

London Examinations GCE Ordinary Level

Mark Scheme and Examiners' Report for Commerce 7100

January 2001

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Mark Scheme

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Grade Boundaries

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COMMERCE 7100, MARK SCHEME

Question 1

(a) Ways of obtaining quotations

Use of broker to obtain best quotation.

Telephoning several different insurance companies.

Sending off pre-paid circulars received.

Telephoning a motoring organisation – example.

Contact insurance company by (i) letter (ii) web site.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each (4 marks)

(b) Reasons for obtaining quotations

Need to obtain the lowest premium for best cover.

Cost of cover can vary considerably.

Other aspects of cover may differ, e.g. excess, loading.

Cheaper cover e.g. paying by direct debit.

Comparison (1 mark).

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

(c) <u>Proposal form completion</u>

Need to obtain full personal information to fix premium.

Information will determine risk level and correct premium.

Examples of factors e.g. age, driving experience, accidents.

Age of car – replacement cost

Need to establish utmost good faith – information correct.

Future claims invalidated where wrong information given.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each (6 marks)

(d) Refusal reasons

High risk of loss (1 mark).

Poor accident record – high risk of more accidents.

High performance car – compared with age/experience.

Previous poor payment record – where monthly.

Incorrect information previously given.

Too young/too inexperienced driver.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(6 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Question 2

(a) Multiple stores – distinguishing features

Large number of branches – owned by one organisation.

Minimum of 10 branches – distributed countrywide.

Each branch has same décor/features.

Same range of goods stocked in each branch.

Same prices charged at each branch.

Each branch run by a manager – store responsibility.

Head Office controls branches – determines range of goods, prices etc.

Goods brought centrally and in bulk.

Goods distributed to branches from central/regional warehouses.

May stock a narrow range of goods or a variety.

Correct examples of stores – max 2 (2 marks)

(Allow foreign examples.)

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each (12 marks)

(b) Success reasons cf. sole traders

Very well known through advertising/sales promotion.

Can afford more effective advertising, e.g. T.V.

Access to large-scale finance through company ownership.

Can afford to maintain/modernise stores to high standard.

Bulk purchasing power allows goods to be bought more cheaply.

Lower cost prices allow lower selling prices/more profit.

Can afford to employ/utilise specialist staff – example.

Stock surplus at some branches can be transferred to others.

Poor business at some stores offset by others.

Switch staff between branches, e.g. managers.

Reference to facilities i.e. better than at sole traders e.g. toilets, creches – (max 2 marks)

Rent can be afforded by multiples in central locations (1 mark).

Sole traders weaknesses allowable as strengths of national multiples.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(8 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Question 3

(a) Reasons for consumer protection

Misled (1 mark)

Goods not correctly described in advertisement.

General dishonesty or cheating (1 mark only).

Goods sold not suitable for purpose intended.

Goods sold not of merchantable quality.

Incorrect weight sold – scales/pre-packed.

Cost of credit not clearly set out.

Out of date foods sold – health risk.

Origin of goods incorrectly stated.

Dangerous goods sold – injury risk.

Cooling-off period for goods sold off-premises.

Illegal attachment of brands.

Restrictive Practices – cartels.

Second-hand goods sold as new (1 mark only).

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each (10 marks)

(b) Act of Parliament

e.g. Trade Descriptions Act, Consumer Credit Act, Sale of Goods Act, Consumer Protection Act, Food and Drugs Act, Weight and Measures Act, Supply of Goods and Services Act.

1 mark for identifying one relevant Act (recognisably correct name)

1 mark for each correct point of explanation or development

(5 marks)

(c) Non-government organisation

e.g. Advertising Standards Authority, Consumers' Association, BSI, IBA (<u>not</u> National Consumer Council, OFT, Trading Standards Offices), watchdogs on the media.

1 mark for identifying one relevant organisation and 1 mark for each correct point of explanation or development (5 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Question 4

(a) Suitability of air transport

Perishables, e.g. flowers – speed to avoid deterioration.

