



Unit:
Information Systems and Organisations
Assignment
20 Credit Version
Sample Assignment

Important notes

- Please refer to the Assignment Presentation Requirements for advice on how to set out your assignment. These can be found on the NCC Education VLE. Click on Policies and Advice in the left-hand menu and look under the Advice section.
- You must read the NCC Education documents 'What is Academic Misconduct? Guidance for Candidates' and 'Avoiding Plagiarism and Collusion: Guidance for Candidates' and ensure that you acknowledge all the sources that you use in your work. These documents are available on the VLE. Click on Policies and Advice in the left-hand menu and look under the Policies section.
- You **must** complete the '**Statement and Confirmation of Own Work**'. The form is available on *Campus*. Click on Policies and Advice in the left-hand menu and look under the Policies section.
- Please make a note of the recommended word count. You could lose marks if you write 10% more or less than this.
- All electronic media will be checked for plagiarism.

Introduction

This assignment requires you to demonstrate knowledge and skills you have acquired throughout the course of this module by producing a 4,000 (+/- 10%) word, fully referenced, academic report that addresses the tasks given below. In order to complete the assignment, you will need to choose an appropriate organisation to research.

Choosing an appropriate organisation

Step 1: Select an industry sector in which you are interested e.g. automotive (car industry) banking, ecommerce, food retail, fashion retail, IT, entertainment, sport etc.

Step 2: Select an international business in that sector (e.g. Toyota Cars in case of car/automotive industry, eBay in case of e-commerce, Walmart/ASDA in case of retailers, etc). A feature of such an organisation must be that it has a reliance on information systems (i.e. computer software, enterprise applications, decision support systems, customer relationship management systems, etc) and technology (e.g. computers, smart processing devices, etc) as part of their product offering or service provision. You must ensure that the focus is on the operation and processes of the chosen organisation, using information systems and technology.

Step 3: Ensure that the main activities of your organisation include the majority of the following:

- Manufacture and/or creation and maintenance of products and/or services
- Communication with business partners, customers and other stakeholders
- Management of relationships with partners, customers and other stakeholders
- Brand management and marketing in a variety of different markets
- Management and training of staff at all levels
- Management of infrastructure and operational costs
- Management of information systems and technology infrastructure
- Managing ethical, social and legal requirements
- Research and development of new products and/or processes
- Decision making, selling/distribution services, and logistics
- Project management and provision of specialist technical services

It is assumed that the organisation you have chosen will already have a variety of information systems (software and hardware) or will need to update or acquire new systems as the organisation further develops or expands.

Researching Your Organisation

Search on the Internet to choose an appropriate organisation; and use Internet resources to enable you to understand the business mission, the products/services they offer, the operational processes, and the business and technology context in which the organisation operates. You will need this information to address the tasks given below. Do not limit yourself to web-based sources only; you should also use academic, industry and other sources, that you find relevant.

Make sure your chosen organisation has some information relevant to the following aspects. This research is part of the assignment; make notes as you sift through the available information.

- Existing Information systems and hardware infrastructure
- Relationship with partner organisations and customers
- Management of operational processes and inherent issues
- Technologies used for working practices and organisational processes
- Issues and limitations of existing information systems
- Strategies for innovation, improvement and expansion
- Strategies for marketing and customer profiling
- Policies on environmental issues and regulatory compliance.

Example

Consider Tesco Plc. It is a successful retailer with many branches in all cities and towns of the UK, as well as in many other countries. They are linked up with many other suppliers and manufacturers such as farmers (for dairy products, fruits and vegetables), fashion retailers (for clothes and shoes), etc. They have also diversified into banking and insurance sectors, as well as providing e-commerce arm called Tesco Direct.

They have many UK based competitors such as Sainsbury's, however, many new European retailers such as Aldi and Lidl are becoming much more successful in the UK. Tesco Plc have, therefore, the following challenges to address:

- How to compete with new European retailers
- How to diversify so that Tesco remains as attractive as before
- How to cut margins and yet remain profitable
- How to update Information Systems (IS) and make better use of them
- How to use IS to profile and understand customers better
- How to invest in computing infrastructure and yet cut costs
- etc.

