



Ofqual QAN	600/2480/X
Quartz ID	Sample
Qualification	Level 5 Diploma in Business

Unit ID	Sample
Assessment	Innovation & Growth
Assessment Type	Global Assignment
Assessment Cycle	<i>SAMPLE</i>

Marking Scheme

Markers are advised that, unless a task specifies that an answer be provided in a particular form, then an answer that is correct (factually or in practical terms) **must** be given the available marks. If there is doubt as to the correctness of an answer, the relevant NCC Education materials should be the first authority.

This marking scheme has been prepared as a **guide only** to markers and there will frequently be many alternative responses which will provide a valid answer.

Each candidate's script must be fully annotated with the marker's comments (where applicable) and the marks allocated for each part of the tasks.

Throughout the marking, please credit any valid alternative point.

Marker's comments:

Moderator's comments:

Mark:

Moderated mark:

Final mark:

Penalties applied for academic malpractice:

Aim

The aim of this assignment is to assess your level of understanding of the key concepts discussed during this unit and to what extent you are able to apply them in a business context.

Instructions:

- Read the scenario carefully.
- Answer all five tasks.
- All responses must be applied to the scenario.

Each task is worth 20 marks.

Scenario

VitLead Labs is a small start-up specialising in plant-based performance supplements for athletes and fitness-focused consumers. The company has experienced a successful six-month launch phase, driven by strong online sales and a loyal customer base who provide feedback through digital channels.

Founded by two entrepreneurs with backgrounds in sport science and ecommerce, VitLead has adopted a lean model: remote working, outsourcing production to a sustainable manufacturer and investing heavily in its digital presence.

With consistent customer demand, the founders now plan to expand their product line and scale operations through retail partnerships, influencer collaborations and a new subscription service.

To support this growth, they are keen to strengthen innovation across their business model, implement sustainable change strategies and develop their small team.

Task 1 - 20 marks

- a) Evaluate why innovation is important for VitLead in achieving long-term competitiveness and sustainability in the health supplements market.
- b) Analyse TWO (2) key internal or external factors likely to drive innovation for VitLead over the next year.

Indicative Content:

- Innovation as a competitive advantage: differentiation, market relevance, customer retention, adaptation
- Sustainability through innovation: new product development, eco-packaging, ethical sourcing
- Internal drivers: team culture, leadership vision, operational flexibility
- External drivers: market competition, consumer trends, technology changes

Strong answers will include:

- Contextualised evaluation linking innovation to VitLead's strategic goals
- Discussion of internal and external innovation drivers with clear relevance to VitLead's position
- Specific examples such as responding to trends in sustainability or customer feedback

0-5 marks	6-7 marks	8-11 marks	12-13 marks	14-20 marks
<i>Minimal explanation of how innovation relates to VitLead's sustainability or competitive goals.</i>	<i>Basic understanding of innovation; one or two internal/external drivers named.</i>	<i>Adequate evaluation with relevant examples that are accurate.</i>	<i>Good understanding with relevant scenario-based insights.</i>	<i>Comprehensive analysis of innovation and drivers.</i>
<i>No relevant factors identified</i>	<i>Basic link to scenario but this is not consistent.</i>	<i>Includes some analysis of how drivers impact VitLead's innovation strategy.</i>	<i>Innovation linked clearly to competitive advantage.</i>	<i>Strong, specific examples fully contextualised to VitLead's goals and market.</i>
Marker's Comments/Justifications:				

Task 2 - 20 marks

- a) Recommend ONE (1) suitable growth strategy that VitLead could use to scale operations nationally. Justify your recommendation.
- b) Critically assess TWO (2) potential operational implications of your recommended strategy.

Indicative Content:

- Growth strategies: market penetration, product development, channel expansion, partnerships
- Operational implications: staffing needs, logistics, quality control, supplier coordination, IT infrastructure

Strong answers will include:

- A clearly justified growth strategy suited to VitLead's scale and market
- Critical analysis of practical operational implications relevant to scenario
- Logical reasoning that reflects the company's remote model and scaling aims

0-5 marks	6-7 marks	8-11 marks	12-13 marks	14-20 marks
<i>Recommendation vague, unjustified or irrelevant.</i>	<i>A growth strategy is identified but only partially justified.</i>	<i>Adequate recommendation with sound justification.</i>	<i>Well-justified strategy, with clear identification and assessment of realistic operational implications</i>	<i>Detailed and strategic recommendation with strong justification.</i>
<i>Lacks operational insight.</i>	<i>Operational implications are general or oversimplified.</i>	<i>Basic but relevant operational challenges discussed.</i>	<i>Good links made to scenario.</i>	<i>Insightful analysis of operational implications linked to VitLead's scaling context.</i>
Marker's Comments/Justifications:				

Task 3 - 20 marks

- Identify ONE (1) opportunity for improvement within VitLead's current business model and explain how it could improve performance or sustainability.
- Evaluate ONE (1) change management model VitLead could use to successfully implement this improvement.

