

LEVEL 5 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

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Programme:	IUMW Business Administration (Dual Award)		
Module:	Changemakers: Applying a Research Mindset		
Module code:		Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	100%
Lecturer:	Emma Roberts	Internal Verifier:	Vic Saunders
Assignment Title:	E-Portfolio Evidence of Learning	Word count (or equivalent):	4,000 words or equivalent
Submission deadline:	Friday 11th Sep 2026 23:55 British Summer Time BST	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	15th October 2026
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark: Work which is submitted up to 1 week late will be capped at 40% for the first attempt and will be awarded a mark of 0% for re-assessment. Late submission penalties may be lifted only if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim. Work submitted more than 1 week late will be considered as a non-submission and will not be marked. The work may be considered as a submission for reassessment if offered by an Examining Board or if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim.		
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

VIDEO PRESENTATION LINK:

<https://youtu.be/oLSh42tU35I?si=tOfloA6c9jV7X1Ek>

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TASK 1 IDENTIFICATION OF A REAL-WORLD BUSINESS PROBLEM

Aridh Rise Ventures or well-known as Karya Imaji Photo Studio and Photobooth is a small business operated by Akif Ridhwan Bin Razman, was located in Bandar Baru Bangi, Selangor Malaysia. Karya Imaji began in February 2024, which was when self-photo studios began to gain popularity. Karya Imaji focuses on providing photography services which offers two main services, self-photoshoot and photobooth services. The studio primarily serves students, families, wedding clients, and companies.

Based on the information gathered from my discussion with the business owner, it was identified that the major challenge Karya Imaji faces, is competition from other self-photo studios and photobooth businesses. When Karya Imaji first entered the market, there were only a small number of businesses providing similar services in Selangor area. However, the number of competitors has increased over time, with many businesses offering similar photography services and attract customers through different prices and services offerings. Some competitors may charge less for their photobooth packages, while others may have wider selection of backdrops, themes and creative photography concepts.

This competition offers a choice to the customer in choosing a photography service. Customers will make comparisons on price, packages, backdrop, studio environment, photo quality, additional services, and customer service before making a decision. Therefore, Karya Imaji must continue to provide high-quality services while also providing good offerings that can encourage customers to choose their service.

Karya Imaji has been impacted by the problem, which has led the business to have fewer bookings and pressure to compete with less expensive alternatives. It also creates a challenge for Karya Imaji to ensure the quality and customer satisfaction while still remaining competitive in the industry. This problem is important, as competition will not only impact the business owner but also influences how small photography businesses respond to the fast-changing customer expectation and the increasing availability of similar services.

TASK 2 USE OF GENERATIVE AI AND ACADEMIC LITERATURE TO DEFINE THE PROBLEM

The competition faced by Karya Imaji has been analysed by applying Generative AI to find out which factors are relevant, and were then compared with academic literature to check their accuracy and relevance.

The first prompt was *“How do small businesses compete when many businesses provide similar products or services? Explain the role of competitive advantage, differentiation and niche strategies, and provide academic sources.”* AI suggested that SMEs can compete through competitive advantage, differentiation and focusing on specific groups of customers rather than relying only on low prices. This was supported by Galli-Debicella (2021), who explains that niche strategies and differentiation can give SMEs sustainable competitive advantages. This is further supported by research showing that competitive advantage can help small businesses compete more effectively (Zahrah et al., 2024). The finding is relevant to Karya Imaji because some competitors do offer lower-priced photobooth packages. Therefore, the finding was considered valid and relevant.

The second prompt was *“How can differentiation, customer engagement, and customer retention help a small service business compete against businesses offering similar products or services?”* Differentiation, customer engagement and customer retention, according to AI may help businesses stand out and maintain customer relationships. The study of Campagnolo et al. (2023), supports the relationship between differentiation and small business performance. For Karya Imaji, this could be things such as unique photo concepts and special backdrops. Sim et al. (2022), found that social connections and trust play a role in consumer engagement. A customer who has a positive interaction with Karya Imaji will be more likely to trust the service and be more willing to engage with the business again. In Black et al. (2026), also found that SMEs might benefit more by keeping their current customers.

The third prompt was *“How does service quality, innovation, digitalisation, and marketing affect the competitiveness of SMEs?”* AI suggested that service quality and innovation can support business performance, while digital capabilities and marketing can help SMEs adapt and reach customers. The findings were supported by research showing relationships between service quality, innovation and business performance (Kankam, 2023), while digital literacy and marketing intensity were associated with SME productivity (Sakti et al., 2025). In Kessler et al. (2026), also found that digitalisation can create competitive

advantages for SME family businesses. Thomas and Douglas (2021), further show that small firms can use strategic responses to survive changes in their industry.

