

<b>Module Code:</b>	NX0474		
<b>Module Title:</b>	Strategic Management for Competitive Advantage		
<b>Distributed on:</b>	Week 5	<b>Hand in Date:</b>	To be advised locally.

Further information about general assessment criteria, ARTA regulations, referencing and plagiarism can be found on the module’s site on the e-Learning Portal. Students are advised to read and follow this information.

This assessment includes group work and/or peer assessment or evaluation. It is important that students familiarise themselves with protocols for these activities and follow these during the course of the assessment. The document can be found on the module’s site on the e-Learning Portal.

### Introduction

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You will participate in a business simulation exercise (“Business Simulation”) based on the European Car Industry. The purpose of the exercise is to give you the opportunity to use the learning from the four functional areas (marketing, finance, human resources and operations management) to simulate the setting up and running of a business which is competing for market share.

In Week 5, you will attend an introductory lecture which will explain the objectives of the simulation and the process for making decisions. In the Business Simulation seminars, you will be divided into teams of 5-6 students. Each team has to set up a car manufacturing company, design two cars and sell these to the market. The teams within each seminar group will compete with one another for market share. **The objective for each team is to maximise the shareholder value of their company at the end of four decision rounds.**

Information on the market together with cost data will be posted on Blackboard in Week 5. Each team should read this information carefully and use it to establish a business strategy. On 20 and 27 Nov the teams will make a set of decisions each week to be submitted online. The results, in the form of computer-generated reports, will be available online later in the week.

***In order to complete the assessment detailed below, it is essential that each student keeps a detailed record of the team meetings, the decisions made, the rationale for these decisions and their own role as a member of the team.***

**Assignment A (20% of module mark)**

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Each team will submit a **group** report on the Round 1 decisions with the following sections:

1. Peer assessment form with the names and signatures of all team members (see final page of this brief). **[10%]**
  
2. The team's business plan for Round 1 (**word limit 1,500 words**) as follows: **[60%]**
  - a. Mission statement – what is the purpose of your company?
  - b. Business Objectives – measurable targets for the end of Round 4 (e.g. market share)
  - c. Chosen market segments with brief descriptions of target customers and your marketing strategy
  - d. Your competitive strategy – why will people buy your cars rather than those from other companies?
  - e. The rationale underlying the choices of designs, options and R&D
  - f. The rationale for the prices charged for each car
  - g. The rationale for production/HRM decisions such as investment in automation
  
3. An appendix containing minutes of the team meetings that took place up to the submission of the Round 1 Decision. These should show attendance, topics discussed, an outline of the team discussion of each topic, the decisions made (and how they were made) and actions agreed. As a guide, each meeting is likely to require at least one full A4 page. **[30%]**

**Assignment B (60% of module mark)**

Each student will submit an **individual** report (**word limit 5,000 words**). This report will consist of the following sections laid out EXACTLY as follows:

1. Front page, with your name, ID, Seminar Group number, Team number and word count.
2. Contents (with page numbers)
3. Introduction: A brief (**maximum 50 words**) statement of the business objectives (from Assignment A) and a brief (**maximum 100 words**) summary of the company performance during the game and how far you succeeded in meeting the business objectives; a table showing total sales, total unsold stock, shareholder funds, closing bank balance and outstanding loan at the end of each of the four rounds. **These figures should be in £m, to the nearest £1 million.**
4. Company Performance: A **clear** analysis and **explanation (2000 words)** of what happened during the game supported by graphs/tables of key financial and non-financial data for the company. **[45%]**

Guidance: It is important to show that you **now** fully understand what happened during the game – even if you didn't understand **during** the game. To so do, you **MUST** start with the Round 1 forecast of key performance measures (KPMs), compare the Round 1 results with the forecast, explain the differences **in detail**, and the key issues that arose. Go on to explain the rationale for the Round 2 decisions, what these were, then present the Round 2 forecast. Follow this approach for all four rounds. You should then comment on the **trends** in KPMs over the game. The KPMs should include **as a minimum** production, sales, gross margin, unsold stock, post-tax profit, net cash position and market share. It is suggested that you discuss suitable KPMs with the tutors for each of the four functional areas. Effective comparisons with competitors (where possible) will earn additional marks.

