Business Paper 1:

Duration: 1h30m exam

Marks: 30 marks

SL (35% of final grade) / HL (25% of final grade)

IB Business Paper 1 revolves around a case study. A small excerpt of the case study is released around 3 months before the exam. It is crucial that students thoroughly examine this case study and use it as fully as possible. This could mean:

- Highlighting key words of the case study.
- Defining EVERY business management term that appears in the case study.
- Asking ChatGPT to generate possible questions (definitions, examples, but also 10-markers) that relate to the study.
- Using the Business management toolkit (for example, doing a STEEPLE analysis) using excerpt material.

Using the excerpt to your maximum advantage will help your chances in succeeding on the business paper 1. The excerpt is meant to help you gain insight into the nature of the business examined in the case study. This is valuable: knowing a piece of the exam's case study means you know a bit of the exam months before you actually sit in the exam room. Use the excerpt wisely.

Other relevant paper 1 information:

The SL and HL Paper 1 is the exact same. This means the Paper 1 tests ONLY SL CONTENT. HL students are still allowed to use HL theories, tools and terminology, but know that it is not required in this paper, Moreover, the IB Business Formula Book is NOT provided. However, only basic calculations may need to be performed. Regardless, it is important students are capable of performing most calculations with ease to not be caught off-guard on exam day.

Business Paper 2:

Duration:

HL: 1h45m

SL: 1h30m

Marks:

HL: 50 marks

SL: 40 marks

SL (35% of final grade) / HL (30% of final grade)

IB Business Paper 2 provides you multiple case studies, divided into 2 sections, section A and section B.

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SECTION A:

- HL and SL students must answer ALL questions in this section.

- A series of short case studies are provided in this section. For SL students they will have to read 2 cases (20 marks, each case 10 marks) and answer their respective questions, while for HL it is 3 case studies (30 marks, each case 10 marks).

- This section has strong QUANTITATIVE focus (AO4 questions): could be calculating something, constructing a table/graph, etc. At least 60% of this section's questions are quantitative. However, there will still be qualitative questions. These could be AO1 (state, define, list) or AO2 (explain or describe).

SECTION B:

- Answer ONLY ONE of the two questions (you will be given 2 options). Some students in the past have answered both questions in section B and have wasted a lot of time that could have been better used in the exam. Therefore, choose ONLY ONE.

- Unlike section A, this section is more QUALITATIVE focused. However, it is still possible you may be asked some quantitative questions. Section B has more AO2's plus a guaranteed 10 marker (AO3). Either one of the two case studies are worth 20 marks. However, make sure you choose the case study that you feel most confident in, not just in the 10 marker, but overall.

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Other relevant paper 2 information:

The SL and HL Paper 1's are different. HL students can expect both SL and HL material to be assessed in this exam. HL students can expect more "HL only" quantitative and qualitative questions, and can prepare themselves accordingly. Moreover, the IB Business Formula Book IS provided in this exam. This can be used at any time in the exam. Know where each formula is in the formula booklet, this can save precious time in the exam. Better yet, memorize the formulas so you don't even have to spend time searching in the booklet.

Business Paper 3 (HL ONLY):

Duration: 1h15m

Marks: 25 marks

25% of final grade

This paper is ONLY for HL students. The marks in this paper are the most highly weighted: each mark in this paper is worth 1% of your final grade.

The structure of this paper is the exact same throughout the years, and is as follows:

1. **With reference to an appropriate business management theory, describe a human need that (COMPANY) meets through ... [2 marks]**

This question is graded as 1+1:

1 mark for simply identifying a human need.

1 mark for describing the need, and properly applying to the case.

Choose a relatively simple motivation theory that you know well, but do not make the mistake of assuming Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs can always be applied. In the M25 Paper 3, this question said to use any theory BESIDES Maslow. Naturally, this caught students off guard, as most predicted Maslow can always be used for this question. To avoid this confusion and anxiety, know 2-3 motivation theories well so that you can always have something to fall back onto.

2. **Explain two challenges facing (COMPANY) [6 marks]**

This question is graded as 3+3:

1 mark for identifying a challenge.

