

LEVEL 4 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:		Student ID number:	
Programme:	CertHE Skills for the Workplace Outreach		
Module:	Problem Solving and Decision Making		
Module code:	BMSK4004	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	100%
Lecturer:		Internal Verifier:	
Lecturer Signature:		Date marked:	
Assignment Title:	Problem Solving and Decision Making	Word count (or equivalent):	4000
Submission deadline:	As agreed	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	
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 40%. 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)

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

1. Know how to describe a problem, its nature, scope and impact:
2. Know how to gather and interpret information to solve a problem
3. Know how to evaluate options to make a decision
4. Know how to plan, monitor and review the implementation and communication of decisions

TASK DESCRIPTION

Indicative Content	What You Should Focus Upon
Define a complex problem in the workplace including its scope and impact	• A complex problem in the workplace with multiple possible solutions has been defined in a way that makes clear both the difference between the actual condition and the desired condition and the restrictions placed on the solution such as time, budget and resources • The scope and impact of the complex problem are considered across the organisation and take account of the complexity of the problem and make it clear who the owner(s) of the problem are and why a solution is needed
Analyse information on the identified problem, to help inform the decision-making process	• Information from a wide range of sources has been analysed correctly and appropriately to reflect the complexity, scope and impact of the problem and to identify possible causes of the problem • Tools to be used: 5 Whys, Root Cause Analysis, Mind mapping, Brainstorming
Propose a range of alternative solutions to the problem	• Alternative complete and appropriate solutions to the problem based on the analysis of information are proposed with detailed resource considerations List and describe solutions to the problem based on the information collected in 1.2 and taking into consideration the available resources. • Are there any obstacles or barriers to any of the solutions?
Using a decision-making technique, evaluate a range of solutions to identify the most appropriate option	• A decision-making technique with appropriate criteria that takes account of the restrictions placed on the solution in the problem definition such as time, budget and resources has been used correctly and appropriately on the alternative solutions to weight each solution in a transparent manner

	and rank the solutions in order of preference Tools to be used: Grid analysis and Cost benefit analysis
Develop a detailed plan for implementing the solution	- A correct and appropriate detailed plan for implementing the solution that clarifies objectives, assigns tasks with deadlines and charts progress in reaching goals and milestones has been developed for full implementation - Tools to used: Gantt chart
Communicate the plan to relevant stakeholders	- Stakeholders need to be identified and their expectations analysed. - Evidence is provided that the implementation plan has been communicated correctly and appropriately to meet the identified communication needs of relevant stakeholders and a formal communication plan is provided - Tools to be used: Stakeholder Analysis, Communication plan
Assess appropriate monitoring and review techniques to ensure successful implementation of solution	- Correct and appropriate monitoring and review techniques have been assessed using objective and transparent criteria to make a judgement as to their appropriateness to ensure successful implementation of the solution - Tools to be used: Gantt chart (or alternatively, an action plan), communication plan
Organise the knowledge and learning through use of a range of information resources. The layout, structure and grammar are presented at the appropriate level and include Harvard style references.	Your work should be checked for grammar errors, follow a report structure, include in-text citations and have a separate Reference section populated with full references of all your information sources – and follow Harvard style of referencing.

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 provide evidence that you have accessed an appropriate *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 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:

You should include at least ten references. These should be taken from appropriate journals, textbooks and reliable websites according CRAAP test. A reference list should be provided using Harvard referencing convention.

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills

At level 4, you should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with your area(s) of study. *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 concepts, techniques, models, theories, etc. appropriate to the task(s) set. You should be able to explain the theories, concepts, etc. to show your understanding. Your mark/grade will also depend upon the *extent* to which you demonstrate your knowledge and understanding.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

Demonstrate your knowledge of the problem-solving process. Conduct research into problems, scope, impact and root causes. Consider the effect of this problem on the business. Consider stakeholders, their expectations and how you will communicate with them. Develop implementation plans and communication plans. Assess the appropriate monitoring techniques to monitor and review the implementation of your plans.

Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

You should be able to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of your subject(s) of study. You should be able to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to your area(s) of study and/or work. Your work must contain evidence of logical, analytical thinking. 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? You should provide justification for your arguments and judgements using evidence that you have reflected upon the ideas of others within the subject area and that you are able to make sound judgements and arguments using data and concepts. Where relevant, alternative solutions and recommendations may be proposed.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

Conduct research into problem and potential solutions by using Mind mapping, Brainstorming, Root Cause Analysis, 5 Whys, and present evidence. Research a range of solutions to this problem. Demonstrate research and academic writing skills as well as critical reading and ability to interrogate data in order to justify a management decision made as a result of research conducted.

3. Practical Skills

At level 4, you should be able to apply the basic underlying concepts and principles to evaluate and interpret these within the context of your area of study. You should be able to demonstrate how the subject-related concepts and ideas relate to real world situations and/or a particular context. How do they work in practice? You will deploy models, methods, techniques, and/or theories, in that context, to assess current situations, perhaps to formulate plans or solutions to solve problems, or to create artefacts. 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 based on stated criteria.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

Practical use of the tools and techniques for assessing the financial viability of your suggested solution. Grid Analysis needs to be followed by Cost Benefit Analysis and corresponding financial ratios to justify your decision for implementation. Verbally explain your process to demonstrate the understanding of the techniques. This section really tests your ability to select the financially viable and realistic solution to the problem and justify it.

4. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice

Your work must provide evidence of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility. This includes demonstrating: that you can communicate the results of your study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments; that you can initiate and complete tasks and procedures, whether individually and/or collaboratively; fluency of expression; clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation. Work should be coherent and well-structured in presentation and organisation.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

Demonstrate effective formal report writing skills, with appropriate diagrams, graphs, charts and tables included as evidence of your ability with data handling, where appropriate. Consider your layout, grammar and report structure.

