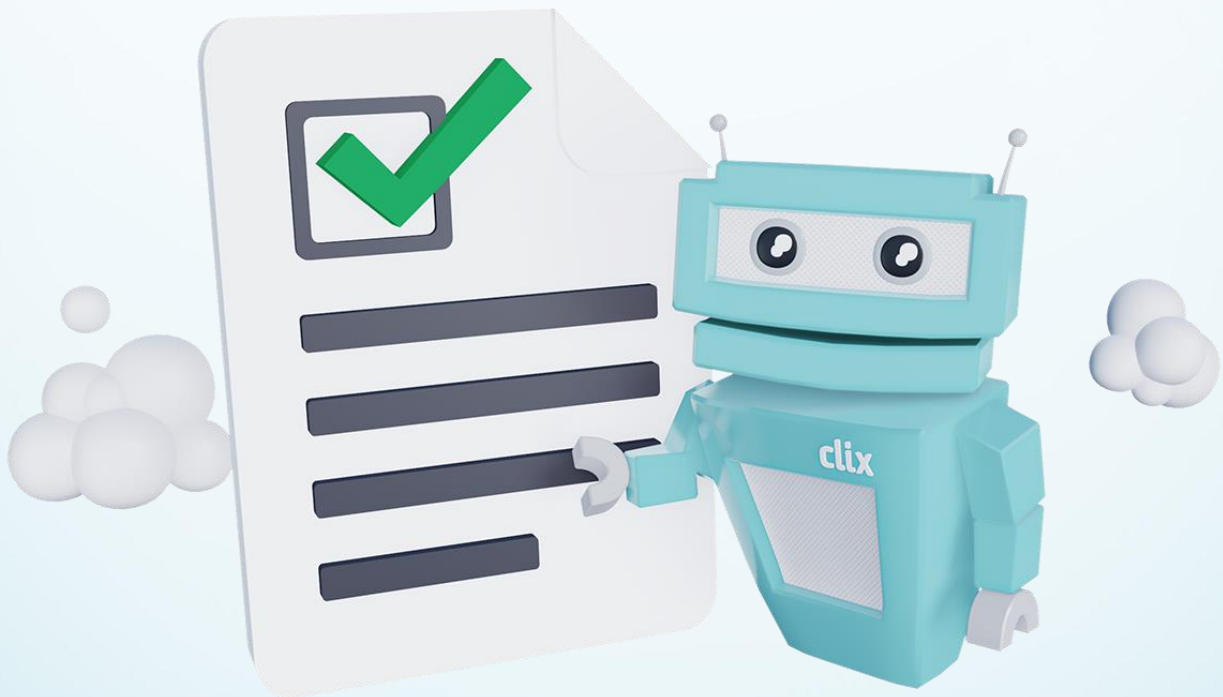


Business Studies

How you can succeed in your
Junior Cycle Business Studies CBA 1



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Róisín Ní Dhonnagáin is an experienced teacher of Business Studies. Here she shares her hints and tips for the Junior Cycle Business Studies CBA 1.



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Introduction

The new Junior Cycle Business Studies course gives you an opportunity to showcase what you have learned in 2nd and 3rd year in the form of a Classroom Based Assessment (CBA). The Junior Cycle Business CBAs are two specific tasks, one in 2nd year and the other in 3rd year.

There is a unique grading system for the CBA, where you will receive a descriptor for your work from your class teacher. The descriptors include “yet to meet expectations”, “in line with expectations”, “above expectations”, and “exceptional”. These CBA descriptors do not contribute to your final grade, however they will be added to your Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement alongside the grade you get in your exam at the end of 3rd year.

This CBA guide will break down Business Studies CBA 1 and provide helpful tips and advice to ensure you are given the highest descriptor possible!

General Information on the Business Studies CBA

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) are completed within the normal class time allocated to each subject.

In Junior Cycle Business Studies, there are two CBAs to be completed. These are both assessed at common level.

Descriptors

There are four level descriptors of achievement for each CBA; your teachers use the “Features of Quality”, set out in The Assessment Guidelines for each subject to decide the level of achievement in each CBA. The “Features of Quality” are the benchmark used to assess your work as best fitting one of the following descriptors:

EXCEPTIONAL describes a piece of work that is of a very high standard. The work meets the guidelines across the board set out in the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment. While not necessarily flawless, the strengths of the work overrule any weaknesses which may be present. Suggestions for improvement are easily addressable by the student.

