

LEVEL 7 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:		Student ID number:	
Programme:	MA/PGDip HRM		
Module:	Employment Law		
Module code:	BMHR7003	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	100%
Lecturer:	Helen Stevens	Internal Verifier:	Julie Hayward
Assignment Title:	Human Resource Management Issues at SecurityPlus Trading Limited	Word count (or equivalent):	4500
Submission deadline:	15/11/2019	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	13/12/2019
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. Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 50%. Over one week late, 0%. Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may approve a change to submission dates.		
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.		

Module Learning Outcomes (from module syllabus)

1. Explain the core principles that underpin employment law as it applies in the UK (or Ireland), including common law, their purpose, origin and practical implications.
2. Advise colleagues about significant legal implications of decisions, plans or proposals in the employment field.
3. Advise about the appropriate action that should be taken in workplace scenarios where employment regulation applies.
4. Play a leading role in determining the appropriate organisational response when legal action on the part of a worker or employee is anticipated, threatened or taken.
5. Participate in the preparation, presentation and settling of employment tribunal cases.
6. Know how to keep their knowledge of developments in employment law up to date and advice about the impact of these developments on employment policy and practice in their organisations.

TASK DESCRIPTION

You have recently been appointed Head of People Services at SecurityPlus Trading Limited – a medium sized local security and locks company. Over the past few weeks, you have met with the two HR Business Partners who focus on operational and service delivery, along with the HR Assistants who carry out general HR administrative functions. To understand the history of the company and to be appraised of the legacy people issues that have been ongoing, you have asked for sight of Management Information and have been interrogating the data that has been made available to you. Despite the number of ER cases, business is booming and sales are increasing to the point that the company is looking at taking over another company. Your Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is concerned with the decline in ER and line managers' lack of grip of challenging situations. The CEO has tasked you with the role of identifying key issues that you need to deal with as a priority, and to minimise risk to the business in doing so.

Several problems require your immediate attention and input:

Scenario 1: 30

Gavin has worked for the business for 22 months. For the past 3 months he has been asked to 'act up' as co-manager in light of his increased sales performance and because the CEO has seen the talent that he can bring to the organisation. The CEO wants to secure the talent pipeline.

Working alongside Gavin is also co-manager, Toni. Toni has worked for the company for some 20 years but has never progressed within the organisation. Toni took exception to Gavin joining as he did not want him to 'steal his thunder' and saw Gavin as competition for any future senior leadership roles.

Gavin is married with two children but is effeminate in the way he presents himself. No sooner than Gavin joined, Toni started circulating emails to the team suggesting that Gavin is gay. Toni also arranged team nights out and purposely excluded Gavin from email circulation. At first, Gavin did not mind about this as he had his family to go home to anyway. As time progressed within the team, Toni made snide inappropriate comments when passing Gavin's desk, loud enough for the team to hear. The working environment was getting untenable and Gavin felt so humiliated and degraded about the way he was being treated by Toni. Unbeknown to Toni or his team, Gavin completed an online 'Have your Say' form, which is sent to HR. He set out everything that he had been subjected to, and also the fact that he hadn't been paid for his acting up role. Gavin was hopeful that raising matters formally that something could be done about what was happening. A colleague within the team confided in Gavin that there was another team social event being planned but that they had been told by Toni not to tell Gavin.

Despite the treatment he sustained, Gavin was still hitting his targets and outshined in his performance compared to Toni. Toni had sight of the latest statistics on sales performance, and called out to Gavin in the open plan office, “you think you’re clever and you’re not. You won’t get your bonus because the CEO only gives that to straight people”, again making assumptions about Gavin’s sexual orientation.

This was the last straw for Gavin and, having received no response from HR regarding his concerns, and fearful that all the issues he had raised were not being taken seriously or were just being ignored, he pens an email to the CEO confirming that he feels that the situation has become so untenable that he can no longer continue working for the company. He sets out that he gives his three months’ notice to leave, that he is going to see his doctor and that he would be sending in a sick note to cover him for the rest of his notice.

