

Assignment 2

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**PROGRAMME: Cert He Business for the
Workplace**

**MODULE: Employability and Career Development
(LCLM4005)**

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Task 1: Comparison of Four Teaching Assistant Job Adverts

I looked at four teaching assistant jobs in Birmingham to understand what schools want from candidates. The positions I analysed were:

- SEND Teaching Assistant at King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy (£23,938–£25,119)
- Primary Teaching Assistant at Springfield Primary Academy (£17,158–£20,625)
- Nursery Teaching Assistant in South Birmingham (£92–£100 per day)
- Level 3 Teaching Assistant Resource Base in Erdington (£20,560–£25,421)

Key Skills:

All adverts emphasised communication skills. Teaching assistants must talk clearly with teachers, students, and parents, for example, explaining instructions or discussing progress. Patience and empathy were essential, especially when supporting children with different learning needs. Teamwork was required in every role, working alongside teachers, other assistants, and external professionals. ICT skills appeared in three adverts, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint for creating resources and tracking student progress. Organisation was crucial for keeping classrooms and resources in order. Adaptability and flexibility were needed to respond to changing classroom situations or individual needs. Behaviour management appeared in three adverts, showing that assistants must maintain a calm, positive learning environment.

Knowledge Areas:

All jobs required understanding child development, safeguarding, and health and safety. SEN knowledge was essential or desirable, particularly understanding autism, ADHD, or dyslexia. Classroom support skills included assisting with lessons, one-to-one support, and small group work.

Qualifications:

All adverts required Level 2 or 3 teaching assistant qualifications or equivalent childcare certificates. English and Maths at GCSE Grade C/4 or Functional Skills Level 2 were mandatory. An enhanced DBS check was also required, and experience working with children was either essential or highly desirable.

Overall, these adverts show that schools want teaching assistants with a mix of interpersonal skills, practical knowledge, and recognised qualifications.

Task 2: Self-Assessment and Evidence of Readiness

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

I have a Level 4 certificate, which is above the Level 2 or 3 required for the jobs I analysed. This shows commitment to learning and the ability to understand advanced educational theory. I also have basic IT skills, including using computers and standard software, which will help in classrooms that use digital tools like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

I am organised and manage my time well. For example, I have balanced coursework and other responsibilities during my Level 4 course, demonstrating good planning and prioritisation. I enjoy supporting children and helping them learn, which motivates me in educational roles. I also have good interpersonal skills from group work at college and social activities, which will help me communicate effectively with teachers, students, and parents.

Weaknesses:

I have limited classroom experience, which all adverts stated as essential. My IT skills need improvement to meet full requirements for Microsoft Office and school systems like SIMS or Bromcom. I lack specific SEN training, which is crucial for supporting children with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, or other learning differences. My Functional Skills or GCSE qualifications may need verification to ensure they meet the required Grade C/4 standard. Additionally, I do not have First Aid or current safeguarding certification, both of which are important in schools.

Opportunities:

Birmingham schools have many vacancies, especially for SEND roles. Volunteering provides practical experience and professional references. Free online courses and local training can help improve IT skills, SEN awareness, safeguarding knowledge, and Functional Skills. My Level 4 certificate positions me well for progression to Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) roles, which offer more responsibility and higher pay.

Threats:

Competition for teaching assistant roles is high, with many applicants having classroom experience, Level 3 TA qualifications, or SEN training. Budget constraints may require new staff to be fully skilled. Policy or funding changes could affect recruitment, and Enhanced DBS checks may delay employment.

Evidence of Readiness

My Level 4 certificate demonstrates the ability to learn and complete advanced qualifications. Basic IT skills provide a foundation for using classroom technology. Academic achievements show literacy, numeracy, and organisation skills. For example, I have successfully completed coursework, assessments, and group projects requiring careful planning and time management. Feedback from tutors highlights teamwork and communication skills, which will help me collaborate effectively with teachers, parents, and students.

