



**EXTERNAL INTEGRATED SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT
EXEMPLAR WRITTEN ASSESSMENT- PAPER 1
MEMORANDUM**

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

SURNAME													
NAMES													
ID NUMBER													
EISA REGISTRATION NUMBER													
ASSESSMENT CENTRE													
ASSESSMENT CENTRE ACCREDITATION NUMBER													

QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

QUALIFICATION TITLE	Occupational Certificate: Small Business Consultant
SAQA ID	118741
NQF LEVEL	5
CREDITS	244
DURATION	2 Hour 30 minutes
TOTAL MARKS	120
PASS MARK	50% (60 marks)
DATE OF EISA	

GENERAL EISA RULES

1. Candidates are **only** allowed to use the supplied EISA booklets.
2. Candidates are **only** allowed to use a black pen for their answers.
3. Candidates to ensure that their name, surname and EISA registration number appear on the front of their EISA booklet.
4. This is a closed-book examination.
5. All EISA booklets must be handed back to the invigilator. No pages may be torn off or removed from the EISA booklet. The removal of EISA booklets from the examination room is prohibited.
6. Candidates may make use of a calculator in this EISA.
7. The use of any communication devices, including smart watches, cell phones, tablets, iPads, headphones and laptops is prohibited.
8. All cell phones are to be switched off for the duration of the EISA.
9. The invigilator will not assist you with the explanation of questions related to the EISA.
10. Candidates are prohibited from communicating with each other in any manner whatsoever.
11. Candidates may not leave the examination venue within one hour of the start of the EISA and in the last 10 minutes of the duration of the paper.
12. Candidates who are found to be disruptive and unruly in the assessment centre will be requested to leave the assessment centre by the invigilator.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT I HAVE READ THE ABOVE EISA RULES AND
DECLARE THAT I UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THEM.

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Candidates must complete all the questions in this EISA.
2. Candidates must ensure that they use only a black pen when completing this EISA.
3. Should you require additional paper to complete the EISA, please request it from the invigilator. Ensure that you indicate your name, surname, EISA registration number at the top of the additional paper.

Question 1

1.1 Read the scenario below and then answer the questions that follow.

Scenario: Assessing Your Readiness as a Small Business Consultant

You are a newly appointed junior consultant at a small business support organisation called **FutureGrowth Consulting Services**. The organisation provides consulting and advisory support to emerging entrepreneurs and small businesses in various sectors such as retail, agriculture, catering, beauty, and manufacturing.

Your supervisor has assigned you to work with a client called **Bright Path Trading**, a growing small business owned by Mr. Sibusiso Dlamini. The business specialises in manufacturing and supplying school uniforms to local schools and communities. Although the business has experienced growth over the past three years, it is currently facing several operational and management challenges.

Some of the challenges identified include:

1. Poor customer communication and complaints handling
2. Weak financial planning and budgeting
3. Limited marketing and business growth strategies
4. Inconsistent stock control and record keeping
5. Difficulty managing employees and meeting deadlines

Before starting the consulting assignment, you are required to conduct a self-appraisal to assess your personal qualities, entrepreneurial abilities, ethical conduct, strengths, weaknesses, skills, and career development needs relevant to the consulting role.

1.1.1 (a) Identify at least TWO business challenges experienced by Bright Path Trading and indicate the personality traits that would assist you in addressing those challenges.

Complete **Section A** of the template. **(2)**

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for identifying and aligning TWO business challenges and personality traits that would assist in addressing the challenges.

1.1.1 (b) Identify at least TWO personal interests that align with the operational or business needs of Bright Path Trading and explain how these interests may support your consulting role.

Populate your response in **Section B** of the template. (2)

Marking Guide: Award 1 mark each for the TWO relevant personal interests aligned to a business need stated.

1.1.1 (c) Evaluate how the alignment between your personality traits and interests may improve your effectiveness as a Small Business Consultant supporting Bright Path Trading.

Populate your response in **Section C** of the template. (1)

Marking Guide: Award 1 mark for evaluating how the alignment between personality traits and interests improves consulting effectiveness.

Personal Capability Alignment Template for Small Business Consultant (SBC)			
Name of Small Business: Bright Path Trading			
Type of Business: School Uniform Manufacturing and Supply			
Date: _____			
Section A: Understanding the Business			
Business Identified	Challenge	Personality Trait	How Trait Supports the Business
Poor communication and complaints handling	customer and	Good communication skills	Enables effective communication with customers, employees, and management to improve customer service processes
Weak financial planning and budgeting		Analytical thinking	Assists in identifying financial weaknesses and recommending budgeting improvements
Section B: Personality Traits Alignment of SBC			
Personal Interest	Business Need	How Interest Supports Consulting Effectiveness	
Financial management	Weak financial planning and budgeting	Supports development of budgeting and cash flow improvement recommendations	
Marketing and business growth	Limited marketing and growth strategies	Supports development of customer acquisition and growth strategies	
Section C: Personal Interests Alignment of SBC			
My Interests and Alignment with the Business Needs			
Entrepreneurship and business growth aligns with the business's need to improve profitability and expand operations.			