The CEO went to see HR to find out if they knew anything about why Gavin was resigning, especially as he was the best sales performer and a contributing factor to the increased sales. HR admitted that they had been so busy processing new recruits paperwork that they hadn’t followed up the paperwork nor had they paid him his ‘acting up’ allowance.

The CEO tells you that he remembered that he had received an email from an ACAS representative about two days ago, which explained that Gavin had been in touch with them in relation to:

- his resignation – which he maintained the company and Toni were the cause of, and that he had no option but to leave,
- the fact that he was looking for payment for the following: acting up allowance in his final pay, the bonus he should have received had he not resigned because he was the best performer and would have received this, payment for accrued holiday for pre-booked leave that he could not now take during his notice period because he was technically on sick leave.

Gavin had told ACAS that if he did not receive any offer of compensation for his enforced resignation, the way he was treated, and the payments due to him, then he would have no alternative but to issue a claim in the Employment Tribunal against the company.

The CEO tells you that whilst it was a great shame that Gavin had left, he was not worried about the threat of a claim. The CEO says that Gavin has little employment rights because he has only been employed for 22 months, and because he terminated his employment before the bonus was due, and was on sick during his notice, he could not have taken his holiday anyway.

The CEO asks that you let him have your view on this position and to identify if there is in fact any risk to the business based on the claims that Gavin threatens, and what would be the next steps in your view.

Scenario 2: 20

The CEO tells you that they have had problems with the computer systems so that personal files were merging and some data was being stored in the wrong place. As the company had many competing priorities, the CEO said that this was something that would have to be ‘put on the back burner’. HR have been trying to work on the systems periodically and recently had budget signed off by Finance to engage a fixed term worker in order to come into help with the backload for 6 months. Sian, the fixed term worker, was not aware of the differences between personal data or sensitive personal data. She stored people’s files together instead. When HR needed to check on an absence matter, they found someone else’s Occupational Health file stored within a different member of staff’s personal file, and the OH report was not password protected and so was accessible by anyone who went into that folder. HR has since transferred the OH file where it rightly belongs but has decided not to tell anyone about what has happened. HR have decided that because of the mistakes, they do not need Sian any longer – she has caused too many administrative errors. Sian was called into HR and was told that her services were no longer required and that she need not return the next day. Sian’s fixed term contract had a notice provision setting out that the filing system project was to last for the duration of 6 months, and set out that either party could give one week’s notice to terminate the arrangement before the expiry of the term.

The CEO asks you to advise:

- On whether there are employment issues in relation to the filing problems – whether this is infringing GDPR or any other employment rights of any kind.
- On whether there are any issues he needs to be concerned about regarding ‘letting go’ of Sian before the end of the fixed term which she was meant to be engaged for.

Scenario 3: 30

The company has been doing incredibly well in terms of its sales performance and the CEO has been in discussions with LockCo Ltd regarding a merger of their entire business. LockCo Ltd has 20 members of staff, which is made up of a diverse workforce. Also, rather than source their cleaning from an external company, LockCo Ltd employ their own two cleaners.

HR have been linking in with the HR team for LockCo Ltd to try and get an understanding of what type of contracts the staff are on, what their wages are, and whether there are any grievance or disciplinarys ongoing. HR from both companies have arranged consultation meetings with staff regarding the proposed merger and are answering any questions that are arising from staff. The consultation has been going well and no major issues have been identified. In the meantime, the company has also won a big tender for providing security and locks for all of the care homes funded by the County Council, meaning that all staff will need to undergo DBS checks before they can carry out any of their work in, or on, these premises. The CEO is insisting on everyone in the company undergoes DBS checks as a result. One member of staff, Patricia, who has been working for the company for 26 years and who is nearing retirement, has voiced that she is not going to undergo a DBS check, and as it is not a requirement of her contract she does not see why she has to agree to this. The CEO has told HR that Patricia needs to be dismissed immediately as he will not have anyone going against his instruction. The contracts of employment for staff within the company and LockCo Ltd are silent on DBS checks. Due to Patricia’s ‘backlash’, the CEO fears that everyone will follow suit which will detrimentally impact on their future provision of services under this new tender. This could cause huge financial and reputational issues for the company if their service provision cannot be fulfilled. The CEO has instructed HR that every member of staff needs to be dismissed and re-engaged immediately on new contracts that sets out that they need to be DBS checked. He also does not need any cleaners to transfer as they have an external cleaning company that comes into the office, so the LockCo Ltd cleaners would be “surplus to requirements”. The CEO has also instructed that there is no need to let the staff of LockCo Ltd know about this but insist to LockCo Ltd that they need to make sure all of their staff are DBS checked *before* the merger happens (how the managing director does this is down to him, says the CEO), and anyone who is not checked, or who fails the check, “is out from day one”. The CEO has also insisted that all staff are going to have to start working one in every four Saturdays on a rotating basis and that the new contracts need to set this out as well. He says that he does not want to hear any excuses from anyone why they cannot work a Saturday, and will not be prepared to be flexible as they have a service to deliver.

