Qualifications Framework Examiner's report

Qualifications Framework

Stage 1: Business and Consumer Legal Frameworks Examiner's Report May 2026

General

Well done to all candidates who undertook the Unit 2 examination paper in the May 2026 cycle. Marks ranged from 20% to an impressive 82%.

The overall performance across the examination paper showed that candidates who adopted a structured and methodical approach, and who tailored their responses closely to the wording of the questions, were able to achieve the highest marks. Strong knowledge was evident across key syllabus areas, particularly enforcement approaches, self-regulation and the Primary Authority Scheme, which was pleasing to see.

Responses that received lower marks tended to lack focus, providing generalised information rather than addressing the specific requirements of the question. In addition, some candidates did not provide sufficient depth in higher-mark Part B questions. Candidates are reminded that the level of detail provided should always reflect the marks available and that careful planning and question focus are essential to maximise performance.

Advice for future candidates:

- Read questions carefully and ensure answers address exactly what is being asked
- Provide sufficient detail for higher-mark questions, particularly Part B questions worth 35 marks
- Avoid writing general information and instead tailor responses to the specific question set
- Use relevant legislation, codes and regulatory frameworks to support explanations
- Practise answering past examination papers to improve structure, timing and exam technique.

Section A

Q1. This was the most popular Part A question with only 1 candidate electing not to answer it. Marks achieved ranged from 4–10.

This question assessed knowledge of mandatory controls and consumer protection legislation. Part (a) was generally answered well, demonstrating a good understanding of the mandatory forms of control and their purposes, such as achieving policy aims, protecting the public, achieving changes in behaviour etc. Performance in Part (b) of the question was mixed; with higher marks achieved where candidates accurately identified relevant legislation, provided an accurate explanation of the law and the protections offered and clearly linked the chosen legislation to safeguarding the public. Some candidates incorrectly named legislation and/or provided incorrect or vague explanations of their chosen area of law.

Q2. This question was chosen by 4 candidates and the marks achieved ranged from 8–10.

This question focused on illegal money lending and the harms caused to victims. Candidates who answered this question demonstrated a strong understanding in this area which was pleasing to see. Most candidates provided good coverage of harms such as financial harm, emotional/psychological harm and potential physical harm that victims may experience and demonstrated a good level of knowledge. They therefore achieved high marks for their answers.

Q3**.** Four candidates elected to answer this question. Marks achieved ranged from 4–10.

This question tested the candidates' understanding of intelligence and the role of the Intelligence Operating Model (IOM). Part (a) required a clear definition of intelligence and for candidates to demonstrate that they understand intelligence isn't just information that has been received. Part (b) of the question required candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the IOM and how it is used to prioritise areas of work and allocate resources. Candidates who adopted a methodical approach which focused on the question being asked and applied the model effectively, achieved the highest marks.

Q4. Six candidates answered this question and the marks achieved ranged from 6–9.

This question examined the role of trade associations and their relationship with the Primary Authority Scheme. Candidates were required to also provide an example of a trade association and explain which types of businesses may apply to join the association. Approaching each element of the question methodically to ensure all parts were answered achieved stronger marks for candidates who adopted this approach. Some candidates lacked a depth in their explanation and did not answer all elements of the question. Highlighting or underling key elements of a question can help with this.

Q5. This was a less popular question, with only two candidates choosing to answer it. The average mark for this question was 7 out of 10.

This question assessed understanding of delegation of powers and enforcement responsibilities. Although there was a lower uptake for this question from candidates, it was generally answered well and demonstrated sound professional understanding. Good answers clearly explained how to check legislation to identify whether Trading Standards are an authorised regulator and clearly explained their scheme of delegation. Candidates then went on to distinguish and provide examples of legislation which Trading Standards has a duty to enforce and those where Trading Standards have the power to enforce.

Q6. This question was answered by 7 candidates and the marks achieved ranged from 1–10.

This question required candidates to evaluate self-regulation. Strong responses provided balanced and clearly distinct advantages and disadvantages without repetition, while weaker responses showed repetition or stated the same point written in a similar way or provided limited depth in their answer. Overall, this question was answered to a high standard with a couple of candidates achieving the maximum marks available.

Section B

Q7. This question was answered by 5 candidates. The marks achieved ranged from 16–29 out of 35.