Lightweight goods, e.g. computer chips – less weight/lower charge.

Small items, e.g. watches – less space/lower charge.

Valuable items, e.g. diamonds – high value can bear higher charge.

Urgent items, e.g. machine parts – lower production loss covers higher air charge.

Fragile goods, e.g. glassware – less chance of damage/lower insurance.

Fashion goods/ Beaujolais Nouveau – to market quickly for competition.

(Give only 2 marks maximum per line.)

Examples without reasons up to 4 max.

1 mark for each example plus 1 mark for explanation

(8 marks)

(b) <u>Sea transport/greater volume</u>

Sea still cheaper for most goods.

Most goods are not urgently required.

Many goods too large/bulky for air, e.g. coal, iron ore.

Volume of goods to be transported too much for air.

Sea has increased efficiency and lower charges.

Containers increase efficiency (2 max).

Limited airport facilities.

No rail or road links between many countries.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(6 marks)

(c) Air improvements

Larger aircraft – larger loads.

Larger aircraft – more economic, lower charges.

Faster aircraft – quicker delivery.

Improved engines – less fuel, lower costs.

More airports – more local/faster delivery.

Air containers – faster loading/unloading.

Improved terminals – faster turnaround.

More/larger airports – improved access/facilities.

Lower charges plus development such as more competition.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

Total: 20 marks

(6 marks)

Question 5

(a) Maximum of 2 marks for one side of each question part.

(i) Ownership and control

Private owned by individuals/public owned by State.

Private controlled by shareholders/public by Government/Ministers.

Shareholders elect Board/Government appoints Board.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

(ii) Profit distribution

Private issues to shareholders and owners/public retained by government.

Shareholders/owners can spend profits/Treasury uses for public expenditure/tax reductions.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

(iii) Sources of finance

Private issues shares to public/public borrows from Treasury.

Private issues debentures/public issues bonds/stock/NS deposits.

Tax revenue or tax payers for public sector.

Ploughing back profit for private sector.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

(b) Reasons for sales to private sector

Government policy to reduce size of public sector.

Wish to reduce public sector debt – losses.

Aim to increase efficiency through profit motive.

Aim to raise funds to reduce taxation/raise public expenditure.

Expose organisation to market forces.

To improve competition.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

(c) Reasons for retaining public control

Essential services at risk in private sector control.

Services which are concerned with national security.

Services which would not be profitable in private sector

Examples (2 marks), eg., Defence, Health, Libraries, Atomic Energy.

Size of capital needed.

Political risks.

Private not social costs eq. pollution, congestion.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Question 6

(a) Plough back profits

Using profits made in previous years and held as reserves.

Profits not distributed to owners/shareholders.

Plough back – putting back into the business operations.

Retained profits.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

(b) <u>Bank loan/leasing differences</u>

Bank Loan – money lent directly by a bank.

Loan account opened and money credited to current a/c.

Cash/cheque payment made to supplier to buy equipment.

Interest paid (1 mark). Repay loan (1 mark).

Ownership of equipment immediate.

Leasing – equipment supplied directly by a leasing company.

Equipment remains property of lessor during lease period.

Monthly rental payments made.

Possible option to purchase outright at lease end.

Finance companies/houses provide.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(8 marks)

(c) Suitability of leasing

Equipment which can rapidly become out-dated.

New/modern version repaired every few years.

Equipment quickly required or replaced.

Essential equipment cannot be 'down' for long.

Rapid fall in value of equipment.

Maintenance contract.

Tax advantages.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(4 marks)

(d) Bank loan instalments

£25000
$$\times \frac{10}{100} \times 2 = £5000$$

$$\frac{30000}{24} = £1250$$

4 marks for correct answer; max 3 marks for correct workings (4 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Question 7

(a) International trade

Trade between different countries – as opposed to internal trade.

Includes both importing and exporting.

Example – eq. Maldives exporting fish to USA (1 mark).

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each (2 marks)

(b) Reasons for international trade

Import of goods which cannot be manufactured.