The CEO asks you to remind him of what the company’s obligations are with the merger, what information needs to be gathered, and to confirm that there is no risk at all in what he wants you to achieve because this merger has to happen, and the DBS checks and Saturday working has to happen to be able to fulfil the obligations under the tender. He wants your reassurance that there are no risks of any litigation but if there were, what would he need to establish if any of them were to bring a claim.

Scenario 4: 20

Raj, a long-standing customer contacted the CEO to say that he had been contacted by two staff members offering him a private security and lock service, Secure4Less Ltd, for less of a premium and monthly invoicing to what he currently pays SecurityPlus Trading Limited. He mentioned that he has also seen flyers in the window display of the local Post Office, local hairdresser and the local shops along the same road.

HR raised a concern to the CEO recently about fears that someone within the company was moonlighting or taking customer lists, as they had noticed when they had to do an audit check of clients to be able to update them of their assigned representative at next visits, noticed that someone had recently been in the customer list spreadsheet as it was locked and in ‘read only’ mode. Fuming, the CEO said that he was going to call all the staff in and insist on the staff member owning up or he would call in the police.

Raj told the CEO that he did not want to get anyone into trouble because he was a long-standing customer and that every representative who had gone to his store to provide a security or lock service had been very professional, polite, and had done a good job for him.

In the meantime, another customer, Sonia, contacts the CEO alleging the same thing. She says that she has seen the flyer on a Facebook page and recognised immediately that the two people worked for SecurityPlus Trading Limited and was sorry to see that they had since left and were working for a different company. The CEO asks Sonia to send him a copy of what she saw on Facebook, and immediately identified that his staff members, John and Jack, were behind setting up this new company.

The CEO calls John and Jack in for an urgent meeting on their arrival at work Monday morning and puts it to them that they are moonlighting and have taken the customer list to set up in competition. John was difficult and said that he was doing this extra work in his own time and so there was no issue. Jack remained silent. When questioned about accessing the company's customer list, they both denied having seen this and said that they did not know that the company kept a spreadsheet of this kind. The CEO challenged them and showed them the Facebook picture that a customer had given them. John, again maintained an obstinate stance, and insisted that the extra work he did was in his own private time, that the Facebook page was set up in his private time and so this had no impact on his work for SecurityPlus Trading Ltd. Jack still remained silent. Upon the CEO's instruction, HR did some more digging with the Facebook page and noticed in the trail of comments that at least 26 customers of theirs had posted messages so it was clear that they had been contacted about potential business, or had even instructed Secure4Less Ltd to do work for them already; therefore in competition with the company.

The CEO says that given John's attitude and the fact the Facebook page is still live, which clearly shows that the company's customers have been contacted to the point that they have left comments on the Facebook page, he now wants to consider disciplinary action against both John and Jack. (He's not sure he could treat them differently despite their reactions upon being confronted being so different).

It appears that the company does have a basic 'non-competition' policy but this is not set out in either John or Jack's contract of employment. There is no mention either of 'taking customer lists' as being an example of gross misconduct in the relevant section of the Disciplinary Policy. HR tell you that John and Jack have seen the 'non-competition' policy but they cannot find anything to show that they've signed anything to signify that they have seen this, or understood this.

