



# *Tutor conference 7 February 2019*

## **STRATEGIC BUSINESS MANAGEMENT – NOTE OF QUESTIONS**

### **Financial Reporting**

Q – Due to the weighting of up to 25% for FR some students plan to avoid the topic and concentrate on other subject areas. Is it likely that all of the FR marks would be in one question?

A – Highly unlikely that 20-25 marks for FR would be in one question. It is not advisable to take this strategy, a well prepared student should attempt all requirements. It is very frustrating to see students failing by one or two marks, which can be the case when they adopt such strategies.

Q – Are students weaker, in general, on FR aspects of the SBM syllabus?

A – Some candidates struggle on FR aspects but this is not generally the case. The top quartile of students are good and make a fair attempt at the FR aspects of the requirements. We still provide feedback to aid improvement in this area.

Q – In respect of the FR aspects is a more technical answer preferable or valuable than a well explained answer.

A – It depends on the question and what is being asked. Who are you providing the information to? How are you being asked to deliver the answer? Some questions only require a discussion identifying a broad range of FR issues perhaps with less technical discussion. However, a specific technical question will require the technical details in the answer. Students will gain marks for showing understanding.

Q – Brand valuation has appeared in a few recent exams. Do students need to go into a full explanation about business valuation and specifically why a brand will not usually be valued due to its unique qualities. Alternatively, should they summarise and jump straight to the main point, being highest and best use as a means of valuation.

A – If the scenario details an acquisition, I would expect students to identify that in this instance they would value the brand. I would also expect students to differentiate between the brand valuation and that of the whole business and discuss existing brand versus the newly acquired brand.

### **Work Experience**

Q – Some students take 12 exemptions and commence advanced level studies with no or very little relevant work experience, do you assume that all students have business knowledge and experience gained from the workplace?

A – There are no rules regarding the order in which students choose to take the exams (with the exception of case study) and at what point they take them. Not all students will have a training contract. Examiners will require students to demonstrate the required level of knowledge and skills to pass the exam. How they attain this, what their individual circumstances are, is not identifiable by markers. Examiners aren't best placed to comment on policies on exemptions and work experience.

### **Exam technique**

Q – No marks are available for copy and pasting text from the exam but can the student copy the requirements from the question to use as heading in their answer?

A - Yes, this is actually good practice. Some students highlight this in bold which makes it easily identifiable for the markers.

Q – Should students submit rough plans in their answer, do you see examples of this?

A – Yes, we do see it. No marks can be awarded for a question plan. If it helps the students to do this that's fine. I would advise candidates to leave a big gap between their actual answer and their plan to avoid confusion for the marker. They are permitted to make notes on paper.