5. Learning: A **critical reflection (2000 words)** on how the team used the financial, marketing, operations and human resources management material taught during the semester to make responsible business decisions affecting at least one stakeholder group internal to the organisation and at least one stakeholder group external to the organisation. **[45%]**

Guidance: For each of the **decisions**, explain how you made the decisions during the game. Looking back, discuss how you could have made better decisions by making better use of the material taught during the semester, particularly how the functions integrate and how the decisions act in the best interest of the individuals, groups or organisations affected.

**Include citations within the text to refer to relevant readings covered in class.**

6. Conclusion: An evaluation (**150 words**) of the extent to which your organisation met the key strategic objectives set out in part 3 above, with an indication for the reasons these objectives were fully met, partially met or not met at all.
7. Team Performance: A **critical evaluation (700 words)** of the performance of the **team** and a **personal reflection** on your role in the team **[10%]**.

Guidance: Discuss, for example, the organisation of the team, the effectiveness of the decision-making process, and the roles played by individuals *including leadership*. How effective was your contribution to the team? What did you learn from the game about effective teamwork and decision making? Reflect on your experience in working in a culturally diverse team. What would you do differently if you played the game again? It is important to go beyond simply “telling a story” and to make use of relevant material the Leadership and Management Development module. Make use of the meeting logs that you kept during the game. Do not talk about the specific areas of contribution, e.g. how you made financial or marketing decisions, but how you developed as a team member and how you would approach a similar exercise differently should such an opportunity arise.

8. References: Remember that all sources cited in the assignment should appear in the reference list.
  
9. Appendices (not more than 6 pages). These should be used for supporting data and can include tables and graphs. However, Section 4 should include graphs of key data to support the explanation of performance. **Key graphs and tables should appear in the body of your work.**

#### Assignment C (20% of module mark)

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Provide an **individual (1500 words)** critical evaluation of the organization sustainability and CSR, alongside the financial performance, of a major international corporation of your choice.

Guidance: Refer to the lectures provided in the Strategy component of the module where you covered responsible decision making, considering areas such as the concept of the triple bottom line, expectation of the chosen organisation in terms of CSR and how these decisions are underpinned in terms of an organizational sustainability agenda. You should also consider how the company executes its Corporate Governance. In terms of financial performance, consider the key financial statements provided by the organisations and consider these in absolute terms alongside the use of a manageable number of financial ratios.

References: Remember that all sources cited in the assignment should appear in the reference list.

**When submitting Assignments B and C, submit as two separate pieces of work.**

**Marks will be deducted for reports that do not conform to the structure above and which fall below the presentation and writing standards expected for a professional report.**

### Submission of Assessment:

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Both assignments should conform to the following specification:

- Word-processed in Arial 11pt, 1½ spacing
- Each section should start on a new page
- Pages should be numbered
- Assignments B and C should be submitted as two separate documents.

All three assignments must be submitted online via the Turn-it-in submission link found in the 'Assessment' tab on the left hand menu of the module's dedicated blackboard site. You should include the Seminar Group number and Team number on the form.

### Word limits and penalties for assignments

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If the assignment is within +10% of the stated word limit no penalty will apply.

The word count is to be declared on the front page of your assignment. The word count does not include:

- Title and Contents page
- Reference list
- Appendices
- Appropriate tables, figures and illustrations
- Glossary
- Bibliography
- Quotes from interviews and focus groups.

Please note, in text citations [e.g. (Smith, 2011)] and direct secondary quotations [e.g. "*dib-dab nonsense analysis*" (Smith, 2011 p.123)] are INCLUDED in the word count.