Customer service aligns with the business's need to improve customer communication and customer satisfaction.

Marketing and branding align with the business's limited marketing and business growth strategies.

Financial management aligns with the business's weak financial planning and budgeting challenges.

1.1.2 (a) Evaluate at least THREE personal strengths that could improve your effectiveness as a Small Business Consultant assisting Ubuntu Office Supplies. **(3)**

- Good communication skills assist in communicating effectively with management, employees, and customers.
- Organisational and planning skills help manage consulting activities, reporting, and operational improvement processes.
- Problem-solving ability helps identify solutions for stock management and customer service challenges.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for evaluate at TWO personal strengths that could improve effectiveness as an SBC.

1.1.2 (b) Evaluate at least THREE personal weaknesses that may negatively affect your consulting performance when supporting Ubuntu Office Supplies. **(3)**

- Limited financial analysis experience may reduce the ability to analyse financial records effectively.
- Lack of confidence during presentations may affect communication of recommendations to stakeholders.
- Limited digital marketing knowledge may reduce the ability to recommend online business growth strategies.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for evaluate at TWO personal weaknesses that may negatively affect your consulting performance.

1.1.3: Multiple Choice Questions **(4)**

Respond to the multiple-choice questions below using the BrightPath Trading scenario. In each case, select the correct answer from the options given. Transfer your answers to the answer table at the end of the questions.

i) A consultant identifies poor presentation skills as a weakness. Which consulting activity is MOST likely to be affected by this gap?

- A. Communicating recommendations to management
- B. Filing customer invoices
- C. Cleaning the workplace
- D. Capturing stock quantities

ii) A consultant lacks confidence in financial analysis. Which professional development activity would BEST address this gap?

- A. Avoiding financial reports
- B. Attending financial management training
- C. Ignoring budgeting processes
- D. Delegating all communication tasks

iii) Why is it important for a consultant to identify gaps in personal strengths and weaknesses before consulting a business?

- A. To reduce workload responsibilities
- B. To avoid interacting with stakeholders
- C. To replace business policies
- D. To identify development needs and improve consulting effectiveness

iv) A consultant realises they have limited digital marketing knowledge. Which area of consulting performance may be negatively affected?

- A. Ability to recommend online business growth strategies
- B. Ability to arrange office furniture
- C. Ability to monitor employee attendance only
- D. Ability to complete delivery schedules

Multiple Choice Questions Answer Table

Answer Key (1 mark for each correct answer)

Question	Answer
i	C
ii	B

iii	D
iv	A

1.1.4 Having identified your consulting skills gaps during your assessment of Bright Path Trading, draw up a Personal Development Plan (PDP) that will assist you in improving your effectiveness as a Small Business Consultant.

Your personal development plan must include:

- At least TWO skills gaps identified.
- Suitable development action recommended for each skills gap.
- Realistic timeframe for completing each development action.
- Explain how the development action will improve your consulting performance. **(5)**

Use the template below to present your answer.

Consider any TWO of the following skills gaps

Skills Gap	Development Action	Timeframe	Expected Improvement
Limited financial management knowledge	Attend a short course in budgeting, cash flow management, and financial analysis	3 months	Improved ability to analyse financial statements and provide financial recommendations to clients
Lack of confidence when presenting recommendations	Participate in public speaking and presentation skills workshops	2 months	Improved confidence and professionalism when communicating with clients and stakeholders
Limited digital marketing knowledge	Complete a digital marketing training programme	2 months	Improved ability to advise clients on online marketing and customer engagement strategies
Weak conflict management skills	Attend conflict resolution and stakeholder management training	1 month	Improved ability to manage client concerns and workplace conflicts professionally

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for identifying at least TWO relevant skills gaps, 1 mark for recommending suitable development actions that address the identified skills gaps, 1 mark for providing realistic timeframes for implementation and 1 mark for explaining how the development actions will improve consulting performance.

1.1.5 Having identified your skills gaps as a Small Business Consultant, recommend TWO training or development opportunities that would assist you in improving your consulting abilities and advancing your career. **(4)**

Consider any TWO of the following:

- Financial Management Training to improve understanding of budgeting, cash flow, and financial analysis.
- Communication and Presentation Skills Workshop to enhance professional communication and client engagement.
- Mentorship and Coaching Programmes to provide practical guidance from experienced consultants.
- Entrepreneurship and Business Development Courses to increase business growth strategies knowledge.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for stating TWO relevant training or development opportunities and 2 marks for explaining how each opportunity improves consulting performance and career development. Partial marks for vague or incomplete explanations.

