**Leading, Managing & Developing People (7HR508)**



**Assessment Brief**

Module Leader: Dr Naznin Tabassum

Module Tutor: Cathy Hastie, David Fleetwood-Walker

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# **Key Dates and Details**

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| --- | --- |
| **Assessment Type:** | Coursework |
| **Assessment weighting:** | 100% |
| **Word Count** | 3500 |
| **Learning Outcomes:** | 1-4 |
| **Submission Method:** | Turnitin |
| **Submission Date:** | 12:00 UK time, 19/01/2023 |
| **Provisional Feedback Release Date:** | 17:00 UK time, 10/02/2023 |

# **Description of the assessment**

**Please read the case study below and address all four elements of the task detailed at the end. Please Note: In your responses, you are allowed to improvise or add to the case study details provided. However, the case study should not be changed or compromised in any way. You should draw on appropriate academic sources and relevant practical examples to support your work.**

**Case Study: Stoneford Veterinary Practice**

Chipping Stoneford Vets (CSV) is an independent, mixed veterinary practice, based at five locations in and around a large town and its county in the English midlands. It is comprised of five long-established practices, which used to be run as separate, competing surgeries, but which have, over recent years, joined together to form a single organisation, allowing some sharing of facilities, administrative systems and expertise.

CSV is a thriving business. It is successful financially and would like to diversify its activities and expand further in the future. The management team consists of five men, who are practising vets and also act as Directors. While each takes day-to-day responsibility for the management of one of the surgeries, they also carry further, specific practice-wide responsibilities. Paul Cheviot is the Managing Director, Mark Chartreux focuses on marketing issues, David Chinchilla looks after the finances, James Shepherd is responsible for the development of the team’s small animal practice, while Frank Malopolski leads the team that cares for farm animals. The five Directors are, currently, supported by a team of nineteen additional veterinary surgeons, who have a variety of specialisms, thirty-five qualified veterinary nurses, nine receptionists, four kennel assistants, a financial controller, a Tuberculosis (TB) tester and two administrators. Over half of the team work on a part-time basis. Women make up over 85% of the staff who are employed. The average annual salary for full-time vets at CSV is £45,000. For the practice’s nursing team it is £25,000.

In the last two years, CSV, like most veterinary practices, has encountered very significant operational difficulties. The COVID-19 pandemic saw a fifty percent increase in the number of households purchasing new pets - mostly cats and dogs - leading to major increases in demand for health checks, inoculations, microchipping and neutering operations, as well as general medical care. New post-Brexit rules on the export of live animals and animal products to the European Union have led to a fifty-fold increase in inspection and certification work in the country’s farms and abattoirs. This is time-consuming, due to the amount of paperwork vets have to complete before signing off the export forms.

Not only have the number of appointments in CSV’s surgeries increased very significantly, but there has also been a commensurate increase in off-site visits, including, emergency call-outs overnight and at weekends.

Staff at CSV have struggled to cope. Absence due to stress has been a major problem, as have the number of people being required to self-isolate, having taken positive COVID-19 tests or having had contact with infected people. This has increased the burdens on other team members hugely, particularly, the Directors, who are all now exhausted, due to working long hours and taking insufficient holidays.

At times, the practices have had to refuse to take on new patients and have been unable to see animals that do not require emergency treatment for several days. Routine surgical procedures have been postponed, and customers have frequently been asked to travel to different practices, as it has been unable to open all five of them every day. COVID-related protocols have also required pet-owners to leave their animals at the surgery door, rather than to accompany them inside consulting rooms. These procedures, along with rising prices for veterinary care and prescription medicines, have led to some anger, which has, sometimes, resulted in the use of abusive language towards staff. Many pet owners have been distressed and have required emotional support during the period of pandemic restrictions.

Staff retention has also been a major problem. There are, currently, seven vacancies for qualified vets and ten for veterinary nurses which CSV is struggling to fill. Vetinary surgeons are on the government’s shortage occupation list, meaning that overseas recruitment is perfectly possible. But the Royal College of Vetinary Surgeons (RCVS) will only register vets to practice in the UK if they have a high standard of English, and the pandemic has made it impossible for language tests to be carried out at approved centres in the normal way. It has also made it very difficult for the directors to travel overseas to recruit new people.

The time available for training and continuing professional development has been restricted by the increased workload, while it has been necessary to suspend the regular all-staff monthly meetings that used to be held to discuss improving services and future strategic plans. Morale is low and several long-standing members of the team are known to be actively looking for alternative employment.

**You are appointed to advise the five directors of Chipping Stoneford Vets about action they can take in the field of human resource management that will alleviate the pressures they are working under. They are asking for advice both in respect of short-term and longer-term plans.  
What advice would you give in the following areas:**

* Absence management and flexible working
* Employee recruitment and retention
* Employee engagement
* Line management

**You are asked to provide a comprehensive report detailing courses of action which will be affordable in a very competitive and resource-constrained industry and maintain the efficiency with which the operation currently runs. You are also asked to draw on your understanding of relevant theory and published research findings when justifying your recommendations.**

**Each of the four areas are equally weighted.**

This assignment is designed to assess the following learning outcomes:

1. Critically evaluate contemporary research and debates on the relationship between people management/development and leadership practices in a dynamic and organisational context
2. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the role of management and practices and the implications for organisational performance.
3. Critically analyse the effective management and leadership of change in organisations from a people management perspective.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the necessary capabilities, professional skills and knowledge required to manage people.