Sources of information on Tesco PLC business include:

- www.tesco.com
- www.tescomobile.com
- www.tescobank.com
- www.tesco.com/direct

For this assessment, Do NOT use Tesco Plc as the basis of your assignment. This is just an example. You must choose another appropriate organisation yourself.

Guidance notes

You are to produce a single, 4,000 (+/- 10%) word academic report that covers the tasks laid out below. You must also include a 200-word overview of your organisation and a references section neither of which are included in your word count.

Assignment

Clearly identify and give a 200-word overview of your organisation at the beginning of your assignment. You will not be marked on this overview nor is it included in your word count, but it is a mandatory part of your assignment and will give your examiner the context they need to assess your work.

In the assignment, after the Overview, provide five clearly labelled sections that address the five tasks as detailed below.

Task 1 – 20 Marks

Critically analyse the use of TWO (2) of the main enterprise systems (ES) that your organisation has implemented, by providing the benefits that these information systems offer to your organisation. Discuss how operational efficiency of your organisation might reduce if these ES are removed from the organisation's ES portfolio.

Task 2 – 25 Marks

Acquiring new information systems (IS) and hardware infrastructure can be expensive for businesses. Discuss the strategy that your organisation has formulated that helps to reduce excessive capital expenditure and yet results in increased benefits. If there is no such strategy at your selected organisation, then suggest a sensible strategy for acquiring new IS, that helps to reduce cost of capital expenditure and yet provides certain benefits.

Task 3 – 20 Marks

Organisations are generally keen to be environmentally friendly and follow the cultural and societal norms to keep their clients on board. Discuss in detail, how (with the aid of information systems) your chosen organisation is working towards this goal. In doing so, provide clear evidence or examples taken from the documentation that your organisation has made available.

Task 4 – 25 Marks

Critically evaluate the effect of deployment of new emerging technologies on the following aspects of your chosen organisation. If there is not enough relevant information available then discuss how some of the latest technologies can prove useful in the following aspects of your chosen organisation:

- Working environment and working practices of the staff
- Operational processes of the organisation
- Interaction between your organisation and its customers and/or partner organisations.

Task 5 – 10 Marks

Using the Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D. and Jasper, M. (2001) model, critically review the learning that you have undertaken in order to complete this assignment.

Based upon your learning, your reflection should include a description; an analysis and; an action plan in order to bring about improvements in the future.

Guidance

Consult with your tutor if you are uncertain about any aspect of the assignment.

You should apply theory to answer/address the tasks given above i.e. you must provide contextualisation of information and knowledge. It is not enough to just describe the circumstance and cite links to the websites. Critical analysis through the application of relevant literature is required.

Submission requirements

- A single word-processed document containing all source material, correctly cited and referenced, pertaining to all tasks.
- The word count is 4000 words (+/- 10%), not including the Overview or the appendices or the list of references.
- The document should be properly structured as an academic report (consisting of 6 sections: one for overview and five for the five tasks) with a list of references and appendices (where necessary) at the end. Refer to the Assignment Presentation Requirements for more information (see front cover).
- Produce clear and specific reasoning to justify answers.
- Work that contains viruses, or work that cannot be run directly, will result in a fail grade being awarded for this assessment.

Candidate checklist

Please use the following checklist to ensure that your work is ready for submission.

Have you read the NCC Education documents (What is Academic Misconduct? Guidance for Candidates and Avoiding Plagiarism and Collusion: Guidance for Candidates) and ensured that you have acknowledged all the sources that you have used in your work?

Have you completed the Statement and Confirmation of Own Work form and attached it to your assignment? You must do this.

Have you ensured that your work has not gone over or under the recommended word count by more than 10%?

Have you ensured that your work does not contain viruses and can be run directly?