1.1.6 (a) Discuss at least THREE methods you would use to develop your entrepreneurial profile to improve the quality of support you provide to small businesses. **(3)**

Consider any THREE of the following:

- Attend entrepreneurship and business management training.
- Build networking and mentorship relationships.
- Develop problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- Engage in continuous learning and self-development.

Marking Guide: Award 3 marks for discussing THREE methods used to develop a Small Business Consultant entrepreneurial profile to improve the quality of support provided to small businesses.

1.1.6 (b) Select TWO methods identified in Question 1.1.6(a) and explain how each method could strengthen your competence and effectiveness as a Small Business Consultant when supporting businesses such as Bright Path Trading. **(2)**

- Attending entrepreneurship and business management training would improve understanding of business growth, innovation, and financial management.
- Building networking and mentorship relationships would increase exposure to industry knowledge, business opportunities, and professional guidance.
- Developing problem-solving and decision-making skills would improve the ability to analyse business challenges and provide practical solutions.
- Engaging in continuous learning and self-development would keep SBC knowledgeable on current business trends and consulting practices.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for explaining how the TWO methods stated in 1.1.6(a) could improve your effectiveness as a Small Business Consultant.

SUB- TOTAL: 29 marks

Question 2

2.1 Read the scenario below and then answer the questions that follow.

Scenario: Assistance with Compliance to Regulatory Framework

Following your self-assessment and appointment as a junior consultant at **FutureGrowth Consulting Services**, you have now officially been assigned to support **Bright Path Trading**, the small business owned by Mr. Sibusiso Dlamini that manufactures and supplies school uniforms.

During your first visit, Mr. Dlamini explains that the business recently received complaints from customers and a warning notice from the local municipality regarding possible non-compliance with certain business regulations. The business is also preparing to apply for funding from a small government business support programme, which requires proof of legal and operational compliance.

Mr. Dlamini is concerned because some business records and compliance documents are incomplete or outdated. He requests your assistance in conducting a due diligence inspection to determine whether the business complies with the relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

During discussions with the owner, the following concerns are identified:

- The business trading licence may have expired.
- Some employees do not have signed employment contracts.
- Health and safety procedures are not clearly displayed in the workplace.
- Financial records and tax documents are not properly filed.
- Stock records are inconsistent and incomplete.
- Customer complaints are not formally recorded.
- There is uncertainty about compliance with labour and municipal regulations.

Mr. Dlamini sends you the following email requesting assistance:

Dear Consultant,

I hope you are well.

As discussed during your recent visit to Bright Path Trading, I am requesting your assistance in helping our business prepare for compliance and due diligence inspection.

We would like to identify any areas where the business may not be complying with relevant legislation or operational requirements before applying for external funding support.

Please assist us with:

- *Planning an inspection process*
- *Identifying documents and records that must be checked*
- *Advising us on legal and operational compliance requirements*
- *Recording findings and recommending corrective actions where necessary*

We would appreciate your guidance in ensuring that the business operates professionally and complies with all relevant regulations.

Kind regards

Sibusiso Dlamini

Owner: Bright Path Trading

You are now required to prepare for and conduct the due diligence and compliance inspection process for Bright Path Trading. Use the information provided in the scenario to complete the following assessment activities.

2.1.1.1 Multiple Choice Questions

(5)

Respond to the multiple-choice questions below. In each case, select the correct answer from the options given. Transfer your answers to the answer table at the end of the questions.

i) What is the MAIN purpose of preparing an agenda before a due diligence planning meeting?

- A. To increase the length of the meeting
- B. To ensure the meeting is organised and focused on key inspection issues**
- C. To avoid recording meeting discussions
- D. To replace the inspection process

ii) Which of the following items should MOST likely appear on the agenda for a due diligence inspection meeting?

- A. Employee leave applications
- B. Office decoration plans
- C. Review of compliance documents and inspection requirements**
- D. Social media passwords

iii) Why is it important to include the inspection objectives in the meeting agenda?

- A. To reduce communication between participants
- B. To avoid discussing compliance matters
- C. To replace legal requirements
- D. To ensure all participants understand the purpose of the inspection**

iv) Which document would MOST likely be discussed during a due diligence planning meeting for Bright Path Trading?

- A. Vehicle registration books
- B. Restaurant menu
- C. Business licence and tax records**
- D. Sports club membership form

v) A well-prepared meeting agenda helps a Small Business Consultant to:

- A. Plan inspection activities and allocate responsibilities effectively**
- B. Conduct inspections without preparation
- C. Ignore compliance risks
- D. Avoid documenting findings

Multiple Choice Questions Answer Table

Answer Key (1 mark for each correct answer)

Question	Answer
i	B
ii	C
iii	D
iv	C
v	A

2.1.1.2 Draft an agenda with at least FOUR relevant agenda items for a due diligence planning meeting that could be used during the meeting with Bright Path Trading Management as per request email. **(4)**

Marker to consider other different formats and agenda headings used provided they are relevant to due diligence inspection planning.

