

LCDB 7002 MiCE September 2019

Assignment Guidelines
(100%)

Assignment Specification

Coursework 100%

Consultancy project – 7,500 words or equivalent

Example

Produce a business report (consultant's report) that details evidence-based research on a contemporary issue within the field of people management. The report must contain conclusions derived from the findings detailed within the report and culminate in fully justified recommendations and an implementation plan for recommended changes.

The report will be based on a case study provided by the module leaders. You will have a choice as to which of several current HR issues upon which to focus in your report.

Assignment – Requirements 1

- Your task in this assignment is to prepare a business consultant's report (**NOT** an essay!!) on the case study supplied. (It concerns a complex business environment).
- The report should select one or two key people management issues identified in the case study since the business environment described is complex and involves several different HR issues discussed during the module.

You do **not** have to address **all** of the people management issues raised in the case study! (If you are uncertain as to which to select, consult with the module leaders). You must indicate in your report which issues you have selected.

- Your report should draw upon the theories, principles, tools and guidelines for people management given in the lectures and in the previous activities and exercises.

Assignment Guidelines 1

- A business consultant's report is **not** a descriptive, academic essay. It is an evaluation and critical analysis of the case study – in order to make and justify recommendations for a people management strategy which avoids HR problems and benefits the business.
[A rough outline of a typical consultant's report structure follows].
- The case study materials provided are not enough, on their own, to enable a proper business analysis.
- You will need to conduct your own independent research into the external environment in the sector, the complexity of the internal company environment, and the options available to meet the HR objectives of your proposals.

“What does a business consultancy report look like?”

[The following is a rough outline, only, of a typical consultant's report. You are free to vary this structure in ways that better fit the evidence and argument you are presenting in support of your proposals].

1. **Title:** Identifying the company, its context and (briefly) the purposes of the investigation: e.g. *“Apple Inc.: Recommendations for policies concerning treatment of employees by Apple's suppliers”*
2. **Executive Summary:** a ‘snapshot’ of the report as a whole summarising the issues identified, the key conclusions and recommendations (proposals) made and the methods used.
3. **[Optional]: Table of contents** – with page references.
4. **Short introduction:** outlining the purpose of the report (not business background).
5. **Analysis of the issues:** (longest section) – including findings, participants and any data or statistics used as evidence.
6. **Recommendations:** - proposals and justifications / benefits of each one (with alternatives).
7. **Conclusions:** Actions and (brief) implementation plan / timelines.
8. **Short Reference List:** – plus appendices (diagrams, tables, datasets, if needed)

Assignment Guidelines 2

- The case study concerns an actual company (based on a real business context) which is undergoing fairly rapid change in the light of political change and expansion. The case study indicates potential people management problems for the company – including (but not limited to):
 - Diversity
 - Unforeseen effects of changes (risk).
 - Employee resourcing.
 - Change management and employee resistance.
 - Socio-cultural differences in international contexts.
 - Unpredictability of forecasting and strategic planning in complex organisational structures.
 - Control and monitoring issues in relationships with outsourced HR functions.
- Several kinds of people management and organisational complexity issues are indicated in the case study outline. You need to select one or two of these as the main focus of your report.
- Your focus in the report (7,000 – 8,000 words) must be upon the specific analysis of those issues, the evidence for recommendations you make (and alternatives to them), plans for how those recommendations may be implemented, and justifications in terms of potential benefits / solutions to problems for the business.
- You will need to undertake investigative research of your own (chiefly from secondary sources) into comparison cases, policies, procedures, and practices in similar complex business environments.