about the reader's legal situation.

"Well, in situations where you get the push just like that, there are two possibilities. She can either go for Unfair Dismissal or Wrongful Dismissal. Unfair dismissal is when, basically, you're saying that you haven't done anything incorrect and they've got no reason to sack you – you know, it's unfair. But you need to have been working at a company for at least a year to be able to claim that – so that's not relevant here, actually.

Wrongful Dismissal is when you are saying that the company hasn't kept its side of the contract, so here the question is '*Is there a disciplinary procedure for unsatisfactory performance included in the contract, that the company should have followed?*' If there is (and if they haven't explicitly said it doesn't apply during the probationary period), then probably she's got a case. They can't just buy out her contractual rights by giving her a week's money. She needs to go to an Employment Tribunal if she wants to claim. A tribunal decides if the time period and the warnings given by a company allows someone a reasonable chance to sort out the problems in their work. It appears in this instance that they didn't give Julie any warnings at all, and if there is a disciplinary procedure in the contract, the company can't just sack someone with a week's money. In fact, she would get paid compensation – damages – for the period of time that she would have been employed there, if they had followed the procedure. The company writes the contract, and the company has to follow it.

The only other thing is that she's got to contact the tribunal within three months of leaving the company. It's a pity she's got to do it now, actually, because at the moment it's up to the tribunal to decide what's reasonable. Come next year they're changing the law to bring in a **minimum** disciplinary procedure for all employers – it'll all be a lot clearer then.

Anyway let me have a look at what you've written when you've done it and I'll check it for you."

Task

Summarise the lawyer's verbal advice into a short written statement of Julie's rights which will be suitable to be published in the newspaper.

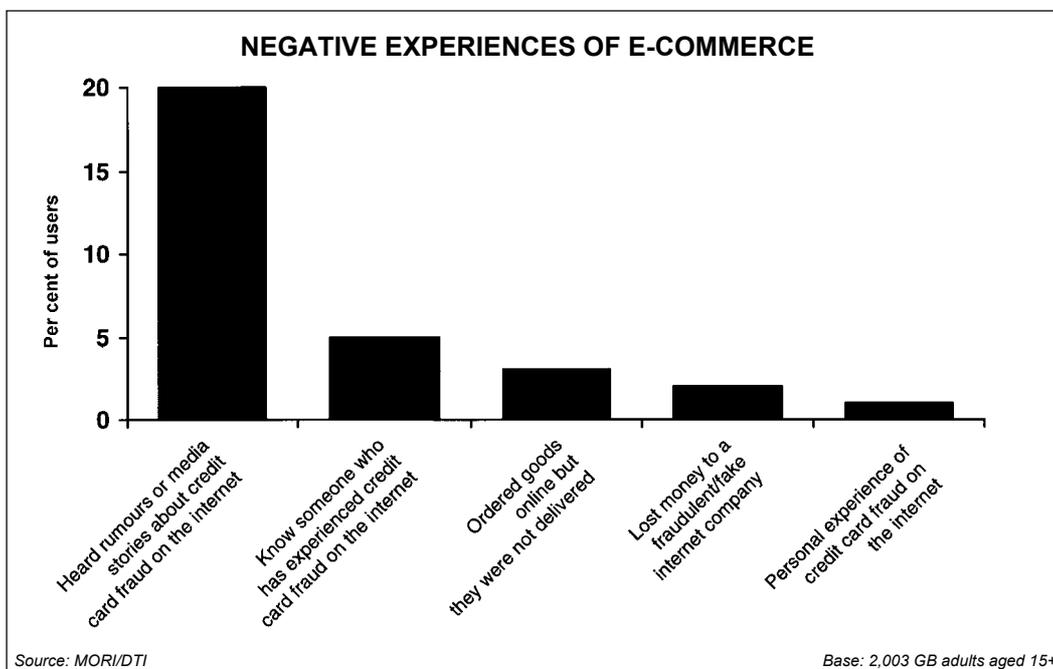
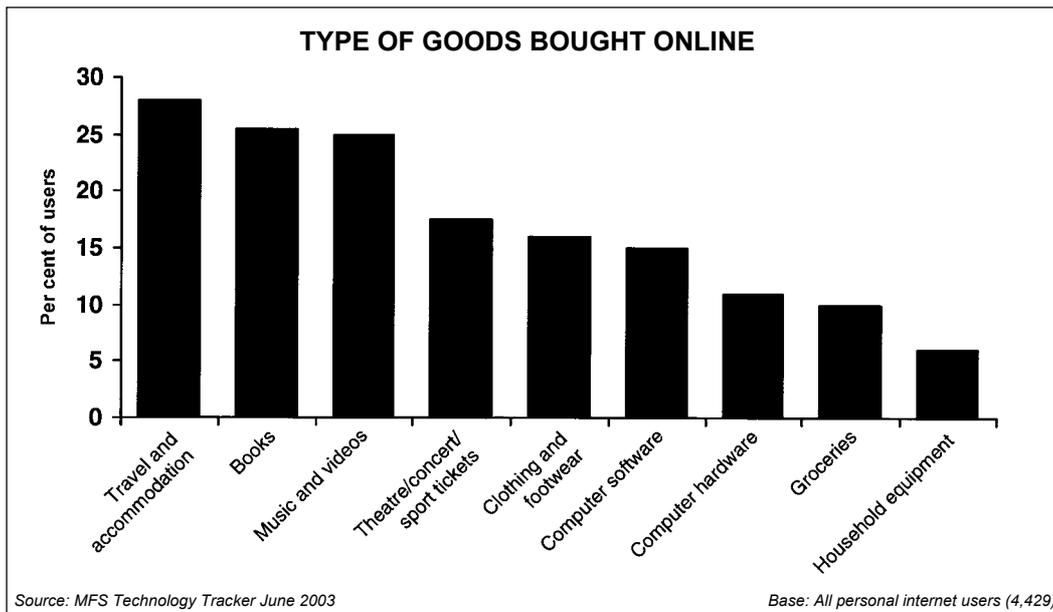
(12 ½ marks)

