

Cambridge International Examinations Cambridge International Advanced Level

BUSINESS

9609/32 March 2017

Paper 3 Case Study MARK SCHEME Maximum Mark: 100

Published

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

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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General Marking Guidance for 9609 Paper 3

- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.
- Errors that are carried forward (e.g. when an incorrect numerical answer to one part of a question is used as the starting point for a calculation in the next part of the question) should not be compounded use the 'own figure rule'.
- Poor spelling, handwriting or grammar should not be penalised as long as the answer makes sense.
- The main Scoris annotations to be used are K (Knowledge), APP (Application), AN (Analysis), EVAL (Evaluation). For each of these four annotations, the number of marks awarded for that assessment objective must match the number of times that annotation is on the answer.
- Only award EVAL if the candidate has also demonstrated APP.
- Other Scoris annotations that can be used are: Tick, Cross, BOD (Benefit Of Doubt), TV (Too Vague), REP (Repetition), NAQ (Not Answered Question), OFR (Own Figure Rule), SEEN, On Page Comment.
- Blank pages on a script must be annotated as SEEN.
- A blank space, dash, question mark and a response that bears no relation to the question constitutes a 'no response'.
- In Section B, candidates answer either Question 6 or Question 7. The Section B question that the candidate does not answer must be entered as 'no response'.
- Blank pages, or pages that contain crossed out material, must be annotated using 'SEEN'.

This mark scheme includes a summary of appropriate content for answering each question. It should be emphasised, however, that this material is for illustrative purposes and is not intended to provide a definitive guide to acceptable answers. It is quite possible that among the scripts there will be some candidate answers that are not covered directly by the content of this mark scheme. In such cases, professional judgement should be exercised in assessing the merits of the answer and the senior examiners should be consulted if further guidance is required.

Application marks are not awarded for repeating material from the case study. Application is by answering in the context of the case or by using the information in the case to help answer the question.

| Question | | | Answer | | Marks | | | | |
|----------|--|---|---|--|-------|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | Analyse the likely opportunities and threats to SA of the forecast economic changes given in Appendix 1. | | | | | | | | |
| | Level | Knowledge 3 marks | Application 3 marks | Analysis 4 marks | | | | | |
| | 2 | 3 marks Good knowledge shown of opportunities and threats/impact of them | 3 marks Points well applied | 3–4 marks Good use of reasoned argument or theory to explain the likely impact of opportunities and threats | | | | | |
| | 1 | 1–2 marks Knowledge shown of opportunities and threats/impact of them | 1–2 marks Some attempt to apply points or one point well applied | 1–2 marks Some use of reasoned argument or theory to explain likely impact of opportunities and threats | | | | | |
| | 0 | | No creditable content | | | | | | |
| | Answers cou Knowledge • Opp and | : portunities and threats – ext I negatively. | ernal factors that impa | | | | | | |
| | | inition of terms from Appen | dix 1. | | | | | | |
| | risin • The • Infla abo • Wit recu • Imp of n | In this case predictions suggest that economic growth is slowing and inflation is rising. The currency of SA's home country is getting stronger against the dollar. Inflation is set to rise above the rate of economic growth – credit comments about falling 'real growth'. With low unemployment could flexible contracts mean more difficulty in recruiting staff? | | | | | | | |
| | I inl | | w profitability of SA. | | 1 | | | | |

| Question | Answer | | | |
|----------|---|--|--|--|
| | Analysis: Slowing economic growth may lead to incomes for consumers and businesses increasing at a slower rate and this could slow the rate of increase in demand for flights. Low unemployment could cause rising wage costs and impact SA's competitiveness. Businesses such as SA may be less willing to make substantial investments with falling growth of real GDP. Currency appreciation will lead to fares being higher if bought in Euros and probably other currencies. Incomes still increasing at a reasonable rate, continued increase in demand for air travel. SA's profitability is relatively low and could fall, meaning reliance on loan finance for future investments, interest rates set to rise. | | | |