If this word count is falsified, students are reminded that under ARNA page 30 Section 3.4 this will be regarded as academic misconduct.

If the word limit of the full assignment exceeds the +10% limit, 10% of the mark provisionally awarded to the assignment will be deducted. For example: if the assignment is worth 70 marks but is above the word limit by more than 10%, a penalty of 7 marks will be imposed, giving a final mark of 63.

**Mapping to Programme Goals and Objectives:**

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**This assessment will contribute directly to the following Postgraduate programme goals and objectives.**

**Goal One: To develop the skills necessary for employment and career progression**

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|--|---|
|  | 1. Demonstrate awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses and the ability to engage in continuing self-development. |
|  | 2. Demonstrate the development of inter-personal and intra-personal skills.   |
|  | 3. Demonstrate competence in contemporary analytical and ICT applications.  |

**Goal Two: Be culturally and ethically aware**

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|---|---|
| x | 1. Demonstrate their ability to work in culturally diverse groups and teams and make appropriate and personal contribution to team effectiveness. |
|   | 2. Reflect on their own ethical values.   |
| x | 3. Understand the wider impact of individual or organisational decision making on social and environmental contexts.                              |

**Goal Three: Have developed leadership and management capability**

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|  | 1. Analyse and communicate complex issues effectively.                         |
|  | 2. Demonstrate decision making, problem solving and project management skills. |

**Goal Four: Have developed and applied knowledge of international business and management theory**

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|---|--|
| x | 1. Acquire, interpret and apply knowledge of international business, management and organisational functions.                                  |
|   | 2. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of innovative and contemporary research on the business and management community.                |
|   | 3. Acquire, interpret and apply specialist functional knowledge in relation to their programme of study ( <i>specialist programmes only</i> ). |

**Goal Five: Have developed a range of research skills and project capabilities**

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|--|---|
|  | 1. Plan and complete a major piece of research or project on a contemporary business, financial, management or leadership topic.                          |
|  | 2. Demonstrate skills of analysis and synthesis in the application of research methods to the exploration of contemporary business and management issues. |



Criteria	Scales						
	0-39% Standard Not Met 1	40-49% Standard Not Met 2	50-59% Meets Standard 2	60-69% Meets Standard 2	70-79% Exceeds Standard 1	80-89% Exceeds Standard 2	90-100% Exceeds Standard 3
Section 2 Rationales	Completely insufficient or missing rationales listed a to g in the group assessment brief  [0 - 23]	Insufficient rationales for most areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief  [24 - 29]	Adequate rationales for most areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief  [30 - 35]	Good rationales for some areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief  [36 - 41]	Very good rationales for most → all areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief  [42 - 47]	Excellent rationales for all areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief  [48 - 53]	Outstanding rationales for all areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief  [54 - 60]
Section 4 Meeting logs	The meeting notes do not explicitly present many of the decision areas and are completely insufficient.  [0 – 11 ½ ]	The meeting logs are insufficient. Vague, a significant proportion of the decision areas not documented.  [12 – 14 ½ ]	Meeting logs are adequate. Though there is missing data and some of the decision areas are not documented.  [15 – 17 ½ ]	Good, a majority of the listed areas presented in the meeting notes  [18 – 20 ½ ]	Meeting logs are very good. Mostly complete across the listed areas  [21 - 23½]	Complete, excellent detail across the listed areas of decision making  [24 – 26 ½ ]	Complete and outstanding detail covering all of the areas of decision making in the assessment brief a to g  [27 - 30]
Overall Comments	The business plan is completely insufficient. The student failed in addressing the rationales requested (a-g). The meeting notes are also completely insufficient, failing to explicitly acknowledge many of the decision areas.  [0 – 35]	The standard of presentation and writing is likely to be less than would be expected for a professional piece of work. The business plan presents insufficient rationales for most areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief. The meeting log is also insufficient, with a significant proportion of the decision areas being vague or not documented.  [36 - 44]	The business plan is adequate, but there are weaknesses in presentation and writing. Adequate rationales for most areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief. Meeting logs are adequate. However, there are missing data and a number of the decision areas not documented.  [45 - 53]	The quality of presentation is good and fairly easy to follow. Good rationales for some areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief. Good quality meeting logs, with a majority of the listed areas presented in the meeting notes.  [54 - 62]	The business plan is very good and easy to read. Reasonable rationales for most → all areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief. The meeting logs are also of a very good standard, mostly complete across the listed areas  [63 - 71]	An excellent business plan which is easy to read and well-laid out. Excellent rationales for all areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief. Meeting logs are complete, with great detail across the listed areas of decision making  [72 - 80]	An outstanding business plan which is easy to read and is presented to the highest standard. Outstanding rationales for all areas listed a to g in the group assessment brief. Complete and superb detail covering all of the areas of decision making in the assessment brief a to g  [81 - 90]