BRIGHT PATH TRADING

DUE DILIGENCE INSPECTION PLANNING MEETING AGENDA

Date: _____

Time: _____

Venue: _____

Chairperson: Small Business Consultant

1. Opening and Welcome
2. Purpose and Scope of the Due Diligence Inspection
3. Review of Compliance Requirements
4. Documentation Required for Inspection
5. Inspection Schedule and Responsibilities
6. Risk Areas and Key Concerns
7. Communication and Reporting Arrangements
8. Questions, Clarifications and Closure

Marking Guide: Award 1 mark for including the purpose and scope of the inspection, 1 mark for including compliance requirements and documentation to be reviewed, 1 mark for including inspection scheduling and allocation of responsibilities, 1 mark for including discussion of risks, concerns, or inspection focus areas and 1 mark for presenting the agenda in a logical and professional meeting format.

2.1.2 Discuss at least THREE preparatory activities that should take place before the inspection to ensure the inspection process is effective and professionally conducted. **(6)**

Consider any THREE of the following but not limited to:

- Reviewing business and compliance documents.
- Preparing an inspection checklist.
- Scheduling and communicating inspection details.
- Gathering relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks each for discussing each of the THREE preparatory activities that should take place before the inspection.

2.1.3 (a) Using the scenario of Bright Path Trading, identify and describe at least THREE inspection activities that you should consider during the inspection process and their purpose. **(6)**

Consider any THREE but not limited to:

- Reviewing compliance and legal documents ensures the business complies with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Conducting physical workplace inspection helps identify health, safety, and operational risks within the business.
- Interviewing the owner and employees to assist in verifying information and identifying operational weaknesses.
- Checking financial and stock records helps determine whether proper control systems and record-keeping processes are in place.

Marking Guide: Award 3 marks each for identifying and describing THREE inspection activities for consideration during the inspection process and 3 marks for clearly explaining their purpose. Partial marks for vague or incomplete explanations.

2.1.3(b) Evaluate the possible impact on the business if the inspection activities are not conducted properly. **(1)**

Consider the following but not limited to:

- Non-compliance issues may remain unidentified.
- The business may face legal penalties, fines, or loss of funding opportunities.

- Poor inspection processes may lead to operational risks and continued customer complaints.
- The consultant may lose credibility and fail to provide effective business support.

Marking Guide: Award 1 mark each for evaluating the possible impact on the business if inspection activities are not conducted.

2.1.4 Following the due diligence inspection conducted at Bright Path Trading identify at least THREE inspection findings that may negatively affect the business. **(6)**

Consider any THREE of the following:

- Expired or missing business licence.
- Employees without signed employment contracts.
- Poor financial record keeping.
- Health and safety procedures not displayed.
- Customer complaints not formally recorded.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks each for identifying THREE inspection findings that may negatively affect the business.

SUB- TOTAL: 28 marks

Question 3

3.1 Scenario: Bright Path Trading

Following the due diligence inspection conducted at **Bright Path Trading**, you have now been requested by your employer **FutureGrowth Consulting Services** to conduct a broader business performance evaluation to determine the sustainability, profitability, and growth potential of the business.

Background of the Business

Bright Path Trading is a small business owned and managed by Mr. Sibusiso Dlamini. The business manufactures and supplies school uniforms, sportswear, and protective clothing to schools, local retailers, and community organisations. The business has been operating for five years and currently employs 12 workers.

Over the past two years, the business experienced growth due to increased demand from local schools. However, the owner has recently noticed declining profits, increasing customer complaints, and strong competition from newer businesses offering similar products at lower prices.

Mr. Dlamini has requested your assistance in evaluating the overall performance of the business and identifying strategies that could improve profitability, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency.

Business Information

Marketing and Sales

The business mainly markets its products through:

- Word-of-mouth referrals.
- Community events.
- A Facebook page that is rarely updated.
- Printed flyers distributed to schools.

Current marketing challenges include:

- Limited online marketing presence

- No formal marketing strategy
- Poor brand visibility compared to competitors
- Declining customer engagement on social media

Sales Performance

The business recorded the following sales trends:

Year	Annual Sales
2023	R1 850 000
2024	R1 620 000
2025	R1 450 000

The owner reports that:

- Customers are increasingly buying from competitors offering online ordering and delivery services.
- Some customers complain about delayed orders and inconsistent product quality.
- Repeat customer purchases have declined.

Human Resources

Bright Path Trading currently employs:

- 6 sewing machinists.
- 2 sales assistants.
- 1 stock controller.
- 1 delivery driver.
- 2 general workers.

The business faces several human resource challenges:

- Employees have not received formal training in the past two years.
- Staff morale is low due to lack of recognition and communication.
- Some employees complain about unclear job responsibilities.
- High absenteeism has affected production deadlines.
- No formal performance management system exists.

Customer Service and Communication

Customer feedback indicates the following concerns:

- Delayed responses to customer enquiries.
- Poor communication regarding order completion dates.
- Inconsistent handling of customer complaints.
- Employees sometimes display unprofessional behaviour toward customers.

