**Important Reminders for End of Semester Exams**

1. Application is the key to building your answers on both paper 1 and 2. **Application is the hardest skill under time pressure and if you are struggling, remember the important rule – if the answer you give could apply to any business in the world then you have not applied your answer enough, you must try harder to make your answer more specific to the situation at The Imperial.** Think to yourself – would this answer make sense for the business and the stakeholders involved in that case? Think of the **environment** you are talking about (a STEEPLE/PESTLE analysis in your revision always helps with this) – are the markets competitive? How much are the competition a threat? Is there much wealth in the market? Who are the stakeholders in this respective case? How would they be affected by what you are putting in your answer? It is a very difficult skill but just keep trying to put yourself in the situation and environment of The Imperial when you answer the question. **Whatever the case study is about you choose, put yourself in the situation of that particular case study and make sure your answer is specific to that particular business. I always like to look for these following criterion when reading the case study:**
* **who are the stakeholders in this case and how are they being affected by the scenario (e.g. how will any change affect employee motivation?)?**
* **how big is the business? (is expanding a risk? Do they have enough capital reserves? Will they find it hard to compete? Will they find it a difficult transition to implement any change?)**
* **Does the business seem financially stable?**
* **How competitive is the market?**

**All of these will help you apply your answers to the case study – whenever you answer, think how will your answer affect the questions you have asked above – this is true application. If you know your answer is just pure theoretical or you have only mentioned the business in the case by name and haven’t really explained in context how your points/explanations will affect the business in the case study based on the scenario they are in, then rest assured you will only achieve half marks. You must go back and try and apply more specifically to the case study.**

1. **HL Exam consists of 2 sections. It has absolutely nothing to do with The Imperial case study. It consists of 4 questions all related to unseen case studies. Section A is the finance section. This is compulsory and everyone must answer this question. Section B is the general theory section where anything can come up. There are 3 questions to choose from and you must answer 2 of those 3 questions. So in total, you answer 3 questions – 1 from Section A and 2 from Section B. You have 2 hours and 15 minutes so it gives you 45 minutes per question (SL you have 1 hour 45 minutes for the same structure but less marks – 60 marks rather than 75 Marks for HL). Each question for HL is 25 marks. SL your exam is slightly different. You will have FIVE questions and you must answer THREE of those questions.**
2. **Definitions are vital in both exams and are asked often, and even when they are not asked, will need to be used to start your answers to any questions as it is an easy knowledge mark to pick up. Make sure you have revised as many of these as possible and when answering a definition give an example, preferably related to the case study in the question, to fully show your understanding of the term. Key business terms should be attempted to be integrated in to all answers to show thorough understanding. Examiners look for key business terms in your answers to all questions to help with your knowledge marks and to reach the top markbands. It is not expected that you recite the definitions word for word but make sure you just have a good understanding of what the key term is. The best way is just to rewrite the definition in your own words to best understand it.**
3. **Make sure you look for what the question is asking. You can then structure your answer around making sure at the end of every paragraph or sentence you have attempted to answer exactly what the question has asked of you. The command word in the question, e.g. Analyse, Justify, Discuss, Evaluate, Compare etc are the key to knowing how to structure the question. Refer to the command term guide that I put on edmodo at the very start of the year to show you what each command term requires from you in your answer. This will tell you whether you need to just argue for and against or compare the advantages and disadvantages or whether you will also need to make a final judgment to your argument.**
4. **When you analyse/compare/weigh up the arguments for and against, make sure your answer is BALANCED! If you look at all of the markschemes, the two skills it constantly asks for to get the most marks is if the argument is BALANCED (i.e. you have given 2 advantages and 2 disadvantages) and if it is RELEVANT to the business in the case study (i.e. APPLICATION). In the big mark questions i.e. 8 – 12 marks, you will not need more than 3 arguments FOR and 3 arguments AGAINST**
5. **When you evaluate/conclude/make your judgement, make sure from your balanced argument that you come to one definitive conclusion**, i.e. choose one way or the other, don’t sit on the fence with your answer and conclude that you cannot decide. You must come to a decision from your argument and **if you can make future recommendations for the business in the conclusion then do so** as this shows good evaluative skills. BUT MAKE SURE YOU GIVE CREDIT TO THE OTHERSIDE BEFORE CHOOSING YOUR FINAL DECISION. So for example you could say Overall, I believe in the short term option A is a good choice for Business X IN THE SHORT TERM to solve their minor issues, however, I think the best option overall is option B as this will help Business X ultimately succeed in the LONG TERM. OR you could word it as I believe Option B is the best option for Business X but it will ultimately DEPEND ON the business solving their minor short term issues first. Or out of the three importance points I discussed or the three main roles that market research has for example, I believe that this is the most important point of the three.
6. **Practice the Past papers as much as you can – you can download them easily from the internet now. The world wide web. WWW.**
7. **Don’t just follow the theory revision.** The notes and classwork we have done over the past year always included examination questions to do with the relevant topic that we went through together in class, that are very useful to look back on as you will remember them most from already having completed them in class and some great answers have been given by the class to add to the model answers. If you have remained organized, each topic in your folder will have these very useful questions we have examined together. I only ever used questions that could come up in the exam or have been in the exam so all of the ones we have done in class are very useful.
8. **Stay calm in the exam. If you really feel like you have no hope of finishing on time then answer the big questions first and then the smaller questions last – these are easier to pick up marks when rushing. You do not have to answer the questions in any particular order, just make sure you clearly label which question you are answering on your answer sheet.**
9. **You can do bullet points but I would advise that you don’t. You wont lose marks but from talking to examiners they just naturally get the feeling that when you write bullet points then you are not writing as much as you could. But if you are going to use them, if this helps you break up your answer, just make sure you are fully explaining the bullet point as if it was just a normal sentence or paragraph. Always write full sentences unless the command word is ‘list’.**

**11) Good luck! YNWA.**

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