Overall, based on the AI findings and academic research, it shows that Karya Imaji's main problem is the challenge to remain competitive in the market as a lot of photography businesses offer similar services, different prices and additional features. Customers therefore have more choices and may compare price, photo quality, and overall studio experience. However, all of these findings provide a general understanding of competition and considered relevant as a general concept, but they do not prove which factors specifically influence Karya Imaji's customers. This comparison also shows that AI can provide useful starting points, but the detail findings still need to be checked against academic research before being applied to a specific business.

TASK 3 DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Competition from other self-photo studios and photobooth providers in Selangor is the main problem faced by Karya Imaji. To further investigate the competition-related problem, Generative AI or ChatGPT was used to develop possible research questions and suggest a suitable research approach.

The first prompt was *“Based on the problem I identified, which is the competition faced by Karya Imaji, a small self-photo studio and photobooth business in Selangor, provide several possible research questions that are specific, focused, realistic, and feasible for an undergraduate research project. The research should investigate the challenges caused by competition and should be conducted within a limited time and with access to the business owner”* AI then suggested several questions, including

1. *“What challenges does Karya Imaji face due to competition from other self-photo studios and photobooth providers in Selangor?”*
2. *“What factors contribute to the competitive challenges faced by Karya Imaji in the self-photo studio and photobooth industry in Selangor?”*
3. *“How do differences in pricing, packages, and additional services among competitors may affect Karya Imaji’s competitiveness?”*

The research question was chosen to be *“What challenges does Karya Imaji face due to competition from other self-photo studios and photobooth providers in Selangor?”* because it directly relates to the main problem identified in Task 1 and is more specific to Karya Imaji and not the whole photography industry. The question was also realistic as information could be received from the business owner, who has the first-hand experience of the problems faced in the business. While a strategy-based research question could be used to investigate the impact of a new strategy on the business, this would require Karya Imaji to implement and measure a strategy within the research period. Therefore, a descriptive case study is more feasible for this report as the information from the business owner can be used to understand and describe the competition-related challenges faced by Karya Imaji.

The second prompt was *“Based on the research question, suggest a realistic and feasible research approach for an undergraduate research project. Recommend an appropriate research philosophy, research design, data collection method and sampling method. The study has limited time and access mainly to the business owner, so the approach should be simple and realistic”* AI recommended qualitative approach using a case study design, with interviews

or open-ended questionnaires as possible data collection methods and purposive sampling to select participants. A qualitative case study would allow the researcher to understand the business owner's experiences and perceptions of competition.

The qualitative approach was chosen since the purpose of the research is to understand and describe the challenges faced by Karya Imaji rather than measure statistical relationships. A descriptive case study is suitable because the research focuses on one specific business. Data can also be collected through an interview or open-ended questionnaire with the business owner. Purposive sampling was used because the business owner was specifically selected based on his direct knowledge and experience of Karya Imaji.

Overall, the selected research question and approach are considered suitable because they are focused, realistic and achievable within the available time and access to the business.

TASK 4 SUMMARY RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The final research question is “*What challenges does Karya Imaji face due to competition from other self-photo studios and photobooth providers in Selangor?*”. The question was designed from the problems faced by the business owner, especially on increasing competition, lower-priced competitors, differences in packages, additional services, customer satisfaction and service quality.

The first important term is challenge. A business challenge is a problem or difficulty that may impact a business’s activities, performance, growth or ability to reach its goals (Pheonix Management International, 2026). This is relevant to Karya Imaji because the business experiences problems like competition, inconsistent income, customer satisfaction, and quality control. Farsi and Toghraee (2014), also identified several challenges faced by SMEs including managerial and human-resources issues, technology, regulations and lack of market information. The research also explained limited resources can make it difficult for some SMEs to adopt new technologies or make important changes. This will give some useful context to look at the difficulties Karya Imaji faced as a small business.

Competition is other companies that are in the same market that are trying to attract customers with products, services, prices or experiences that are appealing to customers compared to other competitors. Galli-Debicella (2021), explains that SMEs can compete through differentiation, focusing on specific customer groups and creating competitive advantages. This is relevant to Karya Imaji because competitors may offer lower prices, more backdrops, different packages and additional services.

A self-photo studio is a photography space where customers take their own photographs using professional equipment provided by the studio without needing a professional photographer (Wonderstory, 2026). This term is included because self-photo studios are one of the businesses that directly compete with Karya Imaji. While a photobooth is an event-based photography service that can be utilised for entertainment and memorable moments during an event (Heard the Beat, 2026). This term is relevant because photobooth services are another main service provided by Karya Imaji, particularly for weddings and events.

