CASE STUDY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
STRATEGIC LEVEL

The case study examination is a virtual business role play. Therefore, understanding your role in the case study examination can really help you produce a good answer at the right level for your audience. You could think of it almost as a job interview, offering you the opportunity to demonstrate to CIMA your competence at this level and in the role of a Senior Finance Manager. The diagram below provides an overview of the role you will be playing at Strategic level, who you will be seeking to influence and examples of the syllabus area you may be tested upon. NOTE: These are just illustrations to help you set the case study exam in context and are not exhaustive.

IN YOUR EXAM:
• Think and write from the perspective of who you are (your role).
• Identify what your line manager/audience wants from you (the task requirements), including the depth of detail required.
• Imagine this as a job interview, what would you need to do to show your competence to do the tasks required?
• Remember why you are supplying this information (e.g. to assist in decision making).
• Plan how you are going to communicate your response and to whom (format, tone, level of detail and technical complexity).
• Consider what the impact may be for other parts of the business, such as other stakeholders and the financial statements (this is where you may be able to demonstrate business and people skills and earn marks for integration).
• Consider what long term measures can be taken for driving performance of the business (this is where you may be able to demonstrate leadership skills and, by thinking beyond the task requirements, earn marks for integration).

If you do this you will produce a good answer of the right breadth and depth which will gain marks across the competencies.

Who you are?

At Strategic level, your role will be that of a Senior Finance Manager.
Equivalent job titles in a real organisation might be:
• Senior Management Accountant;
• Group Accountant
• Financial Director

What is the main focus of your role?

Overall focus is the long term and setting the strategy for the business.
You may be involved in:
• Measuring, analysing and managing risk;
• Advising on strategic decisions;
• Investigating potential business developments and investments;
• Advising on long term sources of finance and financial strategy.

You will need to understand:
• Leadership and its role in achieving change management;
• The full context in which the business operates;
• The importance of looking ahead and advanced planning.
Who is your audience/who are you seeking to influence?

Chief Financial Officer/Board, senior management team – other senior non financial staff.

Examples of topic areas and tasks you may be asked to look at in the exam based on Variant 1 of the November 2015 SCS.

Your role in this case:
You are a Senior Finance Manager employed by Wodd, a forestry company which was founded in 1983 and has been a quoted company since 2001. Wodd is based in Marland, a European country, heavily industrialised in the South, but with large uninhabited areas in the North. Its climate is temperate and is well suited to growing timber.

The emphasis in the SCS is the Enterprise pillar and showing a balance of skills across all competency areas but all subjects will be tested. During the exam you will need to demonstrate:

Technical skills:
Advise on the implications of diversification for shareholders and directors (P3 E1)

Business skills:
Advise on predicting the impact of a weakening USD (E3 A1)

People skills:
Advise on briefing analysts (F3 C2)

Leadership skills:
Advise on managing the share price (E3 B1)

Competency weightings for your exam:

Competency Weighting is the basis of distribution of marks from various sections in the SCS exam. You will have to obtain minimum threshold marks (approximately 1/3) for each competency along with score of 80 to pass the SCS exam.