ABOVE EXPECTATIONS describes a piece of work that reflects all of the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment very well. The student shows a clear understanding of how to complete each area of activity of the investigation. Feedback from the teacher might address some aspect of the work in need of further attention or polishing, but overall the work is of a high standard.

IN LINE WITH EXPECTATIONS describes a piece of work that reflects most of the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment well. It shows a good understanding of the task in hand and is free from significant error. Feedback might point to areas needing further attention or correction, but the work is generally competent and accurate.

YET TO MEET EXPECTATIONS describes a piece of work that falls somewhat short of the criteria outlined in the Features of Quality. Perhaps the student has made a good attempt, but the task has not been grasped clearly or is missing key points. Feedback will draw attention to fundamental errors that need to be addressed.

Remember!

The wording of the descriptors might seem a little confusing so be sure to **ask your teacher to explain them to you if you are unsure**. Exceptional is the highest descriptor you can get: so aim to be exceptional!



Classroom Based Assessment 1 – Business in Action

CBA 1 will take place over four weeks before the end of 2nd year. CBA 1 is a group project. You will conduct a research project on a topic of your group's choice.

You can choose from 3 topics.

- Enterprise in Action
- Economics in Action
- Finance in Action

You will be asked to create an action plan based on the topic you have chosen and complete the following areas of activity:

- Conducting Research
- Evaluating Information
- Developing Action Plans
- Reporting Findings

Tip!

Although this is a group project **each student** must complete areas of activity. Each student must **conduct** and **evaluate** their own **research**.



Enterprise in Action

You and your group will choose an enterprise activity. Students can choose from the following:

- **Option 1:** Develop a product or a service. You can design a new product/service or improve/change an existing product/service
- **Option 2:** Organise an enterprise activity (for profit or not-for-profit).

Economics in Action

Choose an economic trend or development, change or policy that is having a positive or negative impact on the Irish economy or Irish society.

Finance in Action

Identify and research a financial challenge that a consumer or organisation might face.

Tip

Many students choose '**Enterprise in Action**' as their overall topic as it is the easiest topic to brainstorm and gives the group lots of ideas to choose from.



The Written Report

This CBA should be presented as a written report.

The written report should contain:

- An **introduction** to the project – Give a brief outline of what your project is.
- **Explanation** or rationale for the project – Why did your group choose this project?
- **Explain** your group's **research methods** – How did you and your group collect data and do your market research?
- **Evaluate** your group's **research findings** – What did your data tell you about your target market and what did you and your group learn from your market research?
- **Outline** the **action plan** for implementing the findings of the project – What is your Marketing Mix?
- **Conclusion** and **Recommendations** – What changes did you make after evaluating your market research? What did you learn from your market research? What did you learn about the course content you covered during your CBA?
- A student **reflection** from each group member.

Conducting Research

Tip

Before you begin conducting your research, think about everything you already know about your chosen topic. Doing this will help you set out your research goals.

You must conduct your own research and so must everyone in your group. As you are completing your research use the “Template for Student Research” to keep track of your research. This will make delivering your findings to the rest of your group much easier for you. Your teacher will provide you with a hard copy of this template for you to fill out.

Decide with your group which methods of research you are going to use to begin your project.

You should use both Primary Research and Secondary Research.

Primary Research (also known as Field Research):

This involves doing your own research by going to the public to ask questions in order to find the information you need. This can be done through interviews, surveys or focus groups.

When conducting primary research, make sure that you have made a list of the questions you and your group wish to ask in interviews and surveys.

When creating surveys or conducting interviews, be sure to use a mixture of closed questions and open questions.

Secondary Research (also known as Desk Research):

This is information that is already collected about a market. It can be found in online reports, newspaper articles and other documents.

Remember to record all of your sources in one place as you need to be able to say where you found all of your research. You may keep a journal throughout your research to make it easier to reflect.

Ensuring Reliability of your Secondary Research Sources

When conducting your research, you should always ask yourself the following questions when trying to determine the reliability of your sources:

- How reliable is your source of information?
- Could your source be biased?
- Can you verify your findings from a different source?
- How up to date is your information?