This multi-part question tested enforcement approaches, enforcement policy and advice to businesses. Part (a) required candidates to identify and explain five enforcement options and to explain their impact on the costs, compliance culture and behaviour of businesses. Strong answers were well-structured and focused on business impacts. Weaker responses identified some enforcement options but provided vague or sometimes confused explanations about these options and discussed the impact on the Local Authority not the business. Candidates are advised to carefully read their chosen question and ensure they are answering the question that has been asked, to maximise the marks that can be achieved.

Part (b) of this question provided an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the requirement to publish enforcement policies and obtain feedback from businesses. This part of the question was not answered as well as part (a) and it was disappointing that candidates did not identify the relevant legislative framework under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and make reference to the Regulators' Code and the requirements within it.

Part (c) of this question was answered to a high level by most candidates. Marks were lost where advice and guidance given by other organisations was suggested or where methods were repeated.

Q8. Four candidates chose to answer this question with marks achieved ranging from 18–24.

This question focused on candidates' knowledge of the difference between incorporated and non-incorporated business entities and their relevance to enforcement work. Part (a) of the question was mostly answered to a good standard, with most candidates correctly identifying business entities that were incorporated and non-incorporated and discussing their differences. Candidates that demonstrated good knowledge overall, provided stronger answers clearly setting out the liabilities and how they differ. Some candidates needed to provide a clearer and more detailed explanation about the differences between incorporated and unincorporated entities, and their legal liabilities needed to be more clearly identified and applied.

Part (b) of the question was answered to a good standard by some candidates, but there was also a lack of understanding demonstrated in some answers about how the business entity can affect the potential offences that Trading Standards Services investigate. Discussing elements such as who the defendant is, corporate body offences, accessories and the consent, connivance and neglect of relevant Officers or those purporting to act in those roles, were all relevant areas for discussion relating to offences that may be committed.

Q9. This was the most popular Part B question, with 10 out of the 11 candidates electing to answer it. Marks achieved ranged from 14 to an impressive 30 out of 35.

This question focused on detailed knowledge of the Primary Authority Scheme, including the benefits and challenges for businesses, Primary Authorities and Enforcing Authorities. It also requires a discussion of how the scheme balances local enforcement activity with national consistency and priorities. High marks were achieved where candidates structured their answers and addressed all required elements, demonstrating strong subject knowledge. This was pleasing to see as this topic is in the detailed areas of knowledge on the Unit 2 syllabus. Candidates who adopted the approach of writing generally about the Primary Authority scheme missed marks or didn't provide sufficient detail in the required areas. Some candidates spent time discussing the benefits and challenges for consumers, which wasn't asked for in the question. Creating a quick essay plan before starting to write can help candidates to stay focused on the question being asked and ensure all elements of the question are addressed in the answer given.

Q10. Two candidates elected to answer this question with marks achieved ranging from 11–21 out of 35.

This question tested candidates' understanding of the CTSI Approved Code Scheme by requiring candidates to provide a structured email response. Higher marks were awarded where candidates addressed each bullet point with sufficient detail. For example, providing an overview of the scheme and its purpose, including its voluntary nature, the approval and monitoring role of the Codes, the difference between Code Sponsors and member businesses, use of approved code logo, role of ADR etc. and the purpose of the scheme, such as raising compliance standards, consumer confidence etc. A discussion of stages of the scheme such as the initial enquiry/expression of interest, formal application, assessment and scrutiny, approval decision and post-approval monitoring could all have been discussed.

The criteria part of the question tested a candidates' knowledge in areas such as consumer protection, transparency, trading fairly with good practice, effective complaints handling and redress mechanisms available. The responsibilities of Code Sponsors and member businesses also needed to be clearly set out and distinguished, as well as clear benefits of the scheme such as consumer confidence, higher compliance standards, sector-wide consistency, early dispute resolution etc.

Candidates also needed to explain how membership could be checked, such as via the CTSI website, the membership list held by the Code Sponsor or requesting the information from the business themselves.

Marks were lost for this question where bullet points were not addressed or very little detail was provided. For Part B questions where 35 marks are on offer, candidates need to ensure a sufficient level of detail is provided to enable them to maximise the potential marks that can be achieved.