

Answer **all** the questions.

1. McCain Foods

McCain Foods is the world's leading producer of frozen potato products. Although McCain Foods is perhaps best known for producing oven chips, its product lines are much wider. In the UK they include various other potato products such as McCain Wedges and McCain Home Roasts, as well as McCain Sweet Potato and McCain Micro Pizza. In other countries McCain Foods sells a variety of foods including frozen vegetables, ready meals and desserts. Some products, for example McCain Oven Chips, captured the public imagination immediately and continue to sell well without needing to be changed. In terms of the **Boston Matrix**, Oven Chips are certainly a cash cow for McCain Foods. Other products, however, change through time or are adapted to create new variations, e.g. curly fries or thin and crispy fries.



Changes in the range are driven by a number of different factors. For example, microwaveable snacks take account of changing lifestyles, as people are looking for food that does not take long to prepare. McCain Foods has also been responsive to market needs for healthier options and its products support the Government's Change4life campaign. This encourages people to 'Eat Well, Move More, Live Longer'. As a result **Research and Development (R & D)** is a very important **functional department** within the business and helps to maintain McCain's 'It's All Good' message. Not only does McCain food taste good, but it fits in with current thinking on healthy diets. McCain Foods now only uses sunflower oil in the preparation of its chips. It knows that customers want to eat healthily without compromising on taste and it is careful to use wholesome ingredients in its products.

Ever since McCain Foods was founded by three brothers in Canada in 1957, it has been proud of the quality of its products and service. This has been maintained by adopting a **Total Quality Management (TQM)** approach in each of the fifty-seven locations where it operates throughout the world.

Adapted from www.thetimes100.co.uk

- (a) Explain **two** reasons why Research and Development (R & D) is so important to McCain Foods. [4]
- (b) Outline the key elements that a business, like McCain Foods, might include in its approach to Total Quality Management (TQM). [8]
- (c) Discuss the view that in a business, such as McCain Foods, production is the most important functional department. [8]
- (d) Evaluate the usefulness of the Boston Matrix to McCain Foods when using it to manage its large product portfolio. [10]