

SBL Specimen Exam 1 Marking Guide

Task 1a)

Up to 2 marks for each relevant opportunity identified and discussed (up to a maximum of 10 marks)

Up to 2 marks for each relevant challenge identified and discussed (up to a maximum of 10 marks)

(Up to a maximum 16 marks in total for 1a)

Key Points

Opportunities

- Raise profile
- Counter closure of physical showrooms/department stores
- Confirm commitment to Zeelande
- Supported by Peels family
- Socially responsible
- Advertising benefit
- 'Wellbeing' company

Challenges

- Already at capacity
- Would need to reduce supply to retail partners
- Possible financial penalties in retail partner contracts
- Reduction in revenue and gross margin
- Possible reduction in ROCE
- Exposure to increase in cost of springs
- Delivery costs
- Impact of restructuring operations
- Non-delivery penalty clause
- Collection and recycling costs for old mattresses
- Patent expiry
- Risk of high guarantee claims
- Inconsistent with PSS values
- Potential for negative impact on sustainability

Professional skills may be additionally rewarded as in the following rubric:

How well has the candidate demonstrated professional skills as follows:	Not at all	Not so well	Quite well	Very well
<i>analysis skills in considering the most significant factors affecting the proposal</i> REPORT	The candidate has not considered the opportunities and challenges of the proposal. The answer is purely theoretical.	The candidate has considered some of the general opportunities and challenges but there was limited application to PSS.	The candidate has considered most of the key opportunities and challenges to PSS in detail. The answer is presented in the correct format.	The candidate has considered all of the key opportunities and challenges to PSS in detail. The answer is presented in the correct format.
	0	1.33	2.66	4

Task 1b)

Slide 1

Up to 2 marks for each relevant point on actions to comply with EMAS, referring to:

- Formalise policies
- Objective and target setting
- Employee training

(Up to a maximum of 6 marks)

Slide 2

Up to 2 marks for each relevant point on key areas to be included in PSS environmental policy, referring to:

- Transport
- Suppliers
- Mattress disposal service and returned mattresses
- Packaging
- Solar power
- Health and safety

(Up to a maximum of 6 marks)

(Up to a maximum 10 marks in total for 1b)

Professional skills may be additionally rewarded as in the following rubric:

How well has the candidate demonstrated professional skills as follows:	Not at all	Not so well	Quite well	Very well
<i>communication skills in clarifying the most relevant information to the board</i> PRESENTATION SLIDES AND NOTES	The answer failed to clarify the relevant information for PSS. The presentation is inappropriate for the intended audience.	The slides and notes were both limited in coverage and therefore failed to clarify effectively the most relevant information on EMAS to the intended audience.	<p>The slides and notes were adequate and the points made sufficient to clarify the relevant information on EMAS to the intended audience.</p> <p>The answer is presented in the correct format.</p>	<p>The slides and notes are logical and presented in a concise and appropriate way to clarify the relevant information on EMAS to the intended audience.</p> <p>The answer is presented in the correct format.</p>
	0	1.33	2.66	4

Task 2a)

1 mark for each relevant point on the issues assessed (up to a maximum of 4 marks for each issue and up to maximum of 9 marks in total)

Up to 2 marks for each relevant action identified and discussed (up to a maximum of 4 marks for each issue and up to maximum of 12 marks in total)

(Up to a maximum of 18 marks in total for 2a)

Key Points

Health and safety concern

- Assessment – serious, impacts staff and customers, reputational damage, cost-cutting culture?
- Actions:
 - Test cheaper foam
 - Policies reviewed
 - Destroy any harmful foam
 - Approval for discounted deals
 - Communicate with staff
 - Trace customers
 - Press statement
 - Notify ZMF
 - Impact on Zeelande Health contract

Mattress reviews

- Assessment – unethical, reputational damage
- Actions:
 - Email to staff
 - Staff training
 - Reinforce PSS values and ZMF membership
 - Employee focus groups

Innovative Products

- Assessment – not achieving innovation value, customers may be aware, costing sales
- Actions:
 - Review overall strategy
 - Staff forums
 - Gather data from customers
 - Research budget
 - Talent management programme

Professional skills may be additionally rewarded as in the following rubric:

How well has the candidate demonstrated professional skills as follows:	Not at all	Not so well	Quite well	Very well
<i>scepticism skills in probing the discussions of the board in relation to the staff survey</i> BRIEFING PAPER	The candidate has failed to adequately probe the discussions of the board in relation to the staff survey.	The candidate has probed some of the issues in relation to the board discussions but these were not explored in any detail.	<p>The candidate made a reasonable attempt at probing the board discussions, but only some of the key issues were explored in detail.</p> <p>The answer is presented in the correct format.</p>	<p>The candidate presented a clear and well-structured probing of most/all of the board discussions.</p> <p>The answer is presented in the correct format.</p>
	0	1.33	2.66	4

Task 2b)

1 mark for each relevant point advising on the extent to which a talent management programme would support PSS values (to a maximum of 8 marks)

1 mark for each challenge a talent management programme could present (to a maximum of 8 marks).

