

## Skills Exercises

AO3 Analysis and AO4 Evaluation

# Cambridge International AS & A Level Business 9609

For examination from 2023



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## Introduction

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Cambridge International AS & A Level Business attracts a variety of learners from many different backgrounds. For some learners Business is a new subject and an opportunity to explore an area of study that interests them, while developing a set of transferable skills. Other learners have previously studied Business and are looking to continue developing their knowledge of the subject. Either way, the study of Business allows learners to experience the diverse and dynamic world within which businesses exist and gain the knowledge needed to understand how businesses operate within real contexts, analyse alternative courses of action and develop the ability to make justified recommendations.

### Skills and why they are important?

Skills are the key to success. The performance of candidates in Cambridge International AS & A Level Business exams have shown a range of areas where improvement would be helpful. These areas of improvement tend to centre around the assessment objectives (AOs) of the course and we have addressed these AOs in a series of exercises and activities.

- AO1 Knowledge and understanding
- AO2 Application
- AO3 Analysis and AO4 Evaluation

Skills Exercises make use of examination questions and data and include activities and worksheets to help skills development and incorporate suggested teaching approaches, such as group work, discussion, structured support and writing in sequence. They do not attempt to cover all possible aspects of the examinations, only those problem areas which have presented consistently over time.

### How will these skills be developed?

Skills Exercises aim to help learners develop skills in:

- using knowledge and numerical data to answer examination questions
- using the context given in the examination to make answers relevant
- developing skills of analysis – including understanding analysis, spotting analysis and developing analysis skills
- building evaluation skills – including making judgements, what the judgement depends upon and early evaluation in a response.

Skills Exercises provide suggestions so you can have confidence that the materials you prepare and use in the classroom are building skills and resilience in your learners. This document should be used alongside the other teaching and learning resources provided on the [School Support Hub](#).

## AO3 Analysis

### Exercise 1: Spotting analysis

Analysis is often considered to be the least understood skill. However, it is the skill that unlocks higher marks and top grades. Learners who can effectively analyse in their answers will be able to build arguments and come to conclusions.

Analysis is about:

- effects
- consequences
- reactions.

Many learners think that analysis is about description or explanation and often spend too much time explaining and describing elements of an answer without getting to the all-important analysis. Analysis is about effects, consequences or reactions.

#### Activity 1: Analysis or not

Give learners a series of sentences where one sentence involves analysis and the other does not. The sentences in **Worksheet 1: Analysis or not** can be used or replaced with other sentences.

For each sentence, learners circle the analytical sentence. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 1: Analysis or not answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to ensure understanding. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

#### Activity 2: Identifying analysis

Show learners one or two sentences containing analysis, that are explanations of causal connections. These can be everyday examples or enterprise related. Choose examples suitable for the topic being studied. For example:

- The shop was shut therefore I wasn't able to buy what I needed.
- Changing tastes and fashion offer an opportunity to enterprises because there is a new potential customer or market.

Learners identify the decisions made and the reasons given for those decisions in each statement. Introduce the idea of connecting words including, 'because', 'this means', 'so', 'therefore'.

In groups learners consider other possible connecting words. Remind them that not all connecting words such as 'and' are relevant for developing analysis.

Use **Worksheet 2: Identifying analysis in simple sentences** to encourage learners to practise spotting analysis and adding development. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 2: Identifying analysis in simple sentences answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Learners make notes on their discussion before sharing ideas with the class. These could be used later as part of a display about connecting words. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

**Extension activity:** ask learners further questions such as:

- Why does this develop the statement?
- How will this help explain the point being made?

### Activity 3: Identifying analysis in paragraphs

Give learners **Worksheet 3: Identifying analysis in paragraphs**. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs. Learners identify and underline the analytical components of each paragraph.

Use **Worksheet 3: Identifying analysis in paragraphs answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to ask whether the analysis could be extended further to make a better analytical point. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

## Exercise 2: Focus of analysis

Analysis must be focussed on a business or a stakeholder group. It is essential that learners focus their analysis in the right way. An examination question will always have a clear focus for the analysis.

### Activity 1: Who is the focus?

Give learners a series of possible or past examination questions. The questions on **Worksheet 4: Who is the focus?** can be used or changed with other analytical or evaluative questions. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs. For each sentence, learners underline the focus of the analysis.

Use **Worksheet 4: Who is the focus? answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion around how the focus of each question could be misinterpreted. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

### Activity 2: Who might be affected?

Sometimes a question asks you to analyse the effects or impacts of a business's actions on different stakeholders. Learners need to be able to identify all the potential stakeholders who might be affected by a business action and how they might be affected.

Give learners a series of business actions. The actions on **Worksheet 5: Who might be affected?** can be used or changed with other business actions.

For each business action, learners identify as many stakeholders as they can that might be affected. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually, in pairs or groups. Alternatively, copy the business action onto the board and ask learners to come up and add the stakeholders.

Use **Worksheet 5: Who might be affected? answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion around how they might be affected. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

## Exercise 3: Developed analysis

Analysis can be limited or developed. Limited analysis does not go far enough. For example, it may identify an impact, effect or reaction, but does not continue and demonstrate how it will really affect the business or stakeholder.

Developed analysis is about creating a chain of analysis. This means that there is a clear link between the initial impact, effect or reaction and how this might develop to really affect the business or stakeholder.

### Activity 1: Chains of analysis

Developed analysis can be seen as a chain of effects. This activity helps learners think about the links in the chain that go from the initial effect through to the end effect.