| Question | Answer | | | | | | Marks | |
|----------|---|------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------|--|
| 2(a)(i) | Refer to Appendix 2. Calculate the net present value (NPV) for the purchase of the two new aircraft. | | | | | | 4 | |
| | Year Net cash flows \$m | | Discount factor | | Discounted cash flow \$m | Marks | | |
| | 0 | (80) | | | | 1 mark for some attempt to use | | |
| | 1 | 8 | .89 | | 7.12 | discount factors | | |
| | 2 | 12 | .80 | | 9.6 | 2 marks for arithmetic error and | | |
| | 3 | 15 | .71 | | 10.65 | failure to subtract capital cost | | |
| | 4 | 20 | .64 | | 12.80 | 3 marks for 1 error | | |
| | 5 | 30 | .57 | | 17.1 | 4 marks for correct answer | | |
| | 6 | 54 | .49 | | 26.46 | | | |
| | | | NPV | | 83.73 - 80 = 3.73 | | | |
| | Answ | Answer Mark | | | Rationale | | | |
| | \$3.73m 4 | | 4 | Correct answer | | | | |
| | \$83.73m 3 | | 3 | Capital cost not subtracted | | | | |
| | -\$8.03m | | 3 | Ignores residual value | | | | |
| | \$71.97m | | 2 | Ignores residual value and capital cost not subtracted | | | | |
| 2(a)(ii) | Refer to Appendix 3. Calculate the new gearing ratio for SA if \$80m is borrowed to purchase two new aircraft.Formula: non-current liabilities / capital employed × 100 = gearing % (1 mark) | | | | | | | |
| | <mark>\$348m + 80m (1 mark)</mark> \$1128 + 80m (1 mark) = 428m/1208m (2 marks) | | | | | | | |
| | 35.43% (4 marks) | | | | | | | |
| | \$428/\$ | 1128 (fails | to add \$8 | 80 in ca | apital employed) | = 37.94% (3 marks) | | |
| | Alterna | tive formul | a: non-cu | rrent li | iabilities / shareh | olders' equity × 100 (1 mark) | | |
| | <u>\$348m + 80m</u> (1 mark) \$780m (1 mark) = 428m/780m (2 marks) | | | | | | | |
| | 54.87% | 6 (4 marks) | | | | | | |
| | \$348r \$1128 | <u>n</u> m = 30.85% | % (2 mar∤ | (S) | | | | |

| Question | | | Ansv | ver | | Marks | | |
|----------|---|--|---|---|---|-------|--|--|
| 2(b) | | Refer to your results from part (a) and other information in the case. Recommend whether SA should purchase or lease the two aircraft. | | | | | | |
| | Level | Knowledge 2 marks | Application 2 marks | Analysis 5 marks | Evaluation 5 marks | | | |
| | 2 | 2 marks Good knowledge shown of relevant issues | 2 marks Good application to case | 3–5 marks Good use of reasoned argument or theory to explain investment appraisal result and other relevant issues | 3–5 marks Good judgement shown in answer and conclusion | | | |
| | 1 | 1 mark Some knowledge of relevant issues | 1 mark Some application to case | 1–2 marks Some use of reasoned argument or theory to either investment appraisal result or other relevant issues | 1–2 marks Some judgement shown in answer and/or conclusion | | | |
| | 0 | | No crea | litable content | | | | |
| | Investment appraisal is a way of assessing future returns from a capital purchase. NPV takes into account the future value of money. Leasing the aircraft involves a yearly cost/expense and aircraft will not be business assets. Balance sheet – Assets would increase with purchase option. | | | | | | | |
| | Application: NPV 3.73m, so positive after six years, leasing over six years would cost \$4.6m × 2 × 6 = 55.2m. Cost of purchase less residual value is £56m. Discounted payback 5yrs 10 months. Payback is 4yrs 10 months. Increase in gearing ratio could be significant, but still low geared. How much will painting SA's colours cost for the leasing option? Reference to other financial data, such as profit margin (6.6%). | | | | | | | |
| | Analysis: If the competition in the airline industry increases – this would affect expected revenues. Purchase of aircraft will require financing and potentially increase pressure on cashflow. Purchase will increase value of assets of SA and increase capital employed thus increasing size of the business. Leasing will have less impact on the short-term cash-flow position of SA compared to outright purchase. | | | | | | | |

| Question | Answer | Marks |
|----------|---|-------|
| | Evaluation: Accept either option or advise not obtaining new equipment – but must be well supported by reasoned argument. Decision may depend on value after six years/speed of depreciation. How accurate is the figure given? Decision may depend on state of economy – are interest rates likely to increase as a result of rising inflation? This could be a disadvantage for the purchase option especially as the payback is nearly 5 years. | |