Government websites will end in .gov – These websites are reliable sources and usually have the most up to date information.

Online newspapers tend to be biased as they follow the beliefs of the owners and writers.

Remember!

Remember to stay safe online when conducting your research.

Evaluating Research

When you are evaluating your research, it is important that your evidence backs up what your key findings were. Ask yourself and your group the following questions to keep your research and evaluation on track:

- What are the key findings of my research? - What are the most important things that I found out while conducting the research?
- Do your findings answer your research questions? If they do not, how does this impact your project?
- Have you referenced your sources? Keep note of where you found evidence. Make sure you have the website where you found your information.
- What evidence can you include in your project?

Developing your Action Plan

When you and your group have evaluated your research, together you will use your findings to develop your action plan. Your action plan should:

- Provide judgement based on your evidence
- Outline challenges your project will face based on your research findings.
- Your course of action should be justified by your research findings.

Based on the topic your group choose, your action plan needs the following information:

- **Enterprise in Action:** You and your group must develop a business plan which will outline the marketing mix which will be applied to your enterprise project. You and your group will aim to provide the chosen product/service or enterprise event/activity to their target market where possible – Remember this is theoretical, you do not have to create a physical product or service.

- **Economics in Action:** You and your group must develop an action plan outlining an economic policy change that might improve the resulting economic outcomes of the issue you have chosen.
- **Finance in Action:** You and your group must develop an action plan to address the financial challenge to improve the financial position of the individual or organization you and your group have chosen to evaluate. You and your group must support your plan with tables and graphs.

Reporting Findings

To complete your CBA, you and your group must submit evidence of your work.

One copy of the project is submitted per group.

You and your group will decide which information you feel is most relevant and reliable to be included in your completed project.

You should include:

- An introduction to the project
- Your research questions
- Each student's template for student research
- Your survey and interview questions and answers.
- Your action plan
- Conclusion and recommendations
- Each student must submit their own student reflection (see Appendix 1)

You are encouraged to be as creative and as innovative in the presentation of your project so long as your project is set out in a clear way.

Individual Student Reflection

Tip

Be as honest and as thoughtful as possible when filling out your student reflection. It is important to state the challenges you and your group overcame.



You will be asked to reflect on the following aspects of your CBA Project:

- Your key roles and main responsibilities
- How you contributed to researching the project
- How you contributed to analysing the research
- How you contributed to developing the action plan
- How you contributed to compiling the project

Choose one of the following:

- Describe any difficulties you and your team overcame
- Describe the advantages and challenges of working on this group project from your perspective

Appendix 1 – Template for Student Research

Project Option:

Enterprise in Action

Economics in Action

Finance in Action

Title of your Project:

Student Name:

Method of Research:

Field Research

Desk Research

1.1 Introduction: Outline briefly the purpose of your research.

1.2 Method of research: Explain briefly why you have chosen your method of research.

1.4 Summary: Give a brief summary of what you found out as a result of your research.

1.5 Evaluation of findings: Think critically about the following questions and write a short response.

- a)** Were you surprised by your findings? Give a reason for your answer.

- b)** Is the source of your research reliable? Give a reason for your answer.

- c)** Is the information one-sided or biased? Give a reason for your answer.

1.6 Conclusion: Based on your findings what is the key message you will share with your team?

1.7 Decision-making: How do you think your findings will affect your team's action plan?

1.8 Recording your sources: Provide some evidence of your research e.g. interview questions, questionnaire, images, notes etc.

Appendix 2 - Template for Student Reflection

<p>Project Option:</p> <p>Enterprise in Action <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Economics in Action <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Finance in Action <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Title of your Project:</p>
<p>Student Name:</p>
<p>1.1 Introduction: Outline briefly the purpose of your research.</p>
<p>1.2 Roles and responsibilities: Describe your key role and your main responsibilities.</p>

1.3 Summary: Give a brief summary of how you contributed to your project during the following activities:

a) How I contributed to researching the project

b) How I contributed to analysing the research information

c) How I contributed to developing the action plan

d) How I contributed to compiling the project

1.4 Review: Describe how you got on as a team and any difficulties you overcame while working as a team. **OR** Describe the advantages and challenges of working on this group project from your individual perspective.

1.5 Teacher Feedback