



Unit:
Strategic Management
Assignment
Winter 2020 – Winter 2023

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 website. Click on 'Policies & Advice' on the main menu and then click on 'Student Support'.
- 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 NCC Education website. Click on 'Policies & Advice' on the main menu and then click on 'Student Support'.
- You **must** complete the *Statement and Confirmation of Own Work*. The form is available on the NCC Education website. Click on 'Policies & Advice' on the main menu and then click on 'Student Support'.
- 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 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 (referred to as YourOrg in these notes)

You can choose any organisation for the purposes of this assignment, including not-for-profit organisations. You must ensure, however, that you are able to obtain sufficient information and data about the organisation in order to be able to undertake sufficiently convincing analysis and evaluation within your assignment. Your starting point will probably be information published by the organisation itself, but investigate other sources, particularly for quoted companies. The organisation you choose must be large enough to have a realistic range of possible alternative strategies to pursue in the future, and therefore very small businesses will probably not be appropriate. Very large businesses may well be too complex for you to undertake meaningful analysis within the word constraints available to you, and therefore selecting a *part* (e.g. a division) of such an organisation may be appropriate. Using the organisation that you work for is often an appropriate selection but ensure that you maintain a sufficiently objective and dispassionate view of that organisation.

This is *not* a data-gathering exercise. You will need to have a minimum amount of data and information about the organisation you choose, but it is the *use* of that data and information on which you will be assessed. You will need to use a range of academic models and frameworks to systematically analyse that data and information in order to produce convincing conclusions.

Assignment notes

You are to produce a single, 4,000 word academic report that covers the questions laid out below. You must also include a 200 word overview of YourOrg and a bibliography/references section, neither of which are included in the word count.

Assignment

Clearly identify and give a 200 word overview of YourOrg 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.

Task 1

40 marks

With reference to appropriate analytical frameworks:

- a) Critically analyse the environment facing YourOrg, and identify the central issues confronting YourOrg resulting from that analysis. (10 marks)
- b) Critically analyse the strategic capability of YourOrg, and identify the central issues facing YourOrg resulting from that analysis. (10 marks)
- c) Critically analyse the organisational culture of YourOrg, and identify the central features of the organisational culture that will influence the selection and implementation of the future strategy of the organisation. (10 marks)
- d) Critically analyse the stakeholders involved with YourOrg, and identify the central issues confronting YourOrg from that analysis. (10 marks)

Task 2

30 marks

Making use of appropriate analytical frameworks, identify and critically evaluate the strategy that you consider YourOrg should pursue in the future.

Task 3

30 marks

Critically evaluate the alternative approaches to managing ONE issue associated with the implementation or management of change arising from the strategy you identified in Task 2.

Guidance

You should apply academic concepts and frameworks from the relevant literature at all stages to help you analyse YourOrg. It is not enough to just describe YourOrg, its strategies, and cite links to a website. You must provide organisational context but ensure it is analysed through the application of relevant literature, models and frameworks.

You will probably find it useful, when completing the assignment, to refer to the following diagrammatic model of Strategic Management:



[Source: Johnson, G., Whittington, R., Scholes, K., Angwin, D & Regnér, P., *Exploring Strategy*, 11th edition, Pearson 2017.]

In summary terms, Task 1 is concerned with top circle (Strategic Position), Task 2 with the left hand circle (Strategic Choices) and Task 3 with the right hand circle (Strategy in Action).

Task 1:

Do not attempt to include a full PEST analysis, a full 5-Forces analysis, stakeholder analysis, value chain analysis, cultural web analysis, etc., etc., in your assignment. Undertake those pieces of analysis yourself, and provide the **key outcomes** from those analyses. Key outcomes are the important conclusions from the various pieces of analysis which will – or should - have an impact on the future strategy of YourOrg. This means not mechanically going through all the various models and frameworks; but focusing on the important outcomes from those models and frameworks in terms of the implications for the future strategy of YourOrg, and explaining and justifying why you believe those to be the most important outcomes.

Task 2:

The overall approach for this Task is similar to Task 1. Select the models, frameworks and concepts that are most useful to the analysis of YourOrg, and emphasise – again – the conclusions and implications from those models, frameworks and concepts. Your aim is to produce a *convincing* identification of the ‘preferred’ strategy for the organisation, building upon your analysis of the various elements of the strategic position of the organisation in Task 1.

You do not need to include coverage of all five elements of the “Strategic Choices” circle in the diagram above, since some may well not be relevant to YourOrg. You should, however, be clear on why you are **not** including discussion on any elements that you omit. Do ensure that you undertake a convincing evaluation of the strategy you are recommending YourOrg should pursue. Do this systematically, using an appropriate framework. You may find it useful to identify one or more *alternative* strategies for YourOrg, so that you can demonstrate that your recommended strategy is, indeed, the most appropriate.

Task 3:

For this Task, you need to ensure that you select just **one** issue associated with the implementation, or the change management, of your recommended strategy for YourOrg. It might be the case, for example, that your recommended strategy involves a merger or takeover, and therefore your selected issue could be the effective integration of that organisation. Whatever issue you select, ensure that it is associated with either the implementation or the change management resulting from the recommended strategy, and then critically evaluate the alternative approaches to managing that issue. You should aim to identify the most appropriate approach, and justify why it is the most appropriate approach. You should make use of appropriate academic concepts, models and frameworks through which to analyse the issue you select and to convincingly identify the most appropriate approach to managing that issue.

Although the assignment constitutes three separate Tasks, please recognise that these tasks are linked. You should **use** the output from your strategic analysis in Task 1 in order to provide a convincing and effective evaluation of your proposed strategy for YourOrg in Task 2. Similarly, in Task 3 you will need to use the detail of the strategy you identify in Task 2 to identify and evaluate an issue associated with the implementation or change management of that strategy.

Submission requirements

- A single word-processed document containing all material pertaining to all tasks.
- The word count is **4000 words**, not including the appendices.
- The document should be properly structured as an essay with a bibliography (online and literature sources) and appendices (where necessary). Refer to the Assignment Presentation Requirements for more information (see front cover).
- Produce clear and specific reasoning to justify answers.
- An electronic copy of the document must be submitted to NCC Education as instructed.
- 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?