(Up to a maximum of 12 marks in total for 2b)

Key Points

Supporting PSS values

- Currently not innovative
- Suggest ways to innovate
- Save time and money and improve quality
- Challenge assumptions
- Address customer needs
- Staff development
- Staff retention
- Emphasise ethics and sustainability

Challenges for PSS

- Employees may be lost to competitors
- May need to increase salaries
- Competitors already paying higher salaries
- Succession planning necessary
- Current training mindset needs to change
- Expensive
- Cost can outweigh benefits
- Monitor success
- Motivated participants
- Management needs to listen

Professional skills may be additionally rewarded as in the following rubric:

How well has the candidate demonstrated professional skills as follows:	Not at all	Not so well	Quite well	Very well
<i>commercial acumen skills in demonstrating awareness of the extent to which talent management could support PSS.</i>	The candidate has failed to demonstrate any awareness of the support given by talent management or problems with it that PSS may face. The answer is wholly technical.	The candidate has demonstrated a limited awareness of support given by talent management and problems with it and the attempt lacked sufficient focus on PSS.	The candidate made a reasonable attempt at demonstrating awareness of the support given by talent management and problems with it for PSS.	The candidate demonstrated clear and well-structured awareness of most/all of the most important support given by talent management and problems with it for PSS.
EMAIL			The answer is presented in the correct format.	The answer is presented in the correct format.
	0	1.33	2.66	4

Task 3a)

Up to 2 marks for each benefit to PSS identified and discussed (up to a maximum of 8 marks)

Up to 2 marks for each threat to PSS identified and discussed (up to a maximum of 8 marks)

(Up to a maximum of 12 marks for 3a)

Key points:

Benefits

- Drives innovation
- Identify patterns and trends
- Speed up decisions
- Tailor products to meet needs
- Building loyalty
- Competitive advantage

Threats

- Data security
- Increased threat of hackers
- Significant cost interpreting data
- Cannot pass cost on
- Easy to make wrong decisions
- Data only being collected from some of the market
- Distract management
- Having lots of data does not guarantee that it will be useful to us

Task 3b)

1 mark for the evaluation of the impact of each relevant point (Up to a maximum of 5 marks per issue and up to maximum of 8 marks in total)

1 mark for recommended actions for each relevant point (Up to a maximum of 5 marks per issue and up to maximum of 8 marks in total)

(Up to a maximum 12 marks for 3b)

Key points:

Guarantee claims

Impact

- Not clear on cause of claim
- Not clear if across all plants
- Not clear if problem with new mattresses
- Due to shorter average life?
- Problems with raw materials or process?

Recommendations

- Monthly reporting of guarantee claims
- Full investigation into cause
- Detect manufacturing fault
- Actions taken documented

Patents

Impact

- Competitive advantage
- Risk of copying
- No legal protection
- No royalty fees
- Reputational damage

Recommendations

- Regular checks
- Check all processes are patented
- Strategy to manage expired patents
- Impact on Zeelande Health contract

Professional skills may be additionally rewarded as in the following rubric:

How well has the candidate demonstrated professional skills as follows:	Not at all	Not so well	Quite well	Very well
<i>evaluation skills in objectively appraising the implications of the internal control weaknesses identified and making well-reasoned recommendations for improvement</i>	The candidate has failed to make any attempt to appraise the implications for PSS of the control weaknesses identified. No recommendations for improvement were made.	The candidate has attempted to appraise the implications for PSS of the control weaknesses identified, but the appraisal was limited. The candidate made weak and unjustified recommendations for improvement.	The candidate has presented evidence of some objective appraisal the implications for PSS of the control weaknesses and there were some reasonable and justified recommendations for improvement.	The candidate has clearly and correctly appraised most/all of the most relevant implications of the internal control weaknesses and has made a number of relevant and well justified recommendations for improvement.
BRIEFING NOTES			The answer is presented in the correct format.	The answer is presented in the correct format.
	0	1.33	2.66	4