| Question | | | Α | nswer | | Marks | | | |
|----------|--|---|---|--|---|-------|--|--|--|
| 3 | To what extent could a detailed marketing plan lead to a successful launch of SA's proposed new international routes? | | | | | | | | |
| | Level | Knowledge 2 marks | Application 2 marks | Analysis 6 marks | Evaluation 6 marks | | | | |
| | 2 | 2 marks Good knowledge shown of strategic marketing planning | 2 marks Good application to case | 4–6 marks Good use of reasoned argument or theory to explain how effective marketing planning may lead to successful launch or its limitations | 4–6 marks Good judgement shown in answer and conclusion | | | | |
| | 1 | 1 mark Some knowledge of strategic marketing planning/marketin g mix | 1 mark Some application to case | 1–3 marks Some use of reasoned argument or theory to explain how effective marketing planning may lead to successful launch or its limitations | 1–3 marks Some judgement shown in answer and/or conclusion | | | | |
| | 0 No creditable content | | | | | | | | |
| | Answers could include: Knowledge: Marketing plan – integrated strategy, in this case for launch into a new market, including marketing research, mix, budget, objectives, strategy, tactics. Launch marketing planning – activities to ensure that the maximum number of potential customers are aware of and buy a new product or service. Application: Ansoff's matrix – market development. Marketing strategy needs to target customers in home country and destination countries. Low gearing in relation to need to finance launch. | | | | | | | | |
| | Analysis: | | | | | | | | |
| | Different tactics may be needed in countries where SA is not a familiar brand SA need to research overseas markets carefully – will the budget allow for this? Is there any opportunity for a joint venture? Is pricing method used appropriate? Especially given the currency appreciation. Is communication with existing customers good? How effective is the website? | | | | | | | | |
| | • | of social media. | | can be used? Credit sug I be high. Will further bo | | | | | |

| Question | Answer | Marks |
|----------|---|-------|
| | Evaluation: How competitive is the market for air travel in destination countries? Will SA be competing with national state-owned airlines that do not need to make profits? Apart from the marketing plan, what other factors will be important? For example state of economy and incomes in destination countries. As a domestic airline, do SA have the skills and knowledge to enter the new market? | |

| Question | | Answer | Marks | | | | |
|----------|--|--|-------|--|--|--|--|
| 4(a) | Refer to the information on lines 32–34 and 42–46. Assume the average capacity utilisation will be the same on the proposed international routes as on domestic flights. Calculate SA's forecast average total revenue for one international flight. | | | | | | |
| | Answer | Explanation | | | | | |
| | | Capacity utilisation on current flights given in text: | | | | | |
| | | Economy – 99% Business – 67% Apply these to international flights | | | | | |
| | Number of seats sold in business / | Economy 126 × 99% = 124.74 seats [1] Business 16 × 67% = 10 .72 seats [1] | | | | | |
| | economy class per flight | Acceptable to round up or down125 economy + 11 business[1 + 1]124 economy + 10 business[1 + 1] | | | | | |
| | | Now use business and economy prices | | | | | |
| | \$22999 | $124.74 \times $150 = $18\ 711$ [2] $10.72 \times $400 = $4\ 288$ [2] | | | | | |
| | | Total \$22 999 [6] | | | | | |
| | \$23 150 (usual rounding rules) | $125 \times $150 = 18750 [2] $11 \times $400 = 4400 [2]Total \$23150[6] | | | | | |
| | \$22600 (rounded seats | $124 \times \$150 = \$18600 $ [2] $10 \times \$400 = \4000 [2] | | | | | |
| | sold down) | Total \$22 600 [6] | | | | | |
| | \$25300 | Full capacity revenue [1] | | | | | |
| | | If no other valid working Capacity utilisation formula Current capacity (or seats sold)/maximum capacity (or seats available) × 100 [1] | | | | | |
| | 1 error – 5 marks 2 errors – 4 marks 3 errors – 3 marks Some attempt – 1–2 | 2 marks | | | | | |