Import of goods which cannot be grown.

Lack of raw material/energy sources.

Increase variety of goods/services available.

Goods which cannot be produced as cheaply.

Goods which cannot be produced to same quality standard.

Need to export to pay for imports – foreign currency earnings.

Need to export to maintain business/employment.

Provision of help for less developed countries.

Benefits of comparative advantage – explanation (up to 4 marks)

Efficiency (rather than competitive advantage) explanation.

Good relations with other countries.

Wider market + surpluses in other countries.

Specialisation internationally.

Standard of living improvement.

(N.B. 1 mark for each example illustrating different point) 1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(12 marks)

(c) <u>Greater interdependence</u>

Countries increasingly specialise – limited range of goods.

Countries rely on others to obtain goods no longer produced.

Reliance on exports to maintain economy/employment.

Reduction in trade would lower living standards – less efficiency.

Reliance on raw materials/energy to maintain production of other goods.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(6 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Question 8

(a) Legal tender

Creditors cannot refuse legal tender in debt settlement.

Legal tender consists only of notes and coins of the realm (cash).

Coins/notes issued by Central Bank – authorised by Parliament.

Coins/notes are acceptable only to specified maxima (+ example).

Other payment methods do not have to be accepted.

Examples: cheques, credit cards, bank transfers, foreign currency, postal orders. (2 marks)

Barter system is not method of legal payment...

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(6 marks)

(b) Money as medium, measure, store

<u>Medium</u> of exchange – goods/services sold for money and money used to buy other goods/services (+ example).

<u>Measure</u> of value – goods/services priced in money terms, which allows people to compare value and decide what to buy with money available (+ example). Store of value (or wealth) – money received does not have to be spent at once

on goods/services, but can be kept and spent later (+ example).

Second word of phrases worth additional mark e.g. medium of exchange (max.-

3 marks). If full phrase not mentioned then max 2 marks.

1 mark per point of explanation/development, including an example – max 3 marks for each term (9 marks)

(c) Effect of inflation

Little effect on use as medium as money held only for short period, e.g. week, and prices will have changed only slightly.

Hyperinflation – effect on use of money as medium

Greater effect on use as measure as prices/values cannot be compared over long periods e.g. year, as prices will have risen.

Greatest effect on use as store because money held for longer period will buy less later and value will be lost.

Adverse effect on use of money – alternatives found.

Store – people will not want to save if interest rates are low.

2 marks for correct explanation of each up to max.

(5 marks)

Total: 20 marks

Question 9

(a) Reasons for re-export trade

Goods are shipped into London from other countries.

Some are not used in U.K., but are re-exported to different countries (entrepôt trade).

Much of trade comes from developing countries and is in turn with other European countries.

Goods may be blended, bottled, pressed before being re-exported.

Examples: cotton, wool, tea, wheat, copper, oil, oilseeds, tobacco, olive oil (1 mark for each of two).

Entrepot trade(1 mark).

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(6 marks)

(b) Bonded warehouses

Imported goods stored in these warehouses without tax payment.

Owners of warehouses hold goods in bond – liable to Customs.

Saves importers the need to pay and reclaim tax.

No tax paid provided that goods are re-exported.

Controlled by Customs.

Customs Drawback.

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(6 marks)

(c) <u>Importance of commodity exchanges</u>

Organised markets where imports can be sold to buyers for re-export.

Need for locations/systems where buyers and sellers can meet.

Many of goods do not need to be present or pre-inspected, as they are graded.

Very large quantities can be bought/sold on these exchanges.

Competitive pricing occurs through bargaining/auctioning.

Goods can be easily sold and acquired.

Expert brokers can be used to get best deals.

Examples of exchanges (2 marks)

1 mark per point plus 1 mark for development of each

(8 marks)

Total: 20 marks

COMMERCE 7100, CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

General Comments

There was a very large increase in the entry (28%) compared with January 2000. However, this increase was accompanied by a significant fall in the overall quality of the candidature.

