



# KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL

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LICHFIELD

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9 October 2015

Dear Parent / Carer

## GCSE Business Studies Controlled Assessment - 2015/16

Currently in Business Studies lessons students are being guided through the requirements of their **controlled assessment** task which **accounts for 25% of their final Business Studies GCSE**. Given how important the controlled assessment task is to the final achievement of your son / daughter in their Business Studies GCSE I felt it was important that you are made aware of the nature of the controlled assessment task, the timeframe for completion, and the support that is (and can be) provided. In addition I have also attached the following:

- guidance as to the specific nature of controlled assessment for Business Studies
- a student "Q&A" on controlled assessment
- the question students will need to answer this year
- the assessment criteria for the marking of controlled assessment

which I hope will help you to understand the work your son / daughter is currently undertaking and allow you to support them during this part of their GCSE.

### 1. The Controlled Assessment task

Controlled assessment requires students to carry out research to enable them to answer a specific business question focused around a "small" business of their choice. Once the research has been gathered students are then required to analyse the data collected and use the data and their analysis to make a justified recommendation to answer their question.

The examboard set specific limits on the amount of time students are allowed to carry out research (approx. 6 hours) and for the write up (max. 3 hours) and also on the access students are allowed to their research once they start their write-up - ie. students are allowed to have access to their research during the write-up but between write-up sessions all research must be kept in a "research folder" which must be held in locked storage at school and no further research can be added to the folder once the write-up begins.

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## 2. Timeframe for completion

Students start the research element of their controlled assessment in the last three weeks of half-term and the write-up element will be undertaken in lesson time immediately after the October half term.

**Please note – Business Studies controlled assessment can only be attempted once**

## 3. Support and assistance

A great deal of support and guidance will be given to you son / daughter in their business studies lessons by their teacher with each student being provided with:

- a booklet on how to approach the question they have chosen
- a checklist of what they need to do, and
- a writing frame on how to approach the final write-up

However, in addition to the above it is also possible that you may be able to provide further support to your son / daughter particularly in relation to the research they must undertake outside of the classroom. This support and assistance from you may come in the form of:

- checking they have carried out a research task each week
- answering questionnaires or interviews for them (this is especially the case if you are a customer of the business they are researching or they are looking to use a family business as the focus of their controlled assessment task)
- reviewing the work they have produced and making suggestions as to how it might be improved.

### **PLEASE NOTE -**

**Given the nature of controlled assessment it is important that students do not miss any lessons during this time as there is limited opportunity for lost time to be made up. In addition as controlled assessment is part of the student's final GCSE, all research to be included in the students' research folder must be their own work and must also be clearly referenced / sourced. Any work included in the research folder that is not the students' own work will be removed from the folder and could result in expulsion from the GCSE if the offence was deemed sufficiently severe.**

I trust the above, together with the attachments, provide you with the information you require to support the work your son / daughter will be undertaking for their controlled assessment task in business studies, however if you would like to find out more you may wish to go to the Edexcel website (course code 2BS01), or alternatively please do not hesitate to contact your son / daughters' Business Studies teacher.

With kind regards  
Yours faithfully



Mr C Rossin  
Head of Business, Economics & Accounting

# GCSE Business Studies

## A brief Q&A on Controlled Assessment

**Question:** What is “Controlled Assessment”?

**Answer:** *Controlled assessment in Business Studies is an opportunity for students to research and investigate a business to answer a specific business question, the answer to which has to be written up under “controlled” (ie. exam style) conditions.*

**Question:** So is controlled assessment important?

**Answer:** *YES! The controlled assessment task makes up 25% of the GCSE in Business Studies and how a student performs in the controlled assessment task will go a long way to determining the grade they will achieve in their Business Studies GCSE.*

**Question:** How long do students get to complete the controlled assessment task?

**Answer:** *Students get approximately 6 hours to gather and present their research as well as a maximum of 3 hours of write-up time to answer the question (using the research they have gathered). In addition to this there will be a couple of weeks preparation time to make sure students fully understand the demands of the controlled assessment task, as well as undertaking a practice activity.*

**Question:** What do students need to do to achieve the best mark they can in their controlled assessment task?

**Answer:** *The guidance booklet and additional supporting resources the classroom teacher provides have been specifically produced to help guide the students through each stage of the controlled assessment task. By working through the booklet carefully and listening to the advice and guidance that their business studies teacher gives them in lesson, as well as making sure they carry out research tasks for homework then students will be able to achieve to their full potential.*

# What do students have to do for the Business Studies Controlled Assessment?

There are three main stages that students have to undertake to complete the controlled assessment task. These are as follows:

## **1. Question selection: the controlled assessment question selected**

Each year the examboard release a range of questions one of which the students must answer for their controlled assessment task

*NB: not all of the questions released will be appropriate for the students to attempt given the time they are undertaking controlled assessment and the areas of the syllabus they have covered. Given this the business studies teachers at King Edward VI School will only offer to the students the question / questions they feel are appropriate at the time of study.*

## **2. Research: Students undertake research into a business to help them answer their controlled assessment question**

Once the question has been chosen each student has approximately 6 hours (around 3 weeks), both in class and in their own time, to carry out a range of different types of research that will help them answer their question. All research gathered will be placed into their “research folder” which they then use when they complete the write-up.