Criteria	Scales						
	0-39% Standard Not Met 1	40-49% Standard Not Met 2	50-59% Meets Standard 2	60-69% Meets Standard 2	70-79% Exceeds Standard 1	80-89% Exceeds Standard 2	90-100% Exceeds Standard 3
<p><b>Goal 4 Objective 1</b></p> <p>Acquire, interpret and apply knowledge of international business, management and organisational functions</p>	<p>Very poor choice of measures and goes little beyond tables/graphs so completely insufficient in terms of analysis. In terms of understanding, completely insufficient evidence is shown.</p> <p>[0 – 17 ½ ]</p>	<p>Tells a story but does not convey real understanding, it is insufficient in its lack of linkage between measures and/or poor choice of measures. Does not make use of game data in a sufficient way.</p> <p>[18 – 22]</p>	<p>Adequate explanation which shows reasonable understanding of a basic range of performance measures, not very well linked, at best adequate.</p> <p>[22 ½ – 26 ½ ]</p>	<p>Good explanation of performance – student clearly understands what happened but misses some key measures and/or links. Good use of data.</p> <p>[27- 31]</p>	<p>Very good discussion with sound analysis which covers most areas and shows clearly the links between decisions, forecasts and outcomes. Makes very good use of data on competition.</p> <p>[31 ½ – 35 ½ ]</p>	<p>Excellent discussion of all key measures which shows sound understanding of strategy, decisions, forecasts and outcomes using a wide range of data.</p> <p>[36 – 40]</p>	<p>Outstanding discussion of all key measures which shows sound understanding of strategy, decisions, forecasts and outcomes using an extensive range of data.</p> <p>[40 ½ – 45]</p>
<p><b>Goal 2 Objective 3</b></p> <p>Understand the wider impact of individual or organisational decision making on social and environmental contexts</p>	<p>Almost no links between learning and the simulation, demonstrating completely insufficient learning. No evidence the student attended any classes or understands how decisions are made responsibly hence completely insufficient understanding of its role or importance.</p> <p>[0 – 17 ½ ]</p>	<p>Links not properly made and/or a very limited range of topics mentioned, therefore insufficient understanding demonstrated. Little evidence that the student has made any use of the learning and is insufficient in demonstrating this use of learning.</p> <p>[18 – 22]</p>	<p>Student is able to make adequate links between some elements of the decisions and the learning but the adequate evaluation tends to be strengthened.</p> <p>[22 ½ – 26 ½ ]</p>	<p>Good evaluation although limited in range. Application of learning is good but interdependence of functions not recognised, the nature of responsibility in decision making needs to be strengthened.</p> <p>[27 – 31]</p>	<p>Very good critical evaluation of the decision based on learning from rest of module. Some appreciation of functional interdependence.</p> <p>[31 ½ – 35 ½ ]</p>	<p>Excellent critical evaluation of the decisions demonstrating thorough application of learning from the rest of the module and an understanding of responsible decision making. Clear appreciation of the interdependence of functions.</p> <p>[36 – 40]</p>	<p>Outstanding critical evaluation of the decisions demonstrating significant application of learning from the rest of the module and an extending understanding of responsible decision making. Clear and significantly articulated appreciation of the interdependence of functions.</p> <p>[40 ½ – 45]</p>