Clearly, many of the weaker candidates had spent very little time studying the syllabus and were therefore failing in basic knowledge as well as in breadth and depth of understanding. Candidates often had ability, but their lack of study meant that answers were being invented or were irrelevant to the specific question asked. Frequently, several pages were written by candidates but they contained few if any correct and relevant points.

For those candidates who performed somewhat better, there were still weaknesses in terms of breadth of study, so that they scored quite well on two or three questions but were unable to sustain this for the five answers required.

Lack of ability in the English language was a substantial barrier for many candidates. Apart from having difficulty in expressing themselves in a reasonably clear and coherent way, candidates also had difficulty understanding the requirements of questions because of English comprehension problems.

The following were other weaknesses common across many centres:

- 1. As in previous years, candidates often ignored the context in which questions were set. The examples in this year's paper were car insurance in Question 1 and computer purchase financing in Question 6. In the former, any points relating to other forms of insurance, eg. life, were not relevant and scored nil marks, while in the latter, comments on products other than computers were similarly excluded.
- 2. Misreading of questions was also more common than in previous years, for example in Questions 1d), 4c), 5b) and 8c) (see individual question comments).
- 3. Much rote learning was apparent, with candidates often simply regurgitating anything they could remember about the topic without applying it to the specific question being asked.
- 4. Much learning was also very factual, so that where candidates needed to use their knowledge, for example to make comparisons or to justify certain actions, they were unable to do so.
- 5. Candidates need to have a clearer understanding of the various 'command' or 'key' words used in questions. For example, the word 'why' does not require only a statement of facts or a description, but an explanation of events. Similarly, a 'define' question does not require a long explanation but only a short, sharp statement. Understanding the requirements of these words is critical to the achievement of higher marks.

In addition to these general weaknesses, the following topics tended to produce rather weak answers and therefore need more attention:

- 1. What are insurance quotations, how are they obtained and why are they obtained? (Q.1c/b)
- 2. Why multiple stores are successful compared with sole trader shops. (Q. 2b)
- 3. Knowledge of various Acts and voluntary bodies which protect consumers from unfair/dishonest trading practices. (Q. 3b/c)
- 4. Improvements that have taken place in air freight transport which make it more competitive. (Q. 4c)
- 5. The distinction between the private and the public sector and which types of organisation belong to each. (Q.5a)
- 6. The meaning of the ploughing back of profits. (Q.6a)
- 7. The key features of leasing as an alternative to borrowing or hire purchase. (Q.6 b)
- 8. The meaning of the interdependence of countries. (Q. 7a)
- 9. The meaning of legal tender as opposed to money. (Q.8a)
- 10. The effects of inflation on the ability of money to function effectively. (Q.8c)
- 11. The whole area of entrepot trade, bonded warehouses and the London commodity exchanges. (Q. 9)

However, candidates tended to perform well in their answers on the following topics:

- 1. The reasons why consumers need protection in their dealings with the suppliers of goods and services.
- 2. The reasons why sea transport still carries the greater volume of goods between countries.
- 3. The reasons why countries engage in international trade.

Question 1

The context of this question was buying a new car and obtaining insurance cover for the car. Many candidates, as in previous examinations/questions, ignored the context and used examples of different types of insurance in answering the various parts of the question, especially parts c) and d). No marks were awarded for points which did not relate to a car.

In part a), many candidates referred to brokers, but there was often confusion between brokers and agents. Also there were many vague comments about 'asking' several insurance companies without stating 'how'. More fundamentally, some candidates did not understand the term 'quotation'.

In parts b) and c), the majority of candidates understood why different quotations should be sought and why a proposal form has to be completed, but part d) was poorly answered. Many candidates thought that the question concerned the making of a **claim** and why it might be refused, and therefore scored nil marks. The question asked why **insurance** might be refused, and good answers referred to poor accident record, young age/inexperience and valuable/higher performance cars.

Question 2

This question on multiple stores would normally be expected to produce a good average mark, but there was a widespread lack of knowledge and understanding and many weak answers. Some candidates thought that 'national' multiples were run by the Government or were 'international'.