The business currently:

- Does not have a customer service policy.
- Does not formally record customer complaints.
- Relies mainly on verbal communication with clients.

Competitors

The business faces increasing competition from:

- Larger suppliers offering cheaper prices.
- Online uniform retailers with delivery services.
- Competitors using digital marketing and online ordering systems.

Competitors' advantages include:

- Faster delivery times.
- Better online customer engagement.
- Promotional discounts.
- Modern branding and advertising.

Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

A recent customer survey produced the following feedback:

Area Evaluated	Customer Rating
Product Quality	Average
Delivery Time	Poor
Customer Communication	Poor
Pricing	Average
Staff Professionalism	Fair
Overall Satisfaction	Low

Several customers indicated that they may move to competitors if service delivery does not improve.

Financial Information

Income Statement Summary

Item	2024	2025
Sales Revenue	R1 620 000	R1 450 000
Cost of Sales	R920 000	R950 000
Gross Profit	R700 000	R500 000
Operating Expenses	R420 000	R470 000
Net Profit	R280 000	R30 000

The owner explains that:

- Material costs have increased significantly.
- Customer cancellations have increased.
- Poor stock control has resulted in wastage and losses.
- Marketing activities have not generated sufficient sales growth.

Owner's Track Record

Mr. Dlamini started the business from home with two sewing machines and gradually expanded operations. He is hardworking and committed to the business but tends to:

- Make decisions independently without consulting employees.
- Delay responding to business challenges.
- Focus more on production than strategic planning.
- Avoid using technology for business operations.

Despite these weaknesses, he has:

- Built strong relationships with some local schools.
- Maintained the business during difficult economic periods.
- Created employment opportunities within the community.

Code of Conduct

Bright Path Trading has a basic code of conduct requiring employees to:

- Treat customers respectfully.
- Arrive at work on time.
- Avoid discrimination and harassment.
- Maintain confidentiality of business information.
- Work professionally and honestly.

However, the business has experienced the following problems:

- Employees are not consistently following the code of conduct.
- Some staff members arrive late regularly.
- Customer complaints about rude communication have increased.
- The code of conduct has not been reviewed or updated in three years.
- Employees have not received training on workplace ethics or customer service.

Consultant's Task

As the appointed Small Business Consultant, you are required to:

- Evaluate the business's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Analyse the financial performance and growth opportunities of the business.
- Assess the owner's track record and leadership effectiveness.
- Evaluate customer satisfaction and business performance.
- Assess the effectiveness of the code of conduct.
- Recommend strategies to improve profitability, governance, customer service, and overall business performance.

Use the information provided in the scenario to complete all assessment activities that follow.

3.1.1 Multiple Choice Questions

(10)

Respond to the multiple-choice questions below. In each case, select the correct answer from the options given. Transfer your answers to the answer table at the end of the questions.

i) Which of the following is the BEST example of the strength of Bright Path Trading?

A. Increasing customer complaints

B. Strong relationships with local schools

- C. Declining profits
- D. Lack of online marketing presence

ii) The declining customer engagement on social media is BEST classified as a:

- A. Strength
- B. Opportunity
- C. Weakness
- D. Threat

iii) Which factor represents the BIGGEST external threat to Bright Path Trading?

- A. Employees lacking training
- B. Poor stock control
- C. Lack of a customer service policy
- D. Competitors offering online ordering and delivery services

iv) Introducing digital marketing and online ordering systems would MOST likely be considered a:

- A. Threat
- B. Opportunity
- C. Weakness
- D. Operational loss

v) Why is poor communication with customers considered a weakness for the business?

- A. It increases production speed
- B. It improves employee morale
- C. It can reduce customer satisfaction and repeat business
- D. It reduces operational costs

vi) Which combination below correctly identifies BOTH a weakness and an opportunity for Bright Path Trading?

- A. Delayed customer responses and expansion into online sales

- B. Strong community relationships and declining profits
- C. Increased material costs and loyal customers
- D. High absenteeism and strong brand visibility

vii) If Bright Path Trading fails to address customer complaints, the MOST likely impact will be:

- A. Increased customer loyalty
- B. Improved staff morale
- C. Loss of customers to competitors
- D. Reduced competition in the market

viii) Which factor would MOST likely strengthen the competitive position of Bright Path Trading?

- A. Ignoring customer feedback
- B. Reducing communication with employees
- C. Implementing a customer service improvement strategy
- D. Delaying marketing activities

ix) Why is the absence of a formal performance management system a weakness for the business?

- A. It improves employee accountability
- B. It may reduce employee productivity and accountability
- C. It increases customer satisfaction
- D. It lowers operational risks

x) Which statement BEST explains the value of conducting a SWOT analysis for Bright Path Trading?