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<p><b>Goal 2 Objective 1</b></p> <p>Demonstrate their ability to work in culturally diverse groups and teams and make appropriate and personal contribution to team effectiveness</p>	<p>Performance described but far too brief and completely insufficient to be useful.</p> <p>[0 – 5]</p>	<p>The performance is described but contains insufficient evaluation and the accompanying analysis of self and team is insufficient.</p> <p>[6-7]</p>	<p>There is an adequate evaluation although tends to lack analytical rigour. There is adequate detail to understand how team and performance functioned.</p> <p>[8]</p>	<p>The evaluation is good but requires greater critical thinking. There is adequate application of the academic material presented in module HR9737.</p> <p>[9]</p>	<p>There is a very good evaluation of both team and self (student) but use of HR9737 material has the potential to be either extensive or rigorous</p> <p>[10-11]</p>	<p>There is an excellent critical evaluation of the team and the role of you as the individual within this, making extensive use of material from and module Leadership and Management Development.</p> <p>[12]</p>	<p>There is an outstanding critical evaluation of the team and the role of you as the individual within this, making extensive and rigorous use of material from module Leadership and Management Development.</p> <p>[13-15]</p>
<p><b>Performance of self and team</b></p>	<p>Performance described but far too brief and completely insufficient to be useful.</p> <p>[0 – 3]</p>	<p>The performance is described but contains insufficient evaluation and the accompanying analysis of self and team is insufficient.</p> <p>[4]</p>	<p>There is an adequate evaluation although tends to lack analytical rigour. There is adequate detail to understand how team and performance functioned.</p> <p>[5]</p>	<p>The evaluation is good but requires greater critical thinking. There is adequate application of the academic material presented in module DGMC I.</p> <p>[6]</p>	<p>There is a very good evaluation of both team and self (student) but use of DGMC I material has the potential to be either extensive or rigorous</p> <p>[7]</p>	<p>There is an excellent critical evaluation of the team and the role of you as the individual within this, making extensive use of material from Leadership and Management Development module.</p> <p>[8]</p>	<p>There is an outstanding critical evaluation of the team and the role of you as the individual within this, making extensive and rigorous use of material from Leadership and Management Development module.</p> <p>[9-10]</p>
<p><b>Overall Comments</b></p>	<p>The report has serious weaknesses. The student is completely insufficient in demonstrating that he/she understands what happened in the simulation and has been unable to use the learning from Semester 1 in an effective way. This covers all aspects of the assessment, the simulation and the team and individual inputs.</p>	<p>Although reasonable understanding is shown, the report fails in at least one major aspect to convey an appreciation of the link between strategy, decision-making and performance. The standard of presentation and writing is likely to be less than would be expected for a professional piece of</p>	<p>The report is adequate, but there are likely to be weaknesses in presentation and writing. An adequate understanding of what happened in the simulation is evident, but the linking together of strategy, decision-making and performance is limited. The adequate evaluation of the team</p>	<p>The quality of presentation is good and fairly easy to follow. The student has been selective in choosing key data to discuss. The student shows good understanding of how decisions in each functional area have affected performance, although there is probably more scope</p>	<p>The report is very good and easy to read. All the key points are there with a good level of discussion. There is clear critical thinking demonstrating awareness of how decisions affected performance and how the organisation met its objectives. Team and self contributions is typically very good in its evaluation, making</p>	<p>An excellent report which is easy to read and well-laid out. The student demonstrates mastery of the module material and appreciates the links with performance and the decision-making process. The level of critical thinking is excellent. This also</p>	<p>An outstanding report which is easy to read and is presented to the highest standard. The student demonstrates mastery of the module material and demonstrates a full understanding of the links with performance and the decision-making process. The level of critical thinking is outstanding. This also extends to the</p>

