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## Better Business Cases™: the Five Case Model



### **Practitioner Candidate Guidance**

October 2013

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## 1 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The objectives of the examination are to enable you to demonstrate an understanding of the Better Business Cases: using the Five Case Model method and an ability to apply the method in an appropriate way in a given set of circumstances described in a scenario. The Practitioner exam uses objective test questions that require you to choose a response to a question from a set of choices, only one of which is correct.
- 1.2 The following paragraphs explain the format of the question papers, and the different types of question asked. There are also some suggestions on how to approach answering the various types of question.

## 2 **STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER**

The examination paper consists of three booklets.

- 2.1 The Scenario Booklet will contain one scenario providing a description of the organization and the business rationale for the proposed scheme. The Scenario Booklet may also provide additional information for one or more of the four questions. Where additional information is to be used, this is clearly stated in bold within the question. **Additional information is only to be used for the question to which it relates.**

If there is no reference to additional information or the Scenario within a question, then you should answer the question using only the information contained within the question. **In this case the Scenario provides the background and context to the overall project but not the facts required to answer the question.**

- 2.2 The Question Booklet will contain four questions, each covering a different syllabus area that will be clearly identified at the beginning of each question. Each of the four questions contains 20 question lines, each of which attracts 1 mark, giving a total of 80 marks. The pass mark is 40 (50%). Each of the four questions will be sub-divided into parts. Each of the 'part-questions' will identify the portion of the 20 marks allocated to it. You are expected to answer all questions and part-questions.
- 2.3 The Answer Booklet will contain the answer sheets on which the answers must be given. There will only ever be **one answer** to each question unless it is clearly stated otherwise within the question. If more than one answer is given in the answer booklet, but not required by the question, the response line will be void.

### 3 **BETTER BUSINESS CASES SYLLABUS AREAS ADDRESSED**

The Better Business Cases Syllabus contains six defined syllabus areas covering each of the Five Cases within the Five Case Model and an overview.

Within the Practitioner Examination, there will be four questions, each testing one or more of the Five Cases as shown below. Each of the four **questions** will test a minimum of 2 syllabus topics from within the syllabus area.

Syllabus Area
Strategic Case
Economic Case
Commercial and Financial Case
Management Case

The Overview will not be examined separately but details from this syllabus section may be included in the questions on each of the other syllabus areas. The full Better Business Cases syllabus is available from the APM Group or from an Accredited Training Organization.

### 4 **TYPES OF QUESTION**

There are five different types of question used within the paper.

- 4.1 **Classic Multiple Choice Questions** – ‘choose **one** from a list of possible options’. The correct response is to be selected from a list of 3 or 4 options.

**Using the Scenario, answer the following question.**

The Chief Executive Officer has asked the project manager to draft the Strategic Case for Phase 1 of the Programme. The following questions include only **true statements** about the project, but only one statement is an appropriate entry for the heading of the Strategic Case.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Which statement is an appropriate spending objective for Phase 1?<br><br>A Ensure all services and products are eco-friendly,<br><br>B Aggregate contracts across selected departments to reduce costs by 15% to 25%, in year 0.<br><br>C Procure e-commerce and e-procurement solutions in support of IM&T Strategy.<br><br>D Reduce utility consumption across departments by 5%. |
|---|---|

- 4.2 **Multiple Response** – ‘choose two correct options from a list of 5 options’. This question follows exactly the same format as the ‘Classic style’, but more than one answer is required. It is the **only question type that requires more than one response to gain a mark**. Both responses must be correct to gain a mark. If more or fewer than 2 responses are given, then the answer will be void.

**Review the Additional Information provided for this question in the *Scenario Booklet*, then answer the following questions about the Economic Case, within the Outline Business Case.**

Remember to select 2 answers to each question.

1	<p>On review, which <b>2</b> statements correctly reflect the <b>Investment Objectives</b>?</p> <p>A These are critical success factors rather than investment objectives.</p> <p>B Each of the entries listed are appropriate spending objectives.</p> <p>C The investment objectives shown in Table 13 should be reflected here.</p> <p>D These objectives should be more narrowly defined to reduce the number of possible options.</p> <p>E It is appropriate that the project manager addressed what the spending objectives and critical success factors should be.</p>
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- 4.3 **Matching** – ‘link items in one list to items in a second list’. There is **only one correct response** to each question, but options from the second list may be used once, more than once or not at all.