Features given in part a) were often too general, eg. self service and fresh goods, and could be applied to many different types of retail outlet. Points needed to be more specific, referring for example to a large number of stores, distributed across the country, owned by a single company and buying goods centrally for distribution to the stores.

In part b), candidates often repeated points made in part a) and therefore gained no further marks even if the points made were correct. Candidates were expected to apply the knowledge given in part a) to explain why these features gave an advantage to multiples when compared with sole traders. A further common weakness was that candidates often wrote only about the features of sole trader operations without attempting to make any comparison.

Question 3

This was not popular and many candidates were probably deterred from answering by the requirement to explain how a relevant Act of Parliament (part b) and non-government organisation (part c) protected consumers. Those candidates who tackled it often scored good marks, and there were a significant number of answers gaining full marks in parts b) and c).

In part a), the more frequent points made referred to false descriptions, fitness for purpose, incorrect weight and misleading rates of interest for credit. However, a small minority of students thought that the question was about personal security and wrote about security guards and the police.

The Acts of Parliament most frequently mentioned were the Sale of Goods Act, the Trade Descriptions Act, the Consumer Credit Act and the Weights and Measures Act. Even if the name of the Act given was not entirely accurate, candidates were still given marks for the correct content of the Act.

Candidates were, more surprisingly, weak on non-government agencies which help to protect consumers. Apart from the Advertising Standards Authority and the Consumers' Association, others were rarely mentioned, for example the British Standards Institution, the Trading Standards Offices and the Office of Fair Trading.

Question 4

Part a) of this question asked why **some products** were more suitable for transport by air, but a significant minority of candidates wrote about the merits of air transport without referring to any particular goods. Such responses failed to answer the question asked and therefore scored no marks. Vice-versa, candidates often referred to relevant types of goods, but failed to say why they were more suited to transport by air, eg. the need for fast delivery which is provided by the speed of air transport.

Part b) produced many good answers by reference to bulk goods, lower charges and lack of aircraft capacity. However, there were incorrect points made, for example sea transport providing more direct or regular routes than air. Part c) was poorly answered, with many candidates simply repeating the merits of air transport identified in part a). The question required the candidate to move one stage on from this by referring to improvements in air transport which have made it even more competitive with sea transport. Reference to larger aircraft, more airports and the use of air containers for example would, with a development point for each, have scored the full six marks available.

Ouestion 5

The usual confusion between public companies (in the private sector) and the private sector frequently surfaced in candidates' answers, so that many marks were lost. Where the correct distinction was made, answers varied from weak to excellent, with some good candidates scoring the full twelve marks available.

In general, the differences in ownership and control were better understood, with sources of finance least well understood. Weaker candidates referred repetitively to 'the government' and needed to make more specific reference to gain good marks, eg. profit distribution to benefit government expenditure and taxation levels, and finance to be derived from the Treasury and borrowing by the issue of government securities.

Encouragingly, in part b) many candidates were well-versed in the reasons for the privatisation programme in the United Kingdom, but some candidates answered this part as referring to the need for maintaining government control, which was covered by part c).

Candidates' answers to part c) were generously interpreted to take into account local circumstances, for example where utilities such as electricity and water have been privatised in the UK but are still under public control in the candidate's own country. There was generally a good understanding of why some services remain under public control.

Question 6

The question context was a business financing a new computer system, which was sometimes ignored by candidates who wrote about the purchase of other products, such as cars.

The concept of ploughing back profits was unknown to many candidates, as was leasing. Even though candidates understood bank loans, they were unable to identify the differences from leasing, in particular to do with ownership and loan

repayments/lease rental. Leasing was also often seen wrongly as a form of hire purchase.

In part c), there were some good answers which focussed on rapid technological change and obsolescence, but many candidates' answers were pure invention as they did not understand the fundamental nature of leasing.