1 mark for applying it to the case.

1 mark for further explanation on the challenge.

(per challenge identified, so this must be done TWICE)

Identifying and applying to the case is not enough for question 2, but students still struggle to get the third mark. To get full marks, it helps to make it obvious to your examiner that you are writing a full answer. This could be demonstrated in the way you write your answer. For example, if you format your answer as such:

"A challenge to (COMPANY) is.... [1 mark, identified challenge]

This is evident because the (use case material, like statistics, data points, statements by stakeholders). [1 mark, applied to case]

The implications of this challenge/the impact of this challenge/this affects the business because ... [1 mark, further explanation].

3. **Using all the resources provided and your knowledge of business management tools and theories, recommend a possible plan of action for (COMPANY) [17 marks].**

This question is graded as:

A: Use of resource material [4 marks]

This criterion is basically free marks. You simply need to ensure that you make clear reference to each of the resources you are provided. That means if there are 5 resources, you must explicitly refer to each of the 5 resources. To make it clear, after citing the case, write in parenthesis which resource this information is from. There should be no problem in getting full marks for this criterion.

B: Tools and Theories [4 marks]

Criterion B grades you on how effectively you applied the tools and theories of the business course (ranging from limited application of tools and theories for 1 mark to effective application of tools and theories for 4 marks). Therefore, you must choose tools and theories that are relevant to the point you are making, but also to the case study. Try to not use SWOT and/or STEEPLE, as they are basically applicable everywhere. You want to choose a tool/theory that specifically applies to the case study and to the point you are making. That way, you can reach high marks in this criterion.

C: Evaluation [3 marks]

For this criterion, you get one mark for having a 'descriptive' response, two for an 'analysis' of a response, and three for an 'evaluative' response. As suggested, an increase in the depth of the response and consideration of more perspectives leads to an increase in marks awarded. To maximize marks, ensure you can state an impact of your recommendation, explain that impact, and then evaluate whether that impact of positive or negative. Evaluating is basically having an argument about what you are saying in your answer.
One side could argue that the short term benefits are valuable, despite long term drawbacks. The other side could be the opposite.

Alternatively, one department of the business could benefit from this recommendation, making the recommendation suitable. Meanwhile, another department could suffer, potentially making the recommendation not worthwhile.
Presenting your argument like this, as well as reaching a final verdict in the conclusion of the response, can show excellent evaluation skills.

D: Structure [3 marks]

Lastly, this criterion grades you based on how clearly you have presented your ideas. Are they messy, and seem to be randomly introduced or not suitably concluded? Or does each argument build off of the last, and add perspective at appropriate moments in the response? Your mark for structure shows accordingly. For this criterion, it could be helpful to follow a certain format of answering the question:

EXAMPLE STRUCTURE:

Short Introduction:

Context, Introduce 2 business problems, your areas of focus (image, profitability, etc.)

4 Body paragraphs (2 for each of the 2 business problems):

Paragraph 1: Talk about the problem that you chose. Explain why it is impacting the business. The more depth, the better. Refer to many resources that effectively establish how this problem is impacting the business in multiple ways.

Paragraph 2: Propose a solution to this problem. Explain why it is worth implementing, and emphasize the positive impact the business will experience after following your plan of action. Evaluate your recommendation by considering some tradeoffs, but try to remain

convincing that your recommendation has more pros and cons. (Otherwise why would you be recommending it?)

Do the above twice.

Conclusion:

Summarize your arguments, and finish off by reinforcing that your plan will help the business solve its problems. Briefly explain that the limitation are present, but the benefits outweigh them.

This structure is simple and will generally guarantee you most marks from the 17 marker. However, you can try other structures that you feel would better equip you to gaining all of the 17 marks.

Other relevant paper 3 information:

The IB Business Formula Book is NOT provided. However, no calculations are strictly required to be performed. A calculator is still allowed in this exam for basic mathematical operations. Try to spend as little time as possible on the 2 mark, and try to spend little time on the 6 marker as well. Personally, I recommend spending 5 minutes on the 2 mark, 10 minutes on the 6 mark, and the rest of the hour on the 17 mark.