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		work. The decision making evaluation and the assessment of self and team is also likely to be at best descriptive.	and the role of you as an individual within this team may likely have the same gaps in evaluation.	for being evaluative, this extending to the assessment of the team and your role within this.	use of external material from the programme.	extends to the assessment of the individual and the team.	assessment of the individual and the team.
	[0 – 39]	[40 – 49]	[50 – 59]	[60 – 69]	[70 – 79]	[80 – 89]	[90 – 100]

<b>Postgraduate Goals and Objectives</b>	<u>Not Achieved</u>	<u>Achieved</u>	<u>Exceeded</u>
<b>Goal 2 Objective 1</b> Demonstrate their ability to work in culturally diverse groups and teams and make appropriate and personal contribution to team effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Goal 2 Objective 3</b> Understand the wider impact of individual or organisational decision making on social and environmental contexts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Goal 4 Objective 1</b> Acquire, interpret and apply knowledge of international business, management and organisational functions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**Assignment C Feedback** Name ..... **Programme and Campus:** .....

Criteria	Scales						
	0-39% Standard Not Met 1	40-49% Standard Not Met 2	50-59% Meets Standard 2	60-69% Meets Standard 2	70-79% Exceeds Standard 1	80-89% Exceeds Standard 2	90-100% Exceeds Standard 3
<b>Overall Comments</b>	A completely insufficient answer. A number of clear gaps in the response across the listed subject areas, most of the areas are not covered, some or more of the areas are covered in completely insufficient detail at the descriptive level and the evidence of wider reading is non-existent to limited.	Insufficient answer. There are a number of clear gaps in the response across the listed subject areas. Most of the areas are not covered, some or more of the areas are covered in insufficient detail at the descriptive level and the evidence of wider reading is non-existent to limited.	This task is of pass standard. Most areas covered adequately, there is some evaluation, but there is a necessity to be more critical rather than descriptive.	Good answer. Each of the areas is covered in a critical and evaluative way. However, there is potential to consider stakeholders in a broader sense than that presented and the supporting literature could be from a wider base.	A very good answer, covers each of the required areas, is critical and evaluative and demonstrates a level of wider reading beyond the core literature of the module and the assessment considers the perspective of multiple stakeholders.	An excellent answer covering each of the required areas, is critical and evaluative and demonstrates a level of wider reading beyond the core literature of the module and the assessment considers the perspective of multiple stakeholders.	An outstanding answer covering each of the required areas, is critical and evaluative and demonstrates a level of wider reading beyond the core literature of the module and the assessment considers the perspective of multiple stakeholders.
	[0 – 39]	[40 - 49]	[50 – 59]	[60 - 69]	[70 - 79]	[80 - 89]	[90 - 100]

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## NX0474 – Strategic Management for Sustainable Competitive Advantage

### Business Simulation Exercise

### Cover Page for Assignment A

Seminar Group Number .....

Team Number and Name .....

A mark out of 10 should be awarded to each team member indicating his/her contribution to the Round 1 decision and this assignment. The marks indicated below should be agreed by all team members. In the event of disagreement, please inform the module tutor.

- 9-10 Full attendance and participation in team discussions
- 7-8 A small number of meetings missed, generally good participation in discussions
- 5-6 Several meetings missed, limited participation in team discussions
- 3-4 Most meetings missed, hardly any participation in discussions
- 0-2 Almost no meetings attended, almost no involvement with the team at all

We, the members of the above team, agree that marks below reflect the contributions made by each of us to the Round 1 decisions and Assignment A.

Name	ID	Mark (out of 10)	Signature

**\*\*\*\*\*Reminder: Non-attendance at seminars and team meetings will be penalised!\*\*\*\*\***

