

Assessment Centre Business Prioritisation Activity

Work together as a small business leadership team. Decide what needs attention first, while balancing cost, time, staffing and the needs of customers, employees and the owner. Explain the reasons for your choices.

Student instructions

- Work in groups of 4–5. Choose a timekeeper; everyone should contribute.
- Discuss the six issues below and rank them from 1 (most urgent) to 6 (least urgent). You must agree the order as a group.
- You have 20 minutes to agree the order and complete the worksheet. Present your top three priorities in 4 minutes.
- There is no single correct ranking. Use the information provided, explain trade-offs and consider who is affected.

Scenario

Fresh Start is a small independent shop selling affordable lunches near a college. It employs six people, including the owner. Sales are steady, but several issues have arisen at once. The owner has £1,200 available this month, can only free up about eight management hours, and cannot hire a permanent employee until next term.

Issues requiring a decision

- A. A fridge has been running warmer than usual. A repair visit costs about £350 and can take place tomorrow. Staff have stopped using it and moved perishable food to other working fridges; storage space is now tight.
- B. Customers say lunchtime queues are too long. A second card terminal would cost £250, but it is unclear whether payment is the main cause of the queues.
- C. Two new staff members say they are unsure how to handle complaints. A half-day training session would cost £300 and require cover from other staff.
- D. The business website shows an old menu and prices. Updating it would cost £150 or take the owner about four hours.
- E. A supplier offers a 10% discount if the shop commits £600 to a bulk order this week. Some items have a short shelf life.
- F. A regular customer asks for more vegetarian choices. A small trial would cost £200 and use some fridge space; wider demand is unknown.

Group ranking worksheet

Group members: _____

Rank every issue. Write a brief reason and note who would be affected.

Rank	Issue letter	Why this position?	Main stakeholder affected
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

Your first steps

What would you do immediately about any safety or service concern?

Which actions would you fund this month? Show that the total stays within £1,200.

Which issue would you investigate before spending money? What information would you gather?

What would you explain to a stakeholder who disagreed with your ranking?

Our planned spending: £_____ Remaining budget: £_____