Examiner's Report

Qualifications Framework

Stage 1: Unit 2 Examiner Report May 2025

Written Examiner's Report May 2025

General

Congratulations to all 19 candidates who undertook the Unit 2 examination in the May 2025 cycle. 100% of candidates successfully passed this examination, which is a testament to the hard work that the candidates have put into preparing for their examination.

The marks awarded ranged from 55% to a very impressive 88%.

There were some excellent answers provided by candidates and the examiner was pleased to see some impressive answers to the questions set. The main areas for improvement were the same as in most examination cycles and include a lack of detail in some of the questions, particularly in Part B, not focusing on the question being asked and discussing areas outside the scope of the question set. Reading previous examiner reports and practicing answering past papers under timed conditions, whilst ensuring all parts of the question are addressed, can help to maximise the marks obtained by future candidates in this examination.

Section A

Q1 This question was chosen by 11 candidates. The marks awarded were between 3 and 8.

Some candidates discussed only one area of devolution for part (a) or discussed Local Government Associations which was not what the question was asking. This question specifically asked about devolved Government arrangements in the UK, requiring a brief mention of all devolved arrangements to get full marks for this part of the question. Some good answers were provided for this question, but some answers were too vague and didn't address the question being asked. It is important knowledge of Trading Standards professionals to understand the difference between areas of law that are reserved to UK Government and those which are devolved to the four nations.

For part (b) of the question, strong answers discussed impacts such as which areas assured advice and inspection plans can be issued in, the challenges for businesses who may trade across the UK but need to comply with differences across the four nations, the requirement for more than one Primary Authority partner, the different legislation within scope of the Primary Authority scheme across the four nations etc.

Q2 6 candidates elected to answer this question. The marks awarded were between 4 and 10.

Most candidates who chose this question achieved good marks and all candidates achieved a pass mark or above. This question focused on the role of the Financial Conduct Authority in part (a) and asked for two examples of complaints that can be referred to them in part (b). Some candidates needed to write more for the six marks on offer in part (a) of the question. Answers included information such as regulating around 42,000 businesses in the UK, protecting consumers from harm

from bad conduct by financial services, the consumer duty, the responsibility to authorise financial services, the FCA handbook, ensuring healthy competition in the finance sector etc. Part (b) was generally answered well with examples including insurance issues, breaches of FCA handbook rules, investment scams etc. provided by candidates.

Q3 This question was a popular choice with 11 candidates choosing to answer it. The marks achieved were between 6 and 10.

Most candidates successfully identified that S = successes, W = weaknesses, O = opportunities and T = threats. Some candidates missed out on marks by not providing examples in their answers, which the question clearly asked for. Strong answers provided clear examples and explained what businesses use a SWOT analysis for. All candidates achieved at least 60% for this question and provided good answers, demonstrating their knowledge of this area of the syllabus.

Q4 8 candidates answered this question. The range of marks achieved was between 2 and 7.

Some candidates discussed National Trading Standards or Trading Standards Scotland and their work, without commenting on how their priorities impact on local priorities. A stronger focus on the question set was needed in some of the answers provided. Stronger candidate answers discussed issues such as project work, funding offered, national and regional intelligence, regional investigations teams, differences in national, regional and local priorities, impacts and outcomes reports etc.

Q5 Only 4 candidates chose to answer this question. Marks ranged between 2 and 10.

This question was testing candidates' knowledge of the Intelligence Operating Model (IOM). There was some confusion between the IOM and the intelligence cycle in some of the answers provided. One very impressive answer clearly demonstrated knowledge in this area and systematically identified and explained the five stages for maximum marks.

Q6 This question was the most popular Part A question and was answered by 16 candidates. Marks awarded ranged from 4 to 10.

This question focused on what regulation is and the purposes of regulation. All candidates successfully passed this question, and some excellent answers were provided. Some candidates needed to write more for part (a) to get all 10 marks on offer, but the question was generally answered well.

Section B

Q7 16 candidates chose to answer this popular question. Marks ranged from 16 to an impressive 31 marks.

This question was generally answered very well, demonstrating a good knowledge of the Primary Authority scheme. This is pleasing to see as this is a detailed knowledge part of the syllabus for Unit 2. All candidates successfully passed this question.