The research question is designed to be specific to ensure a focused study that is manageable. It is only about Karya Imaji and not the entire photography industry, competition as the primary concerns, self-photo studios and photobooth providers as competitors, and

Selangor as the geographical boundary. Therefore, the research is limited to only Karya Imaji, and not all photography business in Malaysia.

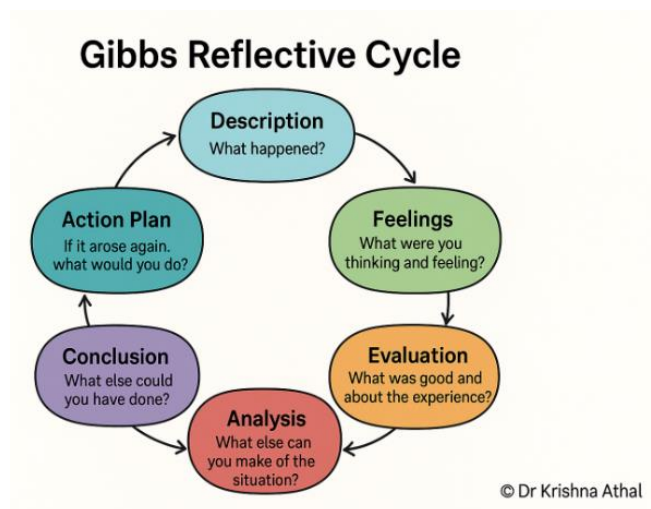
The most suitable research design is the qualitative descriptive case study. In Busetto et al. (2020), explains that qualitative research is suitable for understanding perspectives, experiences and the context of a particular situation. This is relevant because the research aims to understand the experiences of the Karya Imaji business owner toward the challenges faced by the business. A case study is suitable as the research is centred on one specific business, while the descriptive approach allows the challenges to be identified and described using the information provided by the business owner.

Open-ended questionnaire was used for the collection of primary data. This will give the owner an opportunity to explain his experiences and give detailed information that may be unavailable from the internet. The owner of Karya Imaji was chosen as the main participant as he has first-hand knowledge of Karya Imaji's operations and challenges. Academic research is also used as secondary information to compare the owner's responses with existing findings about SMEs and competition.

The questions in the questionnaire were designed to be clear and directly related to the research question as to improve reliability. The responses given by the owner are presented accurately without changing their original meaning. To improve validity, the questions were specifically focus on competition-related challenges, while the responses can be compared with academic research to see if the results of this study match with existing research. However, the academic research will only be used to compare it and not to be taken as Karya Imaji's.

The researcher has direct access to the Karya Imaji business owner, allowing the questionnaire and relevant business information to be obtained. Permission was obtained from the owner before using his responses and business information in the portfolio. However, the research is limited to one business and one main participant. Therefore, the findings give an idea of the situation of Karya Imaji, but do not necessarily apply to all self-photo studio and photobooth businesses in Selangor.

TASK 6 GIBBS REFLECTIVE CYCLE



Picture 1: Six Stages of Gibbs Reflective Cycle

6.1 DESCRIPTION

For this research project, I have explored about the problems faced by my brother's small self-photo studio and photobooth business, Karya Imaji. The data collection technique used in this project was an open-ended questionnaire which was given to the business owner to find out the problems he faced in the operation of the business. From the information collected, I identified competition was an important problem to focus on, and I create a research question focusing on the challenges caused by other self-photo studios and photobooth providers. I then looked into the potential competition-related factors by using Generative AI. After that, I evaluated the AI findings with academic literature to facts checked it. Lastly, I reviewed the concepts and selected a qualitative descriptive case study as the research approach.

6.2 FEELINGS

I was a bit confused when I first started the research as I had little knowledge of conducting a research project. I was unsure about how to develop a suitable research question, and I also had some concerns that my research question might be too broad as there are many factors involved in competition. However, after I received and read the feedback of Dr. Emma, I became more confident in my research direction.

6.3 EVALUATION

There were some good elements in the research process, as I was able to access the business owner directly and gain first-hand information regarding Karya Imaji. It also helped me gain more knowledge about my brother's business. As before this research, I did not really know what he was currently facing when operating the business and through this research, it helped me to now understand more about Karya Imaji. However, I found it a bit difficult to make the research question specific while still keeping it relevant to the business.