The CEO asks you what the relevant considerations are for this type of issue and before he instructs HR to launch into a formal disciplinary process – and then whether he is right in his thinking that both John and Jack should be disciplined.

Please note the following when completing your assignment:

1. Writing: Written in English in an appropriate business/academic style
2. Focus: Focus only on the tasks set in the assignment.
3. Length: **4500 words**
4. Formatting: Typed on A4 paper in Times New Roman or Arial font 12 with at least 2.5 centimetre space at each edge.
5. Document format: Provide a written response to each scenario, include name or ID number on a cover sheet and including a bibliography using Harvard referencing throughout.
6. Research: Research should use reliable and relevant sources of information e.g. case authority, legislation, and academic books the research should be extensive.
7. Marks for each question are distributed as follows:
 - Scenario 1 - 20 marks
 - Scenario 2 - 25 marks
 - Scenario 3 - 30 marks
 - Scenario 4 - 25 marks

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS IN THE COMPLETION OF TASKS

NOTE: The guidance offered below is linked to the five generic assessment criteria overleaf.

1. Engagement with Literature Skills

Your work must be informed and supported by scholarly material that is *relevant* to and *focused* on the task(s) set; you should make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources, as appropriate (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline). You should provide evidence that you have accessed a wide *range* of sources, which may be academic, governmental and industrial; these sources may include academic journal articles, textbooks, current news articles, organisational documents, and websites. You should consider the *credibility* of your sources; academic journals are normally highly credible sources while websites require careful consideration/selection and should be used sparingly. Any sources you use should be current and up-to-date, mostly published within the last five years or so, though seminal/important works in the field may be older. You must provide *evidence* of your research/own reading throughout your work, using correctly a suitable referencing system, including in-text citations in the main body of your work and a reference list at the end of your work.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *At least 1 reference for every 100 words written*

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills

At level 7, you should be able to demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of your academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice, with a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to your own research or advanced scholarship. Your work must demonstrate your growing mastery of these concepts, principles, current challenges, innovation and insights associated with the subject area. *Knowledge* relates to the facts, information and skills you have acquired through your learning. You demonstrate your *understanding* by interpreting the meaning of the facts and information (knowledge). This means that you need to select and include in your work the contemporary concepts, techniques, models, theories, etc. appropriate to the task(s) set. You should be able to explain the theories, concepts, etc. meaningfully to show your understanding. Your mark/grade will also depend upon the *extent* to which you demonstrate your knowledge and understanding; ideally each should be complete and detailed, with comprehensive coverage.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *You should demonstrate the most up to date employment law knowledge associated with each scenario.*

3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

You should be able to: evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively to make sound judgements in the absence of complete data. Your work must contain evidence of logical, analytical thinking, evaluation and synthesis. For example, to examine and break information down into parts, make inferences, compile, compare and contrast information. This means not just describing what! But also justifying: Why? How? When? Who? Where? At what cost? At all times, you must provide justification for your arguments and judgements. Evidence that you have reflected upon the ideas of experts within the subject area is crucial to you providing a reasoned and informed debate within your work. Your choice of methodologies to gather data and information must be rigorously defended. Furthermore, you should provide evidence that you are able to make sound judgements and convincing arguments using data and concepts. Sound, valid, persuasive conclusions are necessary and must be derived from the content of your work. Where relevant, alternative solutions and recommendations may be proposed.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *Risks and benefits of the advice given should be explored and the most appropriate course of action determined based on evidence.*

4. Practical Skills

At level 7, you should be able to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline. This includes acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, originality in tackling and solving problems, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts or situations.

You should be able to demonstrate mastery of the leading edge subject-related concepts and ideas as they relate to real world situations and/or particular contexts. How do they work in practice? You will deploy models, methods, techniques, and/or theories, in those contexts or circumstances, to assess current situations, perhaps to formulate plans or plausible, justifiable recommendations to solve problems, or to propose new models, or to create artefacts, which may be innovative and creative, thereby demonstrating your understanding of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research and/or application. This is likely to involve, for instance, the use of real world artefacts, examples and cases, the application of a model within an organisation and/or benchmarking one theory or organisation against others.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *You should consider the practicality of the advice given for the business in question.*

5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice

Your work must provide evidence of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for postgraduate-level employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments. This includes demonstrating: the independent learning ability for continuing professional development to advance existing skills and acquire new competences of a professional nature that will enable you to assume significant responsibility within organisations; that you can initiate and complete tasks, projects and procedures, whether individually and/or collaboratively, to a professional level; that you can use appropriate media to effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms for a variety of audiences; fluency of expression; clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation. Work should be coherent and well-structured in presentation and organisation.