- A. It focuses only on financial performance.
- B. It removes the need for business planning.
- C. It guarantees immediate profitability.
- D. It identifies internal and external factors affecting business performance and growth.

Multiple Choice Questions Answer Table

Answer Key (1 mark for each correct answer)

Question	Answer
i	B
ii	C
iii	D
iv	B
v	C
vi	A
vii	C
viii	C
ix	B
x	D

3.2.1 Using the financial information provided for Bright Path Trading, examine the financial statements and evaluate the financial performance of the business between 2024 and 2025 and identify and discuss at least THREE significant financial changes or trends reflected in the financial statements. **(6)**

Consider any THREE of the following:

- Decline in sales revenue as sales revenue decreased from R1 620 000 in 2024 to R1 450 000 in 2025.
- Increase in cost of sales from R920 000 to R950 000 despite lower sales.
- Decrease in gross profit from R700 000 to R500 000.
- Increase in operating expenses from R420 000 to R470 000.
- Significant decline in net profit from R280 000 to R30 000.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks each for identifying and discussing at least THREE significant financial changes or trends reflected in the financial statements.

3.2.2 Based on your analysis of the financial statements and operational performance of Bright Path Trading, discuss at least TWO possible impacts of the findings on the business and explain how the identified impacts may affect profitability and customer satisfaction. **(4)**

Consider any TWO but not limited to:

Reduced profitability and financial sustainability

The decline in net profit from R280 000 to R30 000 indicates serious financial pressure on the business. Poor stock control and increased material costs may continue reducing profitability and cash flow.

Loss of customers to competitors

Delayed deliveries, poor customer communication, and inconsistent product quality may reduce customer satisfaction. Customers may move to competitors offering online ordering and faster delivery services.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for explaining TWO possible impacts of the findings on the business and 2 marks for explaining how the identified impacts may affect profitability, customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, or future business growth.

3.2.3 Using the information provided in the scenario identify at least TWO business growth opportunities and explain how each opportunity could improve the business. **(3)**

Consider any TWO but not limited to:

- Introduce online marketing and ordering systems to attract more customers and improve sales and help the business compete with online retailers.
- Improve customer service and communication, which could increase customer satisfaction and repeat business and help build a positive business reputation.
- Expand partnerships with schools and community organisations which could increase the number of long-term customers and income stability and business growth.
- Provide employee training which could improve productivity and service quality and help reduce customer complaints and operational problems.

Marking Guide: Award 0.5 marks for identifying at least TWO business growth opportunities and 1 mark each for explaining how each opportunity could improve the business.

3.2.4 Using the information provided in the scenario, develop an **action plan** that could assist **Bright Path Trading** in improving its business performance, profitability, and long-term sustainability.

Your action plan must:

- Identify at least **TWO business challenges** affecting the business.
- Recommend an appropriate improvement action for each challenge.

- Explain the purpose of each action.
- Explain the expected outcome or benefit for the business.

Present your answer in the table below.

(5)

Consider any TWO of the following:

Business Challenge	Improvement Action	Purpose of the Action	Expected Outcome
Poor customer communication and complaints handling	Develop a customer service policy and implement a formal complaints management system	To improve communication with customers and ensure complaints are addressed consistently	Improved customer satisfaction, customer retention, and business reputation
Declining sales and weak marketing activities	Introduce digital marketing campaigns and strengthen online customer engagement	To increase market visibility and attract new customers	Increased sales revenue and improved competitiveness
Poor stock control and record keeping	Implement an inventory management and stock monitoring system	To improve stock accuracy and reduce losses	Reduced wastage, improved operational efficiency, and increased profitability
Low employee morale and absenteeism	Implement employee training and performance management programmes	To improve employee engagement and productivity	Improved staff performance and service delivery
Weak financial planning and budgeting	Introduce budgeting controls and regular financial performance reviews	To improve financial decision-making and expenditure control	Improved profitability and financial sustainability

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for identifying at least TWO relevant business challenges, 1 mark for recommending appropriate improvement actions that address the identified challenges, 1 mark for explaining the purpose of the proposed actions and 1 mark for

explaining the expected outcomes or benefits for business performance, profitability, or sustainability.

3.3.1 (a) Using the SWOT information and business scenario provided for Bright Path Trading, assess at least TWO positive contributions made by the owner to the business. **(2)**

Consider any TWO but not limited to:

- Started the business from home and successfully expanded operations over five years which demonstrates commitment, entrepreneurship, and business growth ability.
- Built strong relationships with local schools and community organisations and secure customers and created business opportunities.
- Maintained the business during difficult economic conditions which shows resilience and dedication to sustaining the business.
- Created employment opportunities within the community and contributed positively to local economic development.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for assessing TWO positive contributions made by the owner to the business.