As usual, the calculation in part d) showed up the divide between the numerate and innumerate. The former gained the four marks available with ease, while the latter made fundamental errors by omitting the capital repayments or dividing by only twelve marks rather than twenty-four.

Question 7

There were a few very weak candidates who did not even understand the meaning of 'international trade' and were therefore unlikely to score marks on the subsequent parts of this question. However, a majority of candidates scored well in part b) on the reasons for international trade, and there were many excellent answers which included sound explanations of absolute and comparative advantage.

However, some candidates included reasons which missed the point of the question. For example, international trade takes place in order to balance the balance of payments; or to achieve tax revenue; or to protect home industries. Also, there tended to be a repetition of points.

Part c) was very poorly answered in general with most candidates scoring only two marks or fewer out of the six marks available. Most answers simply repeated or added points relating to part b), which therefore received no marks for part c), and very few candidates got beyond the idea of 'dependence'. A good answer would have identified two-way dependency and the fact that increased specialisation between countries increases interdependence.

Question 8

A majority of candidates understood that only notes/coins of the realm are legal tender and not cheques, credit cards, etc. which can be refused by creditors. However, weaker candidates confused legal tender with money, ie. any method of payment other than barter, and/or contrasted it with 'illegal' payments.

A good majority of candidates were able to identify the full function phrases, ie. medium of **exchange**, measure of **value** and store of **value** for three marks, but explanations often confused the medium and measure functions or did not make the key points. A common error was to explain measure of value not in terms of price/value comparisons, but as a means of making payments of different amounts to match the value of goods, ie. money as an exchange medium. Regarding store of value, while the concept was often understood, candidates often failed to explain the implication of storing money, ie making it available for future use.

Part c) was very poorly answered. Some candidates correctly explained 'inflation' but most failed to show how it affected the **use** of money in terms of its functions. It was insufficient to say that its purchasing power was reduced. Reference had to be made, for example, to money not acting as a good store of value because it would purchase less in the future, and to the difficulty of comparing value over periods of time. Good

answers sometimes referred to hyperinflation and people's unwillingness to hold money as a medium of exchange even for short periods.

Ouestion 9

Only a small proportion of candidates attempted this question and answers were mostly poor. This appeared to derive not from any inherent difficulty in the question but from candidates' failure to have studied the topics concerned.

Many saw the 'entrepot' trade as merely a means of making profits for intermediaries and gave all kinds of irrelevant examples, such as cars and computers. They did not understand the idea of providing an organised market for the sub-distribution of primary products and sometimes carrying out some intermediate processes before passing goods on, for example blending and bottling.

More candidates, but still relatively few, had some idea of the purpose of bonded warehouses, but most could only refer in general terms to 'storage'. They did not understand the function of holding goods 'in bond', without the payment of duties, and then re-exporting without the need to pay the UK Government duties.

In part c), very few candidates had any idea of how the London commodity exchanges worked or were able to give examples such as the Metal Exchange or the Baltic Exchange. The key to the answer was to explain how the exchanges provide organised markets where buyers and sellers can get into contact, physically or electronically, aided by brokers and trading rules and procedures.

Conclusions

The quality of performance declined slightly overall because many of the candidates forming the increased entry were at the weaker end of the attainment spectrum.

A significant proportion of candidates appeared to have done very little preparation for the examination.

Difficulties with the English language proved to be a major barrier to good marks for a substantial proportion of the candidates, much more so than in previous years when the standard of English was applauded.

Rote learning remains a barrier to the achievement of good marks when candidates have to apply the knowledge they have gained. More understanding is needed.

Candidates often do not understand the requirements of questions as specified by the command/key words used (see page 9).

Candidates are not studying the syllabus in sufficient breadth and this is adversely affecting their performance, even though there is a choice of questions on the paper.

Candidates need to read carefully the precise wording of all parts of a question before attempting it.

The subject continues to attract an increasing number of candidates because of its general and vocational value to the educational development of many students internationally.

COMMERCE 7100, GRADE BOUNDARIES

Grade	А	В	С	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade	61	49	37	32	28

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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