Indicative Content:

- Improvement areas: customer service process, product packaging, delivery timelines, order system
- Models: Lewin's change model, Kotter's 8 steps, ADKAR, McKinsey 7-S

Strong answers will include:

- Practical, relevant improvement idea clearly linked to VitLead's operations
- Well-explained application of a change model suited to the change
- Demonstrates understanding of change processes

0-5 marks	6-7 marks	8-11 marks	12-13 marks	14-20 marks
<i>Weak or unrealistic improvement identified.</i>	<i>Improvement identified but not clearly linked to VitLead.</i>	<i>Clear and feasible improvement proposed.</i>	<i>Relevant and insightful improvement proposal.</i>	<i>Excellent understanding of improvement and robust application of a suitable change model</i>
<i>Poor or no application of a change model.</i>	<i>Change model discussed at surface level only.</i>	<i>Adequate application of a relevant model with some scenario linkage.</i>	<i>Clear and logical application of model within VitLead's structure.</i>	<i>Comprehensive scenario integration throughout.</i>
Marker's Comments/Justifications:				

Task 4 - 20 marks

VitLead is introducing a subscription-based product model which will require changes to customer communication, fulfilment processes and IT systems.

- a) Outline a simple 3-step plan the founders could follow to implement this change effectively.
- b) Explain ONE (1) way they could support staff and freelancers through this transition.

Indicative Content:

- Steps: communicate change, pilot test, monitor and refine
- Support: training, clear instructions, regular updates, feedback channels

Strong answers will include:

- Realistic and well-sequenced plan tailored to scenario
- Practical staff support ideas, relevant to remote or freelance working

0-5 marks	6-7 marks	8-11 marks	12-13 marks	14-20 marks
<i>Plan lacks structure, feasibility or logic.</i>	<i>Simple plan outlined adequately but may lack coherence.</i>	<i>Structured 3-step plan with basic relevance to VitLead's change needs.</i>	<i>Clear and practical implementation plan that is justified.</i>	<i>Highly effective and feasible change plan.</i>
<i>Support strategy missing or irrelevant.</i>	<i>Limited or generic support method identified.</i>	<i>Reasonable support strategy described which may be underdeveloped.</i>	<i>Relevant support approach tailored to remote working.</i>	<i>Staff support strategy is thoughtful and well adapted to VitLead's model.</i>
Marker's Comments/Justifications:				

Task 5 - 20 marks

- a) Analyse TWO (2) current or future development needs that VitLead’s remote team may have as the company scales.
- b) Evaluate how the founders could encourage ongoing professional development for their team, considering the remote working environment.

Indicative Content:

- Development needs: digital skills, customer service training, cross-functional knowledge, time management
- CPD methods: peer learning, virtual workshops, performance reviews, coaching, funding learning platforms

Strong answers will include:

- Context-specific development needs with clear relevance to scale-up plans
- Practical CPD solutions tailored to a remote team structure

0-5 marks	6-7 marks	8-11 marks	12-13 marks	14-20 marks
<i>Weak or generic development needs.</i>	<i>Some basic needs identified with gaps</i>	<i>Adequate identification of development needs.</i>	<i>Good understanding of development challenges and clear analysis of each.</i>	<i>Comprehensive and insightful identification and analysis of team development needs.</i>
<i>CPD strategy missing or irrelevant to remote context.</i>	<i>CPD activities general and not tailored to VitLead.</i>	<i>CPD ideas somewhat suitable for remote team, but may be underdeveloped.</i>	<i>Relevant CPD strategies aligned well with scale-up scenario.</i>	<i>Well-integrated, realistic CPD solutions suitable for remote operations.</i>
Marker’s Comments/Justifications:				

Note to Markers

Please take appropriate action for any malpractice (plagiarism, collusion, referencing issues etc.) discovered as per the *AQ_28-a01_Academic Misconduct Policy* document. Please also complete and submit the *Malpractice Declaration Form*.

Learning Outcomes matrix

Question	Learning Outcomes / Assessment Criteria assessed	Marker can differentiate between varying levels of achievement
1	1.1, 1,2	Yes
2	2.2, 2.3	Yes
3	3.1, 3.2	Yes
4	4.2, 4.3	Yes
5	5.1, 5.3, 5.4	Yes

Grade descriptors

Learning Outcome	Pass	Merit	Distinction
LO1: Evaluate principles and drivers of innovation	Demonstrates an adequate understanding of the value of innovation and identifies basic internal and external factors.	Demonstrates a robust understanding with relevant application to VitLead Labs, including realistic analysis of key innovation drivers.	Demonstrates a comprehensive and insightful evaluation of innovation's role in competitiveness and sustainability, with clearly contextualised examples.
LO2: Analyse strategies for growth and scalability	Identifies a basic growth strategy with limited insight into operational implications.	Provides a clear recommendation with reasoned operational analysis relevant to scale-up.	Demonstrates a detailed understanding of growth strategies and their operational effects, showing strategic alignment to VitLead's business context.
LO3: Evaluate approaches to identifying, planning and managing change	Suggests a basic improvement and names a change model with limited application.	Analyses improvement potential and applies a relevant change model to the scenario.	Provides a critical and well-supported evaluation of an improvement opportunity, applying a suitable model with depth and context relevance.
LO4: Manage continuous improvement and lead organisational change	Outlines a basic change plan and limited staff support mechanism.	Provides a structured plan with relevant, practical staff support measures.	Presents a well-constructed and context-specific change implementation plan with robust staff support tailored to remote working and business change.
LO5: Examine and facilitate continuous improvement	Identifies general development needs and suggests basic CPD activities.	Analyses development needs and proposes CPD suited to remote working.	Offers an in-depth evaluation of team development needs and integrates strategic, realistic CPD solutions aligned with VitLead's growth plans.