These strengths show I am ready for employability and personal advancement, and I have a clear plan to address weaknesses to ensure I am fully prepared for teaching assistant roles.

Task 3: Employment Goals and Personal Development Plan**Employment Goals****Short-Term Goals (0–6 months):**

My main goal in the next six months is to secure a teaching assistant role in a Birmingham primary or secondary school, ideally in a diverse environment such as Bordesley Green Girls' School. This will provide practical experience and allow me to apply my Level 4 knowledge in real classrooms.

Within the first three months, I aim to complete essential qualifications, including Functional Skills Level 2 in English and Maths, safeguarding training, and Paediatric First Aid certification. This demonstrates to employers that I am prepared and proactive.

I also plan to begin volunteering 2–3 days a week at a local school to gain hands-on experience, observe classroom management, and develop strategies to support diverse learners. Volunteering will also help me build professional references, strengthening my future job applications.

Long-Term Goals (1–3 years):

Within 18 months of starting my first teaching assistant role, I aim to progress toward Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) status. This will involve planning and delivering lessons under teacher supervision, increasing responsibility, and raising my salary. HLTA status recognises experience and qualifications, providing career advancement.

I also plan to specialise in supporting children with SEN within two years, developing skills to help children with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other learning differences. This specialisation will enhance employability, provide rewarding work, and improve job security.

Over three years, I aim to become an experienced, respected teaching assistant, capable of mentoring new staff and coordinating interventions. This positions me for further career progression, such as teacher training or leadership roles within schools.

Personal Development Plan

Weakness 1: Limited Classroom Experience

- **Actions:** Contact five local schools to request volunteer placements. Volunteer 2–3 days weekly for three months, shadow experienced teaching assistants, and request feedback.
- **Timeline:** Weeks 1–2: contact schools; Week 3: start placement; Months 1–3: volunteering.
- **Resources:** Transport (£20/month), professional clothing (£100), DBS (£40).
- **Measurement:** Complete 100 hours and obtain a written reference confirming competencies.

Weakness 2: IT Skills

- **Actions:** Complete free Microsoft Office courses online. Practice Word, Excel, and PowerPoint by creating sample teaching resources, student progress trackers, and parent communication letters.
- **Timeline:** Weeks 1–8: complete courses; Weeks 9–12: practical application.
- **Resources:** Computer/laptop, free online courses, optional LinkedIn Learning (£25/month).
- **Measurement:** Complete courses and produce a portfolio of 10 teaching resources.

Weakness 3: SEN Training

- **Actions:** Complete online SEN courses and read books on autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and behaviour management. Gain practical experience supporting children with SEN during volunteering.
- **Timeline:** Month 1: courses; Month 2: reading; Months 2–4: practical experience.
- **Resources:** Free online courses, library books, notebook (£5).
- **Measurement:** Obtain two SEN certificates, support at least five children with SEN, and write a reflective journal.

Weakness 4: Functional Skills / GCSE Verification

- **Actions:** Locate certificates or request replacements. Register for Functional Skills Level 2 assessments if needed. Study three hours weekly.
- **Timeline:** Weeks 1–2: verify; Weeks 3–10: study; Week 12: complete assessments.
- **Resources:** Exam fees (~£60 per subject), free online study materials.
- **Measurement:** Obtain verified evidence of English and Maths at the required level.

Weakness 5: First Aid and Safeguarding

- **Actions:** Complete a Paediatric First Aid course and Level 1 online safeguarding training.
- **Timeline:** Safeguarding: Week 1; First Aid: within six weeks.

- **Resources:** First Aid course (£50–£100), internet access.
- **Measurement:** Obtain certificates and include on CV.

Progress Review:

I will review progress monthly, track completed actions, and adjust the plan as needed. After three months, I will assess readiness for job applications based on experience, certificates, and skills. Feedback from volunteer supervisors will identify areas for improvement. Success will be measured by securing a teaching assistant job within six months, showing that my development plan has effectively prepared me for professional responsibilities.