

Extended-responses are ‘impression marked’ using a standards referenced approach. The marking criteria (the standards against which student performance in each question will be measured) are established by the Exam Committee when the exam is set. The Marking Guidelines written by the Exam Committee are given to the HSC markers when they commence marking.

Section III is a compulsory question with no internal choice. You are required to write a **business report** based on a brief business scenario (case study) that describes some of the features of a fictitious business.

Section IV has an ‘either/or’ internal choice. It is an extended-response that requires you to use a case study (or case studies) to answer a question focused on one or more of the topic areas. While there is no requirement in this section to write a business report, there are significant benefits in using that style. Used effectively, business report style maximises potential marks because it is easy to read and understand, and maximises the amount of information you can include in the limited time available.

The syllabus does not specify an accepted format for a business report. This is largely because formats vary between businesses. However, there are some generally accepted features of business reports which, incorporated into your extended-responses, will enhance your answer and the impression it makes on the marker. Students are encouraged to adopt this business report style. Of course, students who have high order essay-writing skills in the traditional prose style may feel more comfortable maintaining that approach. Certainly, no student is penalised in marking for not using business report style.

Regardless of whether you use business report style or a more traditional prose style:

1. **Write in short, concise sentences and keep the paragraphs relatively short** ... that is, use the KISS principle. (Keep It Simple Stupid)
2. **Leave a line between each paragraph**... especially if your writing is untidy and/or difficult to read and/or you are using a prose style. Try and make it easy for the marker.

Note. Everything in the exam answer booklet is read and marked. So if you do a plan (or you are writing out an expansion of the business scenario prior to writing either a plan or your answer), do it on the inside cover of the answer booklet rather than on scrap paper or the question paper. If you run out of time, at least the marker can see what you intended to write about and your understanding of the scenario — you are likely to receive some credit.

For similar reasons, don’t use ‘white out’ in either of the writing sections. If you think you have made a mistake or have decided not to include some information, simply cross-out the relevant words/sentence(s)/paragraph(s), but ensure that it can still be read.

Business report style

A business report is supposed to be *easy to read* — to enable busy managers to read it quickly or to find specific sections of the report easily. It is the ‘easy to read’ aspect that makes this approach attractive in the exam situation.