Column 1 is a list of the investment objectives for the Portfolio of Services and Supplies (POSS). For each objective in Column 1, select from Column 2 the category of spending objective that it represents. Each selection from Column 2 can be used once, more than once or not at all.

	Column 1	Column 2
1	Improve the quality of services and supplies, in accordance with relevant standards, by year 2.	A Economy
2	Replace existing arrangements for the provision of services and supplies, as and when current arrangements require to be procured.	B Efficiency
3	Put in place arrangements for reducing the cost of services by between 15% and 25%, through enabling economies of scale, by year 1.	C Effectiveness
4	Improve the throughput and provision of services and supplies by between 15% and 25%, through the deployment and use of better processes, by year 3.	D Re-procurement
		E Compliance

4.4 **Sequencing** – ‘position events in a sequence’. The example below demonstrates a Sequencing question based on the Matching type question.

Consider the stages in the development of the business case listed in Column 1 and identify the sequence in which they should take place. Match your answer to the options provided in Column 2.			
	<b>Column 1</b>		<b>Column 2</b>
1	Strategic Outline Case.	A	First stage
2	Full Business Case.	B	Second stage
3	Programme Business Case.	C	Third stage
4	Outline Business Case.	D	Fourth stage

4.5 **Assertion/Reason** – ‘evaluate two statements (an assertion and a reason), to determine if either, both or neither is true and, if both are true, whether the reason explains why the assertion is true’. If either statement is false, the answer is selected from options C, D or E. If both statements are true, a third step is required. If the reason explains why the assertion is true, the answer is A. If it does not, the answer is B.

**Using the Project Scenario, answer the following question.**

Lines 1 to 2 in the table below consist of an assertion statement and a reason statement. For each line identify the appropriate option, from options A to E, that applies. Each option can be used once, more than once or not at all.

Option	Assertion	Reason	
A	True	True	AND the reason explains the assertion
B	True	True	BUT the reason does not explain the assertion
C	True	False	
D	False	True	
E	False	False	

  

	Assertion		Reason
1	The expected benefits from increasing staff flexibility should be included in the Business Case.	BECAUSE	All known Business Case benefits should be described clearly in measurable terms.
2	The expected benefits from increasing staff flexibility should be included in the Business Case.	BECAUSE	Information about expected project benefits forms part of the justification for undertaking a project.

For example, in question 1 and 2 of the example provided on the previous page, the assertion statement is true but the answer to question 1 is a B and question 2 an A.

In question 1 the reason statement is true, however the fact that benefits should be described in measurable terms does not explain why the benefit of increased staff flexibility should be documented in the Business Case. The answer is B.

In question 2 the reason statement provides an explanation for the assertion. From the scenario information it will be clear that staff flexibility is a projected benefit for this project and from the Better Business Cases Five Case Model we know that the Business Case provides justification for undertaking the project, based on the estimated costs against the anticipated benefits to be gained. The reason is true and explains the assertion. The answer is therefore A.

There is **only one correct response** to each question, but options can be used once, more than once or not at all.

## 5 LEARNING LEVELS

Part-questions will vary in their level of difficulty depending on the learning objective of the test. The learning levels are shown below.

<b>QUAL Learning Outcomes Assessment Model</b>				
	<b>1. Knowledge</b>	<b>2. Comprehension</b>	<b>3. Application</b>	<b>4. Analysis</b>
<b>Generic Definition from APMG Learning Outcomes Assessment Model</b>	Know key facts, terms and concepts from the manual/guidance	Understand key concepts from the manual/guidance	Be able to apply key concepts relating to the syllabus area for a given scenario	Be able to analyse and distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate use of the method/guidance for a given scenario situation
<b>Better Business Cases: using the Five Case Model Learning Outcome Assessment Model</b>	Know facts, including terms, concepts, philosophy, steps and actions, documentation, roles and responsibilities from the guidance, and relationships with other recognized and recommended best practice.	Understand the concepts, philosophy, steps and actions, documentation, roles and responsibilities and can explain how these are applied to design and develop a Business Case.	Be able to: (i) Apply the business case development framework appropriately; (ii) Support the production of the Strategic, Economic, Commercial, Financial and Management Case;  for a given scenario.	Be able to identify, analyse and distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate use of the guidance through appraisal of the inputs, processes and outputs for a given scenario.