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

This section details the *extent* to which the assessment criteria are demonstrated by you, which in turn determines your mark. The marks available for each category of skill are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills		
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills		
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
4. Practical Application Skills		
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice		

Assessment Mark (Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)

Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)

Up to 1 week late (50% Max)

Over 1 week late (0%)

%

GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Level 7

In accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, at the end of Level 7 students should be able to demonstrate: a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice; a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship; originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline; conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences. They will demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level. They the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility; decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations/professional environments; and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Engagement with literature (including current research, referencing, academic conventions and academic honesty)	Little or no evidence of reading and/or reliance on inappropriate sources. Views and findings mostly unsupported and non-authoritative. Referencing conventions used incoherently or largely absent.	Poor engagement with essential reading. No evidence of wider reading. Reliance on inappropriate sources, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Heavily reliant on information gained through class contact. Inconsistent and weak use of referencing.	Engagement with a very limited range of relevant and credible sources. Some omissions and minor errors. Referencing conventions evident though not always applied accurately or consistently.	Engagement with an appropriate range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Some over-reliance on texts. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with a wide range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Selection of relevant and credible sources. Very good use of referencing, with no/very few inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. Consistently accurate application of referencing.	Exceptional engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. High-level referencing skills consistently and professionally applied.
Knowledge and understanding (A systematic,	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of the subject	Gaps in knowledge, with only superficial systematic	Limited knowledge and systematic understanding of	Knowledge is accurate and reasonably detailed. A	Knowledge has a well-defined focus, which is reasonably	Excellent mastery of a complex and specialised area	Exceptional mastery of a complex and specialised area

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conceptual understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline; a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research)	matter is not systematic. Substantial inaccuracies. No awareness of current problems, insights or the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline.	understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material. No critical awareness of current problems, insights, or latest research within the discipline.	the concepts and principles within the subject area, which to some marginal extent, is informed by current research and scholarship. Some critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, but often under-developed.	systematic understanding of the field of study informed by, to some extent, current research and scholarship. A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights though this may be under-developed occasionally.	extensive, coherent and detailed, with a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. Exhibits good understanding of the breadth and depth of contemporary and established views, and the work is, at least in part, well-informed by current research and scholarship.	of knowledge. A systematic, excellent understanding of the concepts of the subject informed by current research and scholarship. Highly critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. A critical, awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.	of knowledge. An exceptionally critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. An outstanding understanding of the concepts of the subject, well-informed by current research and scholarship. A critical, sophisticated and nuanced awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.
Cognitive and intellectual skills (Critical evaluation of current research and methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; make sound judgements in the	Wholly or almost wholly descriptive work. Little or no evaluation or critique or attempt at a systematic approach. Failure to develop arguments, leading to illogical or invalid judgements. Unsubstantiated	Largely descriptive work, with superficial use of critical evaluation of research and methodologies. Absent or weak development of hypotheses and judgements. Information accepted uncritically, uses generalised statements	Limited attempt at critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, tending towards description. Limited attempt to propose new hypotheses. Can deal with complex issues but not systematically or	Some critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, though slightly underdeveloped in places, Proposes adequate but limited new hypotheses, where relevant. Can deal with complex issues	Sound critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes new hypotheses, where appropriate. Can deal with complex issues systematically and with some creativity. Ability to make sound	Excellent critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Can synthesise complex issues systematically and creatively. Ability to	Exceptional critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Exemplary systematic and creative