| Question | | | | Answer | | Marks | |
|----------|--|---|---|--|--|-------|--|
| 4(b) | Refer to your answer from part (a) and other information from the case. Discuss whether SA should offer more seats for business travellers on the proposed new routes. | | | | | | |
| | Level | Knowledge 2 marks | Application 2 marks | Analysis 4 marks | Evaluation 4 marks | | |
| | 2 | 2 marks At least two relevant points made | 2 marks Application of two or more points to the case to case | 3–4 marks Good use of reasoned argument or theory to answer question | 3–4 marks Good judgement shown in answer and conclusion | | |
| | 1 | 1 mark One relevant point made | 1 mark Some application to case | 1–2 marks Some use of reasoned argument or theory to answer question | 1–2 marks Some judgement shown in answer and/or conclusion | | |
| | 0 | | N | o creditable content | | | |
| | Knowled • | Ige: Selling a mix o different group discrimination a This is a key de | f products or in t s of customers v as different serv | vith different needs. (no ice but give credit). s it changes aspects of | is a way of appealing to t strictly speaking price | | |
| | • | Possibility of 'd Case suggests leisure traveller Comparison of i.e. 138 econor Full capacity: C | that business tr rs, they are more calculation in (a ny and 12 busin Dld configuration | sure travellers, due to le ravellers demand is mo e concerned about com a) with same fares but u ess (allow full capacity \$25500; New configur ation \$23709; New con | re price inelastic than fort and flexibility. Ising original mix of seats, calculation). ration \$25300. | | |
| | • | Consider how S Impact of price In order to attra spend more on users. Impact on cost | elasticity on de act increased nu advertising that | | d profits. Ilers SA may need to | | |

| Question | Answer | Marks |
|----------|--|-------|
| | Evaluation: Market research suggests levels of demand and elasticity, but how accurate is this? Can the mix of seats be changed according to the route? To what extent may business traveller demand be affected by economic changes? Overall judgement in advising SA, supported by the most important factors in the case. | |

| Question | Answer | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| 5 | Evaluate the use of flexible employment contracts for SA's future success. | | | | | | | |
| | Level | Knowledge 2 marks | Application 2 marks | Analysis 5 marks | Evaluation 5 marks | | | |
| | 2 | 2 marks Good knowledge shown of flexible workforce | 2 marks Good application to case | 4–5 marks Good use of reasoned argument or theory to explain the advantages or disadvantages of a flexible workforce | 4–5 marks Good judgement shown in answer and conclusion | | | |
| | 1 | 1 marks Some knowledge shown of flexible workforce | 1 marks Some application to case | 1–3 marks Some use of reasoned argument or theory to explain the advantages or disadvantages of a flexible workforce | 1–3 marks Some judgement shown in answer and/or conclusion | | | |
| | 0 | | No cre | ditable content | · | | | |
| | Knowledge: A flexible workforce includes a mix of employees working under different contract. Typically a few key people on full time permanent basis and then others part-time, zero hours, temporary, short term. This leads to workforce planning that meets the needs of the business. Importantly some flexible working arrangements offer flexibility to accept or refuse work to the employees as well, such as zero hours contracts. | | | | | | | |
| | Application: | | | | | | | |
| | In this case, the airline will need staff to cover more or less 24 hours a day flights to some destinations are seasonal, so changing needs for workers. There have been some complaints, but others will be happy to work unsocial hours, part time, and so on, to fit around other commitments. But some insecurity for both the staff and also the airline, as they can't run flights without full crew. The HR Director has suggested putting more staff on full time contracts and paying bonuses, so there could be an issue here. Are there any other benefits of working for SA? Free travel? | | | | | | | |
| | Analysis: | | | | | | | |
| | • | them. Flexible arrangemen The demand for air t staff still want to work | ts suit some we ravel is growing k for SA or mig | A are only paying workers orkers and not others – mo g and unemployment is low ht they leave and join a co ow, so will need to retain a | tivation issues? v – will skilled mpetitor for more | | | |

| Question | Answer | Marks |
|----------|---|-------|
| | Evaluation: Judgement may depend on rate of growth of SA, but also nature of staff in all the different jobs with the company. The economic situation in countries where staff are recruited is important in terms of wage and employment levels. Generally jobs working for airlines, budget or otherwise, are popular, so probably unlikely to face a staff shortage. Arguments must be two sided and final judgement well supported. | |

