

P1 June 2017: Marking of representative answer

Honeybuzz Question 3: Worth 25 marks in total

General feedback:

As often quoted in feedback to students, the three essential elements of achieving a pass in P1 are to firstly answer all parts of a question, secondly to answer the question set, taking particular note of the verbs used, and thirdly to apply the answer to the case, using examples where possible to demonstrate understanding. This candidate made a fair attempt at all parts of the question but overall the answer was a marginal fail. If the candidate had demonstrated a better understanding of the requirements and a little more application to the case then this could easily have been improved to a pass.

Overall the candidate scored 11/25

Question 3a (i)

Explain and evaluate the concepts of CSR strategy and strategic CSR, as they relate to Grunwald and its Honeybuzz brand. (8 marks available)

- There was a little confusion in the answer as to the company and the brand, but the meaning was clear and credit was given.
- The question clearly had two requirements, to explain and to evaluate. In this answer the candidate made a good attempt at the explanation element of CSR strategy – basic definitions were provided with excellent examples from the case.
- The general definition of strategic CSR was good but the answer would have benefited by linking how the approach aligns the social responsibility with the core business objectives so that investors will benefit as well.
- The answer however was weak in terms of evaluation. An opinion, verdict if you like was required as to the extent the two concepts had been incorporated and this was missing.
- Future candidates should note that if they are asked to evaluate then they need to provide an opinion.
- For example in this case the candidate noted the company had introduced the honey substitute and funded research, but made no comment to the fact that this was clear evidence that the company has introduced and implemented a CSR strategy.

The candidate scored 4/8 for this part question

Question 3a) (ii)

Justify which position on social responsibility is being adopted by Grunwald in the context of Gray, Owen & Adams classifications. (4 marks available)

- This answer did achieve a pass mark but lacked a little depth to score very highly.
- The candidate quite correctly did not waste time explaining all seven classifications as some candidates did.

- The candidate would have gained an extra mark or two if they had linked the answer to the CSR strategy discussed in part a (i).

The candidate scored 2/4 for this part question.

Question 3b)

Explain the nature of social and environmental audits, and evaluate the contribution these make to the assurance of the integrated reports published by Grunwald. (7 marks available)

- As with part a(i) candidates were asked to explain and evaluate and again the candidate was weak on the evaluation.
- These explanations contain little detail and as a result scored very few marks.
- Examples linked to the case would illustrate understanding and gain marks. For example Grunwald aims to raise public awareness of the plight of the bumble bee. A target could be set, measured and reported back. Again understanding the link the audits play in the implementation of the strategies noted in a1 would score marks
- These audits are generally better at identifying internal strengths and weaknesses, but some credit was given and attracting investors is a very valid point.
- The three steps given in the answer helped to explain the nature of an audit and gained credit.
- Unfortunately there is little or no evaluation and no mention of the link in to the assurance of the integrated reports. If the candidate had referred to these audits being conducted by independent organisations and the addition assurance and confidence this would bring the shareholders then this would have been a marginal pass rather than a marginal fail.

The candidate scored 3/7 for this part question

Question 3c)

Assess the environmental impacts which the Honeybuzz brand can have in terms of both Grunwald's environmental footprint and environmental reporting. (6 marks available)

- The question asks for an assessment of impact on the environmental footprint and environmental reporting.
- There were no marks for explaining environmental footprint or environmental reporting. At this level candidates should understand the need to apply knowledge to a scenario and not just list generic answers.
- Unfortunately this candidate produced an explanation – which was not required, and generic points, which scored very few marks.
- In addition the candidate drew no distinction between the impact on the environmental footprint and the impact on environmental reporting – just listed general environmental impact points and listed all negative impact points.
- The candidate had mentioned the honey substitute helping to protect the bee population in part a (i) as part of CSR strategy – if they had expanded this point as a positive impact on the environmental footprint then they could have scored up to 2 additional marks.

- Similarly the candidate mentioned the environmental audit helping to market the company to some investors in part b and it was a shame that the candidate did not expand this point in this section as a positive impact on the environmental report and keeping these “green” investors

The candidate scored 2/6 for this part question