



consumer law to prosper in the business exam. Photograph: Stephen Chernin/Getty

TABLE 2

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total	
A: Total income	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	20,800	
B: Total expenditure	4,800	5,000	5,300	4,800	19,900	Add Fixed, Irregular and Discretionary subtotals
Net cash (A - B)	400	200	-100	400	900	Subtract Expenditure from Income
Opening cash	300	700	900	800	300	Month 1 given in question
Closing cash	700	900	800	1,200	1,200	Add monthly Net Cash to Opening Cash

visible and invisible trade, surplus and deficit, etc.

- ◆ Be able to calculate the balance of trade and balance of payments from a given set of figures.
- ◆ Know how to prepare a national budget.

Club accounts

You are likely to be asked to prepare any of the following: statement of accumulated fund (assets-liabilities at start of year), receipts and payments account, bar trading account, income and expenditure account, balance sheet (at year end), so make sure you learn the content and layout of each. It's easy to lose marks for simple mistakes that may throw everything off balance, so be careful when answering.

Theory questions frequently focus on the role of club officers (chairperson, secretary and treasurer).

Consumer

- ◆ You must learn the provisions of the Consumer Information Act (1978) and the Sale of Goods and Supply of Services Act (1980).
- ◆ Be capable of writing a letter of complaint.
- ◆ Outline the role of consumer protection organisations.

Insurance

- ◆ Know the five principles of insurance (utmost good faith, insurable interest, indemnity, contribution and subrogation).
- ◆ Be able to calculate premium or compensation, including the application of average clause.
- ◆ Outline various types of personal or household insurance.

Short questions

When revising for this section in the weeks ahead, your past exam papers will become an essential tool.

It is not possible to do too many exam questions; you must use them to familiarise yourself with the pattern and format of questions, as well as learning how to best manage your time (this cannot be stressed enough) and getting used to writing exam responses without taking tea-breaks. Aim to complete at least one set of short questions each week.

Attempt all 20 questions, even if it means making an educated guess. Blank spaces will always score zero.

Read the questions very carefully, and be sure to answer the question asked. For example, a question on "the importance of insurance for a business" is not asking for a definition of insurance, nor is it asking about types of insurance (though these may be included in support of your answer).

As your answer is limited to just a few lines, it's important to outline the value or benefits of insurance to businesses.

Try to give obvious and relevant points. Failure to do so will cost you marks, and will suggest to the examiner that you are unfamiliar with the topic.

Give short definitions which focus on the key issues. This is where the value of good notes can be seen. If at all possible include a relevant example, even where it is not specifically asked for. This will help show the examiner you understand the concept, especially where your explanation might be a little vague or off the point.

If there's a formula required, write it down. Show all workings clearly.

The A1 student



Laura Scanlan sat her Junior Cert business at St Mary's, Glasnevin

I wouldn't say business was overly difficult. In that subject particularly we were very prepared. We spent about three-quarters of the year finishing off our topics and then we spent the rest in revision.

When it came to studying, what I tended to do, if I took notes that day, was to read over them when I got home. Then, over the course of the year, I'd try and study each subject for two sessions per week. I'd look over my notes and look at what topic I'd picked for that week. Then I'd look at the exam papers and practise questions.

I decided not to look at everything at once but divide it up so I was doing one thing at a time. Coming up to the exams we'd go over separate topics in each class, but I decided which topics I'd study separately and worked on those.

I wasn't too structured about it. I had a general idea of what I wanted to do. I might study the national budget one week, maybe an accounting question the week after.

The mocks weren't too bad for me – we'd had Christmas tests just beforehand, so that helped a lot. It was a shock in some ways, because we weren't used to the exam situation, but otherwise it wasn't too worrying.

For homework, we got questions from past papers. From those we were able to work out how long we were able to spend on each question. After the mocks, I timetabled a bit more, but I was basically using the same method, and I tried to keep it up and make sure I got my studying done.

I didn't do grinds or supervised study. I live a bit away from my school so it didn't really suit, as it would have been too late by the time I was getting in.

Going into my exam, I was really prepared for it, but I think at the start of any exam, most people are nervous because you're not sure what to expect. I was fairly happy with the questions because they were all the subjects that we'd covered pretty well, so when I saw them, I was happy. I didn't have any questions that I was upset about, thankfully. If I was giving advice about the year, the one bit of advice that I would give would be to keep practising the questions from past exam papers. That way, you work out your timing and you know what's going to come up and what you're going to have to look at.

You also learn to understand how you need to answer the questions. In the particular case of the budgets and final accounts, you need to know each layout and be well practised in them.

– In conversation with Eoin Cunningham

Exam structure

Junior Cert business (higher level) requires students to sit two papers.

It is the only subject apart from the core three (English, Irish and maths) that requires students to sit two separate papers, and this should be considered when devising your study plans.

◆ **Paper one: two and a half hours.**

Answer 20 short questions and four (out of six) long questions. The short questions cover all aspects of the course, while the long questions test students' ability to apply course concepts to household or personal situations.

Aim to give 35 minutes to the short questions and 25 minutes to each long question. This leaves 15 minutes to read the paper and adjust work.

◆ **Paper two: two hours**

Answer four (out of six) long questions. The emphasis of this second paper is on business applications, and how the key concepts on the business course can be applied to everyday life.

Aim to spend around 27 minutes on each question. This will leave 12 minutes for reading and correcting work.

Students need to bear in mind that, with a total exam time of four and a half hours, the examiner will use those 20 short and 12 long questions to test many aspects of the course. While there are certain key topics which seem to appear annually, there is no substitute for systematic and in-depth preparation.

It is vital that you use past exam papers to help improve your exam technique.