Question

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Answer

Marks

| ootion | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|--|--|----------------|--|
| estions | 6 and 7 use this | marking grid: | | | | |
| Level | Knowledge 3 marks | Application 3 marks | Analysis 4 marks | Evaluation 10 marks | | |
| 3 | | | | 7–10 marks Good judgement shown throughout with well supported conclusion/ recommendation, focused on the business in the case | : | |
| 2 | 3 marks Good understanding shown | 3 marks Good application to the case | 3–4 marks Good use of reasoned argument or use of theory to explain points made | 4–6 marks Some judgement shown in the main body of the answer and an attempt support conclusion/ recommendation focused on the business in the case OR effective and well supported conclusion/ recommendation, focus on the business in the case | to on, e | |
| 1 | 1–2 marks Some understanding shown | 1–2 marks Some application to the case | 1–2 marks Limited use of reasoned argument or use of theory to support points made | 1–3 marks Limited attempt to show judgement either within the answer OR a weakly supported conclusion/ recommendation with some focus of the business in the case | | |
| 0 | No creditable content | | | | | |

| Question | Answer | | | | |
|----------|---|--|--|--|--|
| 6 | Discuss the importance of contingency planning if SA is to continue to be successful. | | | | |
| | Answers could include: | | | | |
| | Knowledge: Contingency planning – preparations made by business for future unexpected events that may adversely affect the running and reputation of the business. Contingency plans include procedures to follow when such an event occurs, such as dealing with the media and 'disaster recovery' plans. Corporate planning is the overview of company aims, objectives and strategies, in all areas for the next few years. Contingency planning is part of corporate planning. | | | | |
| | Application: In this case, contingency planning (CP) may be used by SA to cope with disruptions such as a complete failure of the website, fuel shortage, service disruptions, such as delays, caused by factors such as weather or major incidents, such as plane technical problems, crashes or terrorism. Reference to contingency planning issues if Option B is chosen, e.g. building delays. The airline industry is vulnerable to many external factors (use of local examples allowable here). | | | | |
| | Analysis: | | | | |
| | CP is important because of reassurance to staff (and customers?) that plans are in place and if, for instance, customers feel that problems such as major delays are dealt with efficiently and sympathetically, this will enhance reputation. CP can be costly, and requires high levels of skills and knowledge, both in the process and in terms of preparations, such as having back-up systems and even equipment. | | | | |
| | Evaluation: | | | | |
| | But by the nature of CP, it is used to prepare for the unexpected, cannot prepare for all eventualities (again local examples) Importance of CP may depend on how likely these events are to occur, quite likely in this industry. A major incident would be disastrous and may cause loss of life. However, other parts of the corporate plan are also very important for the future of the airline. | | | | |
| | Maybe possible to prepare more detailed CP for more likely problems, such as passengers stranded by aircraft breakdown. Cost of CP needs to be balanced against potential damaging consequences of not doing it. | | | | |
| | Arguments must be two sided and final judgement well supported. | | | | |

| Question | Answer | Marks | | | |
|----------|--|-------|--|--|--|
| 7 | Evaluate the <u>techniques</u> that SA could use to make the strategic choice between the two options for growth. | | | | |
| | Answers could include: | | | | |
| | Knowledge: Strategic choice – using appropriate techniques to help make decisions between alternative long term plans of action. Decision trees; force field analysis; Ansoff's matrix to assess risk involved. Also investment appraisal; break-even. Application: Option A is market development. Lack of experience in market. Option B is diversification. SA successful airline with core competence. Cost comparison and comments, e.g. the joint venture sum of \$35m is initial cost only. | | | | |
| | Analysis: Option A – quite risky due to new market/country and lack of experience in international flying. However, SA is successful airline/core competency issues. Option B – but starting within the existing country, and linked with existing service. Potentially risky, though, as SA has no experience of managing hotels. How reliable is joint venture partner? Both options rely on continued growth of travel industry, so some links between them meaning factors in strategic choice may be similar. Decision trees could be very useful to assess risk involved and to compare this with expected payoffs – but how reliable would these estimates be? Could other hotel businesses be investigated to assess returns from Option B? Could joint venture partner help. Force field analysis – important as option A involves operating to and from different countries and Option B entering a new market. Will SA and its staff be able to adapt to these changes? What are likely to be the main driving and restraining forces? | | | | |
| | Evaluation: Important to use scientific methods of strategic choice as these are both likely to be costly and expensive strategies and only potentially profitable in the long run. No one technique better than the others. Lack of experience in either market could make estimating cash flows very difficult. May need to use advice from external consultants? Comparison of costs has been given and SA's profit margin is low, finance and the ability to borrow or raise more funds from shareholders must also be an important factor here. | | | | |