QUESTION 3(b)

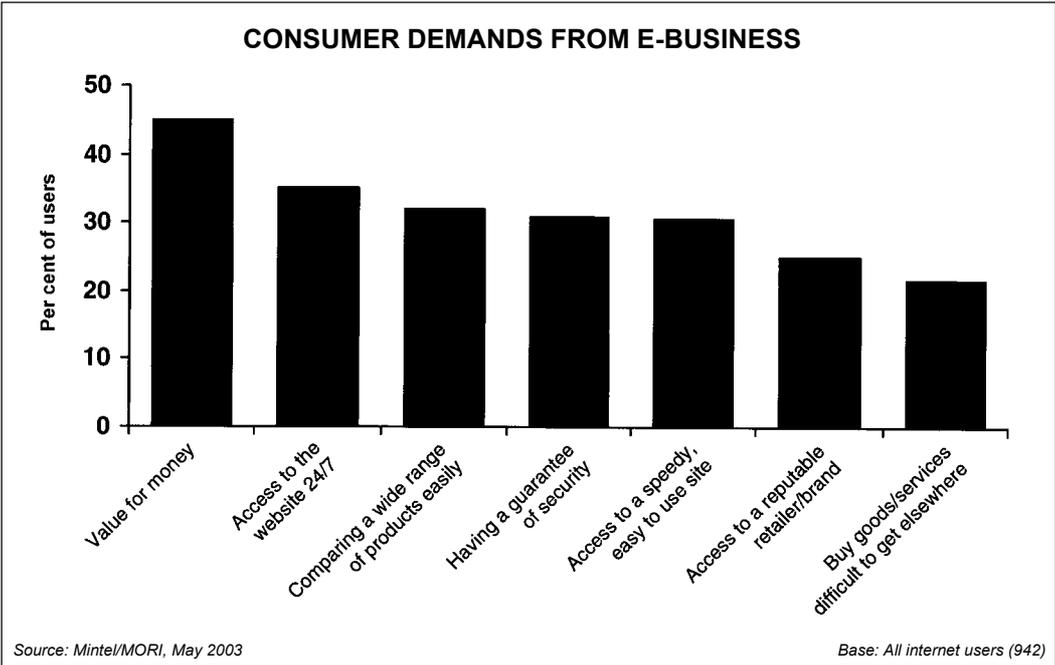
Situation

You work as an analyst in a market research company. Over half the people in your country are now connected to the Internet in their homes, and there has been a twelve-fold increase in online sales in the previous year. Because of this, you have been asked to research consumer attitudes in the e-commerce market.

Study the graphs and then complete the task that follows.



QUESTION 3(b) CONTINUED



Task

Write a comment and analysis of the three accompanying graphs, summarising the main findings.

(12 ½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)

QUESTION 4

On the basis of the two following openings and according to the instructions accompanying them, continue and complete each extract in an appropriate way.

Some or all of the key words and phrases may be, but do not have to be, used in your answer.

(a) **Situation**

You work in the admissions department of Malory Business School. The school has recently received a grant from an education charity to fund a series of open days with example training seminars to attract people from a wider range of backgrounds to join the part time MBA programme.

Task

Write a leaflet/invitation for the next Open Day.

Key words and phrases:

invite you to... / what to expect from part-time MBA course / typical training seminar on important aspects of Team Building / a team of student advisors to answer your questions / our commitment to access to business education for all.

Am I the sort of person who does an MBA? Do I need it? What will I learn? . . .

(12½ marks)

(b) **Situation**

You work in the Marketing Department of a chain of frozen food shops, 'FreezerWorld'. You are about to launch a new advertising campaign to attract back your previous core customers – mothers buying larger quantities for their families. During the last two years, the company has attempted to advertise itself as an up-market, convenience store for high-spending busy working people. However, this campaign has been unsuccessful and it has been decided to return to the company's typical 'supermarket' roots. To support this the company is undertaking a major store refurbishment programme.

Task

Prepare a press release about the advertising campaign and the store refurbishment programme.

(Headings etc.) FreezerWorld is focusing its attention back on mums

Key Words and phrases:

latest campaign / family-orientated once more / 'Hail the hero mum' slogan / previous campaigns / ads in the series feature mums shopping / new marketing director said "many busy mums didn't feel at home here anymore ..." / store refurbishment programme / making life easier / fresh produce / competing with the bigger supermarkets.

(12½ marks)

(Total 25 marks)