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		
	10	
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills		
	20	
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
	25	
4. Practical Application Skills		
	35	
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice		
	10	

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 (40% Max)		
	Over 1 week late (0%)		

GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Level 4

In accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, at the end of Level 4 students will be expected to have demonstrated knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles of a subject, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study. They should be able to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study. They will have learned how to evaluate different approaches to solving problems and will be able to communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments. They will be able to undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment and will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

Level 4	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (3 rd / Pass)	GOOD (2.2 / Pass)	VERY GOOD (2.1 / Merit)	EXCELLENT (1 st / Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (1 st / Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Engagement with literature (including reading, 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 limited range of mostly relevant and credible sources but with some reliance on information gained through class contact. Some omissions and minor errors. Referencing conventions evident though not always applied accurately or consistently.	Engagement with an appropriate range of literature, including sources retrieved independently. Some over-reliance on texts rather than other sources. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with a wide range of literature, including sources retrieved independently. Selection of relevant and credible sources. Generally sound referencing, with no/very few inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature. Consistently accurate application of referencing.	Exceptional engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature. High-level referencing skills consistently applied.
Knowledge and understanding (Knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles of a subject.)	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject matter. Inclusion of irrelevant material. Substantial inaccuracies.	Gaps in knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles, with flawed or superficial understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material.	Limited knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles within the subject area. Some elements may be missing.	Knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles is accurate with a good understanding of the field of study but lacks depth and/or breadth.	Competent knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles. Exhibits very good understanding.	Excellent knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject.	Exceptional, detailed knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles
Cognitive and intellectual skills (Evaluate underlying concepts and principles of a subject and interpret qualitative and	Wholly or almost wholly descriptive work. Little or no evaluation of the underlying concepts and principles. Failure to develop arguments, leading to illogical or invalid	Largely descriptive work, with superficial evaluation of the underlying concepts and principles. Weak interpretation of data, flawed development of arguments and judgements. Information accepted	Limited attempt at evaluation of the underlying concepts and principles, tending towards description. Can interpret qualitative and quantitative data but with some errors. Some evidence to support emerging	Good evaluation of the underlying concepts and principles. Can interpret qualitative and quantitative data, with minor errors. An emerging ability to use evidence to support the argument.	Sound evaluation of the underlying concepts and principles. Can interpret qualitative and quantitative data accurately. Ability to devise arguments using evidence to make mostly	Excellent evaluation of the underlying concepts and principles. Can interpret qualitative and quantitative data accurately and with some insight. Excellent ability to devise arguments	Exceptional evaluation of the underlying concepts and principles-based evidence. Outstanding interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data.

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quantitative data in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements.)	judgements. Minimal or no use of evidence to back up views.	uncritically, uses generalised statements made with scant evidence and unsubstantiated opinions. Ideas sometimes illogical and contradictory.	arguments and judgements but these may be underdeveloped or with a little inconsistency / mis-interpretation.	Mostly valid arguments and logical judgements.	appropriate and valid judgements.	using evidence and make appropriate and valid judgements.	Exceptional ability to devise arguments using evidence and make wholly appropriate and valid judgements.
Practical skills (Different approaches to solving problems in particular contexts.)	Limited or no use of taught, basic methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Little or no appreciation of the context of the application. Very weak evidence of different approaches to problem-solving in particular contexts.	Rudimentary application of taught, basic methods, materials, tools and/or techniques but without consideration and competence. Flawed appreciation of the context of the application. Weak evidence of different approaches to problem-solving in particular contexts.	An adequate awareness and mostly appropriate application of basic methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Basic appreciation of the context of the application. Can identify problems in particular contexts and propose basic alternative approaches or solutions though there may be errors.	A good and appropriate application of basic methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Clear appreciation of the context of the application. Good evidence of different approaches to problem-solving in particular contexts and proposes mostly appropriate solutions.	A very good application of a range of basic methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application. Very good evidence of different approaches to problem-solving in particular contexts and proposes appropriate solutions.	An advanced application of a range of taught, basic methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. The context of the application is well considered, and insightful. Excellent evidence of different approaches to problem-solving in particular contexts and proposes appropriate solutions.	Exceptional levels of application and deployment skills in particular practical contexts. Outstanding identification of problems in particular contexts and formulation of wholly appropriate, thoughtful solutions / different approaches.
Transferable skills for life and professional practice (Communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments; the qualities needed for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility)	Work is poorly structured, disorganised, inaccurate and/or confusingly expressed. Very weak use of language and/or very inappropriate style. Failure to work effectively individually or as part of a group. Little or no evidence of the skills for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.	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. Flawed approach to individual or group work, meeting only partial obligations to others. Limited evidence of the skills for employment requiring the exercise	Mostly ordered presentation and structure in which relevant ideas / concepts are reasonably expressed. Work may lack coherence and/or accuracy in places. Can work as part of a group, meeting most obligations to others but perhaps with limited involvement in group activities. Demonstrates the basic skills for employment requiring the exercise of some personal	Mostly coherent, organised and accurate 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 for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility, with some areas of strength and some of minor weakness.	Work is accurate, coherent, fluent, well-structured and organised. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with very good contribution to group activities. Demonstrates very good skills for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility, with just occasional minor weakness.	Work is coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with an excellent contribution to group activities. Demonstrates excellent skills for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility with an appetite for	Work is accurate, exceptionally coherent, very fluent and presented well. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with an exceptional contribution to group activities. Demonstrates exceptional skills for employment requiring the exercise of some personal

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Category	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
within a structured and managed environment.)		of some personal responsibility.	responsibility, with some areas of minor weakness.			further development.	responsibility with an appetite for further development.