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absence of complete data.)	generalisations, made without use of credible evidence.	made with scant evidence and unsubstantiated opinions. Ideas sometimes illogical and contradictory.	creatively. Some evidence to support emerging judgements but these may be underdeveloped or with a little inconsistency / mis-interpretation. May assert rather than argue a case.	but not fully systematically or creatively. Ability to make judgements based on data (that may be incomplete) but with some tendency to assert/state opinion rather than argue on the basis of reason and evidence.	judgements based on data (that may be incomplete)	investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated judgements.	synthesis of complex issues. Ability to investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated, nuanced, judgements. Potential for journal publication or doctoral research.
Practical skills (Originality / creativity in the application of knowledge, tools and techniques and in tackling and solving problems in complex and unpredictable professional situations; practical use of established techniques of research and enquiry to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.)	Limited or no use of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Little or no appreciation of the context of the application. Limited understanding of the application of theory to practice or making appropriate links between the two. Very weak problem-solving skills in complex and	Rudimentary application of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques but without consideration and competence. Flawed appreciation of the context of the application. Weak understanding of the application of theory to practice, with only occasional evidence of making	An awareness and mostly appropriate application of well-established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques, with occasional errors. Basic appreciation of the context of the application. Theoretical knowledge and understanding applied in practice, but not always making	An appropriate application of standard methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Clear appreciation of the context of the application. Mainly consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making appropriate links between the two. Can identify problems and	A very good application of a range of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application, with perceptive insights. Can identify problems and propose appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts.	An advanced application of knowledge, methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. The context of the application is well considered, and insightful. Can identify complex problems and propose excellent solutions. An excellent grasp of techniques applicable to own research or	Exceptional application skills in complex, unpredictable, contexts, drawing skilfully on the latest research within the discipline. Can identify complex problems and propose sophisticated, original solutions. An outstanding application of techniques applicable to own research or

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	unpredictable contexts.	appropriate links between the two. Weak problem-solving skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.	logical links between the two. Can identify problems and propose basic solutions without fully appreciating the complexity of unpredictable contexts.	propose mostly appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts, with elements of originality.	Evidence of originality and creativity.	advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.	advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline with assimilation and development of cutting edge processes and techniques.
Transferable skills for life and professional practice (Exercise of self-direction, autonomy and personal responsibility; plan and implement tasks at a professional level; independent learning; use appropriate media to communicate effectively and professionally to a variety of audiences; fluency of expression; systematic	Communication medium is inappropriate or misapplied. Work is poorly structured, disorganised and/or confusingly expressed. Very weak use of language and/or very inappropriate style. Little or no evidence of autonomy (or collaboration, where relevant) in the completion of tasks. Little or no evidence of	Communication medium is poorly designed and/or not suitable for the audience. Work is poorly presented in a disjointed manner. It is loosely, and at times incoherently, structured, with information and ideas often poorly expressed. Weak use of language and/or inappropriate style. Weak independent	Can communicate in a suitable medium but with some room for improvement. Mostly ordered presentation and structure in which relevant ideas / concepts are reasonably expressed. Work may lack coherence in places. Can work as part of a team, but with limited involvement in group activities.	Can communicate effectively in a suitable format, but may have minor errors. Mostly coherent, organised work, in a suitable structure and is for the most part clearly expressed. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with clear contribution to group activities. Demonstrates the skills	Can communicate well, confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, fluent, well-structured and organised. Can work very well autonomously and/or as part of a team, with a good contribution to group activities. Demonstrates comprehensive professional, postgraduate	Can communicate professionally confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work autonomously with initiative. Where relevant can work professionally within a team, showing leadership skills as appropriate, managing	Can communicate with an exceptionally high level of professionalism. Work is remarkably coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work outstandingly well and professionally within a team, showing advanced leadership skills. Demonstrates exemplary

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
approach; clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation.)	the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.	initiative (or collaboration, if relevant). Limited evidence of the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.	Demonstrates some but not all of the basic skills required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of minor weakness.	required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of strength and some of minor weakness.	employment skills.	conflict and meeting obligations. Demonstrates excellent professional, postgraduate employment skills and a strong appetite for further development.	professional, postgraduate employment skills and a strong appetite for further development.

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