Within a question, the part-questions will be assembled in order of ascending learning level. The focus of the exam is on the application and evaluation learning objectives.

## 6 **TIME MANAGEMENT**

The exam is 150 minutes in duration. You must manage your time in order to complete all questions. As a general guide, you may wish to spend the first 10 minutes reading the scenario information and getting familiar with the layout of the paper. If 30 minutes is then allocated for each of the four questions, this will allow 20 minutes tolerance for additional reading required for some questions. This suggested timing is for **guidance only**. It is expected that some questions may take longer to answer than others due to the question styles and use of additional information.

Reference to your own annotated Better Business Cases: Using the Five Case Model manual and Template (from the Toolkit) is permitted during the exam. **No additional support material** is permitted; this includes post it notes (other than tabulation of the sections of the manual) and stapled sheets. You should be aware of the time constraint upon you. Whilst the manual is there for support, as in real life, the time pressure of the exam means that the questions **have not been designed** on the basis that you are required or even expected to use the manual to answer questions. Its use is optional. As a guide, you might check the manual once or twice in an exam for a specific point but any more than that is likely to be counter-productive and is not advised.

## 7 **EDITORIAL NOTES**

### 7.1 **Uses of “should”, “will” and “must”.<sup>1</sup>**

“**should**” - is used to express “obligation”: something that is good or important or recommended. It is less strong than must and is used to test whether something should be done in a scenario situation because it is consistent with the principles and recommended practices of the Five Case Model.

“**must**” is used when talking about something that is “necessary” or “has” to occur, i.e. something that is mandatory.

“**will**” and “**is**” however are used to express something definite or indisputable facts about the Five Case Model, e.g. to describe generic facts about the Five Case Model, e.g. “*The Five Case Model is a framework for the development of a business case*”.

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<sup>1</sup> *Definitions are derived from Michael Swan's 'Practical English Usage'*  
Version 1.0 (Status –Live)

### 7.3 Use of 'true statements'

**Using the Scenario, answer the following question.**

The Chief Executive Officer has asked the project manager to draft the Strategic Case for Phase 1 of the Programme. The following questions include only **true statements** about the project, but only one statement is an appropriate entry for the heading of the Strategic Case.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Which statement is an appropriate spending objective for Phase 1?<br>A Ensure all services and products are eco-friendly,<br>B Aggregate contracts across selected departments to reduce costs by 15% to 25%, in year 0.<br>C Procure e-commerce and e-procurement solutions in support of IM&T Strategy.<br>D Reduce utility consumption across departments by 5%. |
|---|---|

When the expression '**true statements**' is used in a question, **no evaluation of whether the statements are consistent with the scenario or additional information is required.**

In example 7.3 there is no need to check the scenario to see if the services and products are to be eco-friendly, etc. As it is known from the question header that the statement is true, the assessment required is whether, according to the recommended Five Case Model content of Business Case, this is an appropriate spending objective for Phase 1.

## 8 USING THE ANSWER BOOKLET

The Answer Booklets will be read electronically and the results generated by computer. It is therefore essential that you follow the instructions given and mark your answers accordingly. Failure to do so may lead to delay and, in some cases, answers being void.

All answers are given by filling in 'ovals' that relate to your chosen response, e.g.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The oval must be filled in **IN PENCIL, NOT PEN**. If a pen is used, the answers will not be marked.

Acceptable ways to complete the answer sheets are either:

 completely filling in the oval or  drawing a line through the centre of the oval, ensuring that between 80-100% is filled.

Any other method, including ticks or crosses, is not acceptable and may not be marked.

If you wish to change your answer during the exam, the incorrect answer should be erased completely and the correct answer indicated. If more than one answer is given, and the question only requires one answer, the question will score zero.