Give learners a starting effect and how this might end. The chains on **Worksheet 6: Chains of analysis** can be used or changed with other effects. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs. For each sentence, learners complete the missing links in the chain that match up the initial effect to the end effect.

Use **Worksheet 6: Chains of analysis answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. There may be many ways to get from the first effect to the last, so discuss the different routes learners have taken and whether any of the links are more realistic than others. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

### Activity 2: Developing advantages and disadvantages

Analysis questions often ask for advantages and / or disadvantages of something. Being able to analyse the advantages and disadvantages is an essential part of analysis and needs to be in context as well as developed.

Give learners a business scenario that may have advantages and disadvantages for a business or a stakeholder. The scenarios in **Worksheet 7: Developing advantages and disadvantages** may be used or replaced with other scenarios.

For each scenario, learners think of two advantages and two disadvantages and explain the impact on the business or stakeholder. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 7: Developing advantages and disadvantages answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Learners are likely to find a range of answers, so different responses should be discussed. Ask learners, 'Are any of the advantages or disadvantages more realistic than others?' Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

### Activity 3: Marking analysis

Show learners the responses to the question on **Worksheet 8: Marking analysis**.

Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs. Learners underline the analysis and decide if the response has a developed chain of analysis.

Use **Worksheet 8: Marking analysis answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion around how each response could be improved and where and why marks were or were not awarded. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

## AO4 Evaluation

### Exercise 4: Answering the question

Evaluation is usually considered to be the most difficult assessment objective and the one that is essential for a top grade. At its heart, evaluation is about answering the question.

Here are some command words that learners might come across to let them know that they need to evaluate:

Command word	What you need to do
<b>Evaluate</b>	Build chains of analysis, weigh up the arguments and then make a judgement over which arguments are most persuasive. Does your judgement depend on anything, such as market research?
<b>Discuss</b>	Build chains of analysis and weigh these up. While this does not necessarily require a judgement to be made, it is usually a good idea to come to a judgement if you can.
<b>Recommend ... justify your answer.</b>	Build chains of analysis, weigh up the arguments and then make a recommendation for the business or stakeholder. Does your recommendation depend on anything or would it change in different circumstances?
<b>Advise</b>	Build chains of analysis, weigh up the arguments and then advise the business or stakeholder on what it should do. Does your advice depend on anything or would it change in different circumstances? Advice is often linked closely with strategy and as such may require more than just a judgement or recommendation.

### Activity 1: How to answer the question

When a learner sees an evaluative question it should be clear what the judgement will be about.

Knowing what the judgement is about helps learners to structure their answer because all the analytical points will create arguments to back up that judgement.

Give learners a series of evaluative questions from either past or specimen papers. Learners will not need the case study or data to work out what the judgement should be. The questions on **Worksheet 9: How to answer the question** can be used or any other evaluative questions.

For each question, learners decide what the first sentence of the conclusion should be. This provides a target for the analytical arguments to work towards. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 9: How to answer the question answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to ensure understanding. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

## Activity 2: Find the conclusion

A good conclusion is an essential part of a response to a question.

Give learners a copy of **Worksheet 10: Find the conclusion** and ask them to decide which of the two conclusions best answers the question. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 10: Find the conclusion answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion around how common mistakes can be avoided. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

## Activity 3: Making judgements

Most evaluation questions require a judgement. However, a business is a dynamic organisation that changes regularly. It also operates in an external environment of which the business has little control. Therefore, it is important to make a provision in your judgement that it might need to change if the circumstances change.

Give learners a series of evaluative questions. The ones on **Worksheet 11: Making judgements** can be used, or these can be replaced with other suitable questions.

Learners decide what judgement they would make and state two things that the judgement could depend upon. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 11: Making judgements answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion around which 'depends upon' is most appropriate. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

## Exercise 5: Early evaluation

Many learners assume evaluation only happens at the end of their answer, in a conclusion. However, the best responses evaluate throughout the answer.

Many of the higher mark questions in the Cambridge International AS & A Level Business examinations have a large proportion of evaluation marks. However, just evaluating in a conclusion, no matter how detailed, is unlikely to gain all these marks.

The table below shows the mark allocations for the higher mark questions on the examinations.

Total marks	AO1 Knowledge and understanding	AO2 Application	AO3 Analysis	AO4 Evaluation
12	2	2	2	6
20	3	2	8	7

Since the assessment objective for AO4 Evaluation is such a large proportion of the marks, it is essential that you take as many opportunities as you can to evaluate when answering these questions.

### Activity 1: Mini-conclusions

Learners can begin to include evaluation in an answer by developing a mini-conclusion after every analytical point.

A mini-conclusion can occur after a chain of analysis and brings the point back to provide an answer to the question.

Give each learner a copy of **Worksheet 12: Mini-conclusions**. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. The first analytical point has been evaluated in the second paragraph. Discuss why it is evaluation and how it is different from analysis.

Learners evaluate the second analytical point using the same style as the example. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 12: Mini-conclusions answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to ensure understanding. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

### Activity 2: Two-sided arguments

One of the most important routes into evaluation is by asking learners to spot the two sides of each question. There is always a way to argue both sides of any evaluative question and in doing so learners can include evaluation in their responses.

Give learners a number of evaluative questions. The data or case that goes with these questions is not important to be able to spot the two sides of the response. The questions in **Worksheet 13: Two-sided arguments** can be used or any other evaluative questions from past examination papers.

Learners decide what the two sides of the question are. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 13: Two-sided arguments answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Acknowledge that there are sometimes different perspectives; discuss as a class why different approaches are sometimes still appropriate. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

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