*NB: whilst support and guidance can be given to the student as they undertake their research, all work included in the students research folder must be their own work. Once the research stage is completed the research folder is held in school and no further work can be added to it. Only information / data gathered can be included in the research folder (this does include tables and charts that have been produced by the student) with no written analysis of the data being allowed in the research folder.*

## **3. Write-up: Students write their answer to the question under controlled conditions**

Under “exam style” conditions students get 3 hours to answer the controlled assessment question using the information in their research folder to help support and justify their opinions.

*NB: the write-up is completed in the classroom in silence with students looking to present a logical and balanced answer to the question they have chosen using the information in their research folder. Marks are awarded based on both the range and use of the research gathered together with the way that students have analysed the issues and justified their chosen recommendation.*

# GCSE Business Studies

## Controlled Assessment Questions 2015/16

Below is the question students will need to answer to complete their controlled assessment this year.

<b>Question</b>
<b>To what EXTENT is the business you have chosen successful in MEETING ITS CUSTOMERS' NEEDS?</b>

### Assessment Criteria

The controlled assessment task is marked out of 40 marks and these are allocated over the assessment criteria as follows: *(please note – for simplification the following has been adapted from the full examboard assessment criteria)*

<b>RESEARCH</b>	
<b>Marks</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>0</b>	Research not referred to / used
<b>1 – 3</b>	Research from one source using limited selectivity and focus.
<b>4 – 6</b>	Research from more than one source showing some selectivity and focus.
<b>7 – 9</b>	Research from a range of sources showing good selectivity and focus.
<b>10 - 12</b>	Detailed, relevant research from a wide range of sources together with high quality organisation of materials and focus.

<b>PRESENT INFORMATION / DATA</b>	
<b>Marks</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>0</b>	Data/information not presented
<b>1 – 2</b>	Data/information is presented in a very basic format with little attention to detail.
<b>3 – 4</b>	Data/information is presented using a limited range of methods and shows some attention to detail.
<b>5 – 6</b>	Data/information is presented clearly using the appropriate methods with good attention to detail.
<b>7 - 8</b>	Data/information is presented in a range of appropriate methods with high levels of attention to detail.
<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>(Nb – marks for quality of written communication will be awarded in this section)</i>	

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>0</b>	No meaningful analysis is made to answer the question set
<b>1 – 3</b>	Basic analysis of presented information/data showing limited understanding of issues, such as simple understanding of advantages and disadvantages of the options presented. Quality of written communication is poor with frequent spelling, punctuation & grammar errors.
<b>4 - 6</b>	Simple analysis of presented information/data showing some understanding of key issues, advantages and disadvantages of the options presented, although some of this may be weak in places. Some logical explanation the issues are discussed. Quality of written communication is basic with some spelling, punctuation & grammar errors.
<b>7 – 9</b>	Analysis is detailed and relevant covering a range of different options. There is good use of the presented information/data and the work shows a clear understanding of key issues. There is a good level of quality of written communication with few mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The quality of the language used will be appropriate for the subject matter.
<b>10 - 12</b>	Excellent analysis of the presented information/data, resulting in a well constructed commentary with a good balance argument of the options. Quality of written communication is of a high standard with few, if any, errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The style of writing and the structure of the response is appropriate and of a high standard.

<b>EVALUATION</b> <i>(Nb – marks for quality of written communication will be awarded in this section)</i>	
<b>Marks</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>0</b>	No meaningful judgments are made / the question is not answered
<b>1 – 2</b>	Limited evaluation of the task with little or no supporting evidence or value judgements. Quality of written communication is poor with frequent spelling, punctuation & grammar errors.
<b>3 - 4</b>	Some evaluation is made eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some weighing of evidence has been made</li> <li>• simple value judgements have been made making use of supporting evidence</li> <li>• some suggestions for improvements have been identified and are appropriate to task.</li> </ul> Quality of written communication is basic with some spelling, punctuation & grammar errors.
<b>5 – 6</b>	Clear evaluation is made using the analysis of the research gathered eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reasonable weighing of evidence is presented</li> <li>• relevant value judgements have been made making use of supporting evidence</li> <li>• feasible suggestions for improvements have been identified</li> </ul> and are appropriate to task. There is a good level of quality of written communication with few mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The quality of the language used will be appropriate for the subject matter.
<b>7 - 8</b>	A developed evaluation has been presented based on the evidence analysed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good weighing of evidence</li> <li>• relevant value judgements have been made with detailed supporting evidence</li> <li>• detailed suggestions for improvements have been made / explained</li> </ul> and are appropriate to task. Quality of written communication is of a high standard with few, if any, errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The style of writing and the structure of the response is appropriate and of a high standard.