6.4 ANALYSIS

While I am working on this project, I learned that developing a research question involves more than just identifying a general business problem. I learned that the research question should specify exactly what was being looked at. I also learned about the proper use of Generative AI and it should not be treated as a source of confirmed information. Even though it provided useful ideas, I still needed to check it with academic research to see if it was supported and applicable for Karya Imaji. Both academic research and the information from the business owner was very useful to me in conducting my research as both of it served different purposes.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Overall, working on this report has taught me a lot since it has made it clear to me that conducting research is a step-by-step process that requires clear questions about what we really want to focus on, reliable information, and also critical evaluation. Moreover, I learned that it is important not to immediately accept information provided by Generative AI and I should always cross check with academic sources and the actual situation of the business to ensure my research is reliable. I also learned that feedback can help me better understand and evaluate my research/

6.6 ACTION PLAN

In the future research project, I would like to plan my research more in advance, manage time better and enhance my research capabilities. When conducting research, I will be more specifically use keywords when searching for academic sources, so that I don't spend time searching for sources that did not relevant to my research. What I would suggest to Karya Imaji is that they would need to work on finding main issues that they faced in the competition earlier.

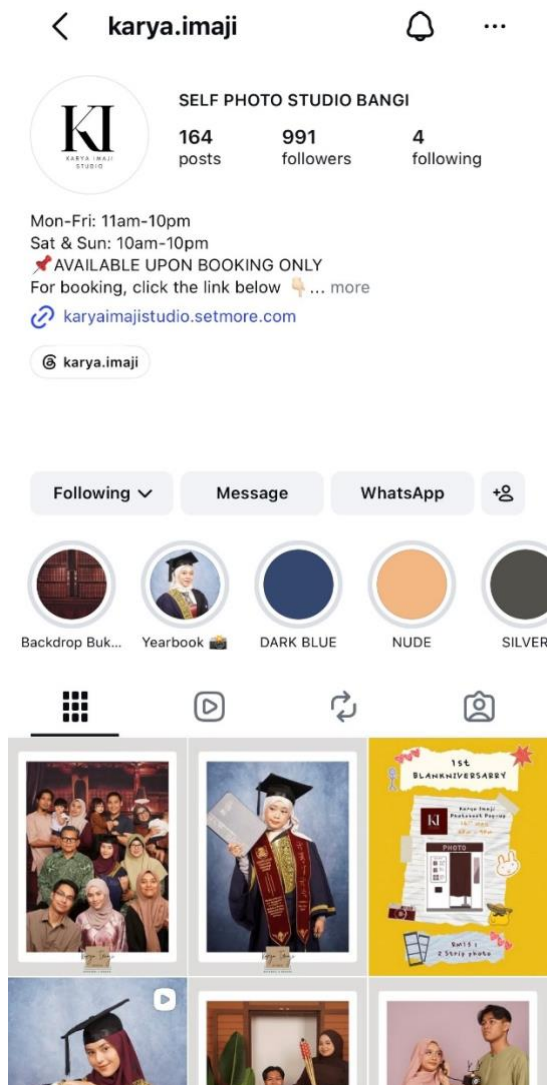
This can help the business in identifying market changes and making good adjustments to the business.

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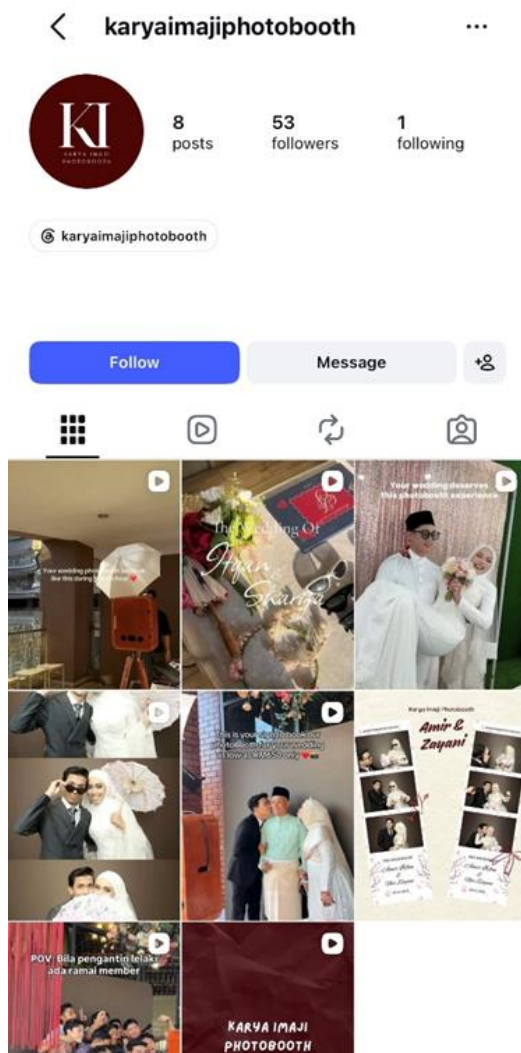
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APPENDICES



Picture 2: The studio of Karya Imaji



Picture 3: Karya Imaji Photobooth