Most candidates provided their answer in the form of a guidance leaflet and candidates who obtained the most marks had a clear plan for their answer and the amount of detail provided appeared to be led by the number of marks on offer for each part of the question. This strategy, as well as adopting a logical approach to ensure they fully addressed each part of the question set, enabled candidates to maximise the marks achieved.

Part (a) required an overview of the scheme and its history which was generally well answered, and part (b) had 5 marks allocated for the purpose of the scheme such as assured advice and consistency, inspection plans, cost recovery etc. and 5 marks for benefits of the scheme. As the leaflet was for businesses, the benefits needed to be benefits for businesses to obtain marks. This was answered well by most candidates, although some candidates stated the same point in different ways, which did not attract any further marks.

Part (c) required candidates to discuss direct and co-ordinated partnerships and provide examples of each type of partnership. Some candidates did not provide examples, limiting their marks in this part of the question.

Marks were lost in part (d) of the question for candidates who did not know the determination process and key time scales for enforcing authorities. This is important knowledge for all Trading Standards professionals to have an awareness of. Having a detailed knowledge of the Primary Authority scheme is an important part of the Unit 2 syllabus and all future candidates should ensure they prepare for questions in this area, as well as from across the rest of the syllabus.

Q8 5 candidates chose to answer this question. Marks ranged between 17 and 24.

This question tested the knowledge and understanding of candidates in relation to self-regulation and codes of conduct. All candidates who elected to answer this question achieved a pass mark or higher.

Some candidates needed to focus on the question asked rather than discussing inspections and alternative options to enforcement, which were outside the scope of this question. Candidates who approached the question with a plan and a logical structure scored higher marks, as they provided the level of detail required in each part of the question. The examiner did find some concerning comments in the answers provided, such as a discussion that self-regulation enables businesses to run their legal entity however, they please and to follow their own rules rather than the law.

Candidates generally answered part (a) well. They also identified five different ways that businesses could keep their knowledge up to date on the latest legal changes for part (b) of the question. Some candidates did not provide benefits for all the options they identified, which resulted in lower marks being achieved.

Part (c) of the question was the part where candidates lost the most marks, which suggested a lack of knowledge. Most candidates were able to obtain a couple of marks for explaining what a code of conduct is but not many candidates were able to explain the process of applying the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) for the code to be an Approved Code. The details for this process can be found on the CTSI website and form part of the syllabus for Unit 2. The five advantages of self-regulation required in part (d) were answered very well, but some candidates found it harder to pick up

marks for the second part of (d). For this part of the question, candidates were required to explain situations where self-regulation would not be effective and to provide examples.

Q9 15 candidates chose to answer this question. It was a very popular choice and is another detailed part of the syllabus for Unit 2. Marks achieved were between 20 and some outstanding 35-mark answers.

This question assessed the knowledge of candidates in relation to business entities and their strengths and limitations. This question was answered to an excellent standard and some very impressive answers resulted in full marks being awarded.

There was some confusion in candidates' answers between the different types of partnerships and the differences between private and public limited company requirements, but generally this question was answered very well. Impressive knowledge demonstrated in one of the detailed areas of the syllabus which clearly demonstrated the hard work that candidates had put into preparing for this examination. An understanding of the different types of business entities within the UK is of vital importance to Trading Standards professionals when providing advice and conducting investigations.

Q10 Only 2 candidates elected to answer this question. Marks ranged between 17 and 20.

Part (a) required a discussion around the social and economic harms associated with online scams and frauds and the impact of these on their victims. Some good discussion was provided for this part of the question, but more detail was needed and less repetition of the same point to maximise the marks given. Points included cost to the economy, money taken from legitimate businesses, purchasing products and services not needed, debt issues, lack of consumer confidence in the market, tension with family members, embarrassment, victim shaming etc.

Part (b) was answered well and gave candidates the opportunity to discuss the importance of prevention and awareness work carried out by Trading Standards and to provide practical examples of this work.

Part (c) was structured well by both candidates, but clearer explanations and examples of marketplace vulnerability were needed to enhance the answers to this part of the question. Situational vulnerability was explained well by both candidates.