3.3.1 (b) Discuss at least TWO weaknesses or management challenges by the owner affecting Bright Path Trading business. **(2)**

Consider any TWO but not limited to:

- Makes decisions independently without consulting employees which may reduce employee involvement and lower staff morale.
- Delays responding to business challenges which contribute to customer complaints, declining sales, and operational inefficiencies.
- Limited use of technology and digital systems and weakens competitiveness against online retailers.
- Focuses more on production than strategic planning and limits business growth and long-term sustainability.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for discussing TWO weaknesses or management challenges affecting the business.

3.3.1 (c) Evaluate how the owner's decisions and leadership style have influenced the performance and sustainability of the business. **(1)**

- The owner's hard work and commitment helped establish and grow the business initially.
- However, poor communication, delayed decision-making, and lack of strategic planning negatively affected profitability and customer satisfaction.
- His leadership strengths supported business survival, but management weaknesses contributed to declining business performance.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks discussing at least TWO positive contributions made by the owner, 2 marks for discussing TWO weaknesses or management challenges and 1 mark for evaluating the impact of the owner's leadership and decisions on business performance and sustainability.

3.4.1 Explain how the code of conduct of Bright Path Trading can be applied in the daily operations of the business by employees to improve business performance. **(2)**

- Treat customers respectfully and professionally to improve customer satisfaction and business reputation.
- Arrive at work on time and behave responsibly to improve productivity and workplace discipline.
- Maintain confidentiality of business information to protect the business and build trust with customers and employees.
- Avoid discrimination and harassment in the workplace to promote a positive and respectful working environment.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for identify/ying TWO ways the code of conduct can be applied in the workplace to improve the business environment.

3.4.2(a) Using the code of conduct and information provided in the scenario for Bright Path Trading, discuss at least TWO strengths of the code of conduct. **(2)**

- Encourages respectful treatment of customers by promoting professionalism and positive customer relationships.
- Promotes honesty and confidentiality by helping protect business information and build trust within the workplace.
- Addresses discrimination and harassment by supporting a fair and respectful working environment.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for discussing TWO strengths of the code of conduct.

3.4.2(b) Discuss at least TWO weaknesses or limitations in the implementation of the code of conduct. **(2)**

- Employees are not consistently following the code which leads to customer complaints and unprofessional behaviour.
- The code has not been reviewed or updated in three years and may no longer address current workplace challenges and business needs.
- Employees have not received code of conduct training and staff may not fully understand workplace expectations and ethical standards.
- Lack of monitoring and enforcement reduces accountability and weakens workplace discipline.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for discussing TWO weaknesses of the code of conduct.

3.4.2 (c) Explain how these strengths and weaknesses may affect employee behaviour, customer relations, and overall business performance. **(1)**

- Weak implementation of the code may reduce customer satisfaction and damage the business reputation.
- Poor employee behaviour may affect teamwork and workplace morale.
- Strong ethical guidelines can improve professionalism and customer trust when properly implemented.

Marking Guide: Award 1 mark for explaining how these strengths and weaknesses may affect employee behaviour, customer relations, and overall business performance.

3.4.3 (a) Based on the challenges identified at Bright Path Trading, discuss at least THREE improvement strategies for the code of conduct. **(3)**

- Providing training on the code of conduct and workplace ethics.
- Reviewing and update the code of conduct regularly.
- Introducing monitoring and disciplinary procedures.
- Improving communication between management and employees.
- Introducing customer service performance standards.

Marking Guide: Award 1 mark for discussing THREE relevant improvement strategies for the code of conduct.

3.4.3 (b) Choose TWO improvement strategies from 3.4.3(a) and explain how each strategy could improve workplace behaviour and business performance for Bright Path Trading. **(2)**

- Provide training on the code of conduct and workplace ethics to help employees understand expected behaviour and professional standards.
- Review and update the code of conduct regularly to ensure the code addresses current business challenges and workplace expectations.
- Introduce monitoring and disciplinary procedures to hold employees accountable for misconduct and poor behaviour.

Marking Guide: Award 1 mark for explaining how each strategy could improve workplace behaviour, customer service, and business performance.

SUB- TOTAL: 45 marks

Question 4

4.1 Scenario: Creation of Employment Opportunities

You are employed as a Junior Small Business Consultant at **FutureGrowth Consulting Services**, a consulting company that supports small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with business development, compliance, project implementation, and operational improvement.

Following your successful evaluation of **Bright Path Trading**, the company has now expanded its operations and secured funding from a local enterprise development programme to improve business performance and create employment opportunities in the community.

As part of the expansion strategy, the owner, Mr. Sibusiso Dlamini, has approved the implementation of several business improvement projects that must be completed within six months. You have been appointed as the project coordinator responsible for supporting the implementation of these projects together with internal staff, suppliers, customers, community representatives, and funding stakeholders.

The projects must be implemented under strict budget limitations and tight deadlines, while ensuring that business operations continue without major disruptions.

Bright Path Trading Project Portfolios

<p>Project 1: Digital Marketing and Online Ordering Project</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>To improve customer engagement, increase sales, and compete with online retailers by introducing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A business website• Online ordering system• Social media marketing campaign <p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business owner• IT service provider• Marketing consultant• Customers• Sales staff	<p>Project 2: Workplace Skills Development Project</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>To improve employee productivity, customer service, and workplace professionalism through training programmes.</p> <p>Planned Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer service training• Communication and teamwork workshops• Health and safety awareness training• Supervisory skills development <p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employees• HR consultant• Training providers• Labour representatives
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management
<p>Project 3: Stock Control and Financial Management Improvement Project</p> <p>Purpose To improve stock management, reduce wastage, and strengthen financial controls.</p> <p>Planned Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a digital stock control system • Improve financial record keeping • Conduct stock audits • Train staff on stock management procedures <p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock controller • Finance clerk • Suppliers • Management • External accounting consultant 	<p>Project 4: Community School Partnership Expansion Project</p> <p>Purpose To expand supply agreements with local schools and increase long-term business opportunities.</p> <p>Planned Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with school management teams • Promotional campaigns • Negotiation of supply contracts • Community engagement activities <p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School principals • Parents • Community leaders • Marketing team • Business owner

Project Management Environment

All projects must:

- Be completed within six months.
- Operate within the allocated budget.
- Be monitored regularly against project deliverables.
- Include progress reporting to management and funding stakeholders.
- Use both physical and virtual communication platforms due to stakeholders working in different locations.

The consulting team is expected to:

- Develop project implementation plans.
- Allocate project roles and responsibilities.

- Establish communication procedures and reporting systems.
- Monitor risks and project performance.
- Address unexpected challenges during project execution.

Unexpected Challenges During Project Execution

Three months after implementation begins, the following problems occur:

- The IT service provider delays delivery of the online ordering system.
- Employee attendance at training sessions is poor.
- The stock control software experiences technical problems.
- A major supplier increases material prices unexpectedly.
- Two key employees resign during project implementation.
- Community members complain that communication about the school partnership project is unclear.
- The funding stakeholder requests additional progress reports and stricter budget controls.

These challenges threaten project deadlines, budgets, stakeholder relationships, and overall project success.

Consultant's Task

As the appointed Small Business Consultant and project coordinator, you are required to:

- Assess projects involving multiple stakeholders, limited budgets, and tight deadlines.
- Apply project management principles to support successful project implementation.
- Develop implementation approaches and stakeholder coordination processes.
- Address and mitigate risks affecting project execution.
- Monitor and evaluate project performance against deliverables.
- Recommend corrective actions to keep projects on track.

4.1.1(a) Using the Creation of Employment Opportunities scenario, select ONE project that is being implemented at Bright Path Trading and analyse at least THREE project challenges that may affect the successful implementation of the selected project.

Your analysis should consider factors such as:

- stakeholder involvement.

- project deadlines.
- budget limitations.
- resource constraints or
- operational risks.

(6)

Consider the following but not limited to:

Selected Project: Digital Marketing and Online Ordering Project

- Multiple Stakeholders (Business owner, IT service provider, marketing consultant, customers, and sales staff).
- Tight Project Deadlines.
- Limited Budget.
- Limited Employee Digital Skills.
- Technical Risks.
- Resistance to Change.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks each for analysing THREE relevant project challenges and how that could affect project implementation.

4.1.1 (b) Explain how appropriate project management principles could be applied to address the identified challenges and contribute to the successful implementation of the selected project in 4.1.1 (a). (4)

- Project Planning and Scheduling.
- Stakeholder Management.
- Risk Management.
- Resource and Budget Management.
- Monitoring and Control.
- Role Clarification and Accountability.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks for explaining appropriate project management principles and their application to the identified challenges and 2 marks for explaining how the principles contribute to the successful implementation of the selected project in 4.1.1 (a).

4.2.1 During the execution phase of the projects at Bright Path Trading, several unexpected challenges threatened project deadlines, budgets, and stakeholder relationships. Using

information from the scenario identify at least FOUR risks or challenges affecting the projects and how you apply FOUR project management principles to mitigate the identified risks and keep the project on track. **(8)**

Consider any THREE from the following:

Risk: Delays with the IT service provider

Mitigation: Apply schedule management and risk management

Risk: Poor employee attendance at training sessions

Mitigation: Apply stakeholder management and communication principles.

Risk: Technical problems with the stock control software

Mitigation: Apply problem-solving and quality management principles.

Risk: Increase in supplier material prices

Mitigation: Apply cost management and procurement management principles.

Risk: Resignation of key employees

Mitigation: Re-allocate responsibilities and recruit temporary support where necessary.

Risk: Complaints about poor communication with community stakeholders

Mitigation: Introduce regular community updates and stakeholder meetings.

Marking Guide: Award 2 marks each for identifying each of the FOUR risks or challenges affecting the projects and explaining how project management principles would be applied to mitigate the risks and keep the project on track.

SUB- TOTAL: 18 marks

GRAND TOTAL: 120 marks