# **Assessment Content**

Your report should be no more than 3,500 words maximum (excluding References and Appendices), and structured according to the following format:

* **Title page** – detailing Module number and name, title of coursework, your SID, module leader’s name, date of submission (not included in word count). **NOTE:** **PLEASE** **DO NOT** include your own name to enable anonymous marking.
* **Content’s page** – indicating the main section headings and page numbers (not included in word count).
* **Introduction** – Explain the aim of the report (refer to assignment brief and task). Explain how you will attempt to address the task.
* **Main Body** – This is where you meet the main requirements of the task. Take each of the four points in turn and ensure you are clear about the key concepts you are discussing. Draw on the case study and use your reading, academic references and organisational examples to support your work.
* **Conclusions and recommendations** – Draw together the key points from the main body of your report. Present your overall conclusion to the task. ***There should be no new information provided in this section***but you can (and should) refer back to appropriate references. Make your final recommendations are based upon your already established arguments and literature. (If you wish, you can use tables or bullet points to communicate details).
* **Reference section** – Using Harvard Referencing convention(not in word count).
* **Appendices** – **ONLY** include if they add specific value and are integral to your work. They should be kept to a minimum. If you are using documents or secondary sources these should not be attached as appendices and should be listed in your Reference section. Appendices are **NOT** an opportunity to extend your word count by relocating text into the appendices and referring to it (not in word count).

**Additional points to note:**

* At least one page of references is required. This will often equate to a minimum of 12. Textbooks alone are not enough for postgraduate study. At this level you are required to use peer-refereed academic journal articles, and there are plenty of current titles available in this topic area. Your on-line journal access is excellent, and you can always use CIPD resources, they also have EBSCO and Emerald. Be careful of using some of the more simplistic work from CIPD – E.g., Factsheets etc. Some of the research reports however are excellent.
* Citation within the assignment itself is too often either incorrectly completed or inconsistent – please cross check your references between what is in-text and what is in the reference section. Additionally, the reference section at the end is often incorrectly completed and/or inappropriately presented. **NB** we use the Harvard Referencing System. Further help and guidance can be found at: <https://www.derby.ac.uk/services/library/study-skills/citing-and-referencing/>
* Generally (but not exclusively) assignments are written in the 3rd person. Please try and develop this skill in all your assignments unless you are explicitly told to take a different approach.
* Presentation re paragraph writing. Whilst you might write business reports in ‘sound bite` sentences, i.e. one sentence or two at most, this does not form a paragraph. It is expected that as a postgraduate student you would normally complete most of your work in ‘proper` and full paragraphs.
* Presentation re bullet points. Again, these are common in business reports, and can be used in assignments, but very sparingly.

* Description v analysis. Whilst some description is necessary, **we want you to be analysing and evaluating** using appropriate supporting references. This should be the focus of your work.
* Recommendations - ask whether your recommendations are actionable and supported by your discussion, consider cost and opportunity.

# **Assessment Rubric**

The assessment rubric on the next page shows the complete criteria of the CW and how you will be assessed.

# **Level 7 Assessment Rubric (50% Pass)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level 7 Assessment Criteria** | **70-100%: Excellent**  (outstanding/very high standard of work) | **60-69%: Very Good**  (Very Good standard of work) | **50-59%: Good/Satisfactory**  (Good/Satisfactory standard of work) | **40-49%: Unsatisfactory**  (unsatisfactory standard of work) |
| **Use of literature**  **20%** | Presents a thorough analysis of the current literature drawing from a wide range of sources. | Strong evidence of wider reading including journal articles.  Should draw from a wide range of sources to develop the argument. | Some evidence of wider reading but will tend to rely on textbooks.  There may be some inappropriate use of Internet sources. | Over-reliance on the core text book and on lecture notes. Use of poor internet sources  There may be over-use of direct quotes and inappropriate use of texts/internet sources to pad out the work. |
| **Structure/ argument**  **20%** | Excellent treatment of the subject matter with high levels of conceptual sophistication and critical evaluation demonstrated.  Incisive original thinking  An excellently structured piece of work with good use made of appendices and tables/diagrams (where appropriate). | A convincing argument is presented acknowledging multiple perspectives including appropriate critical evaluation of the literature and key concepts.  Significant originality  A well-structured piece of work with appropriate use of appendices, tables and diagrams (where required). The report should be logically structured. | A good response includes use of theory, acknowledgement of alternative perspectives and attempts to justify position but with room for further development.  Some evidence of originality  A clearly written and structured report.  Generally, well used appendices, diagrams and tables (where appropriate) | A largely descriptive response to the assignment with confused rationale and poor argument.  Little or no evidence of originality  There is substantial room for further development.  Structure of piece of work is weak and arguments are underdeveloped. |
| **Knowledge, understanding and application**  **20%** | Evidence of superior, comprehensive and deep knowledge and understanding of the relevant module content  Makes an excellent attempt to combine both theory and practice within the work.  Exceptionally well researched  Excellent coherence and logic | Evidence of extensive knowledge of the relevant module content without major misapprehensions.  Used to address the question well.  Inclusion of relevant business examples in appropriate depth.  Well researched. Very good sense of coherence and logic | Evidence that relevant module content is adequately understood but with some gaps or level of misunderstanding  Good use of theory and practical examples.  Quite well researched | Limited evidence that relevant module content is understood and with some significant gaps or misunderstandings.  Some relevant examples given but analysis lacks relevance.  Inadequate research. |
| **Critical Discussion/**  **Evaluation**  **20%** | High level of critical analysis and evaluation of relevant theory and research. | A very good level of critical analysis and evaluation of relevant theory | Fairy good level of critical analysis and evaluation although some material not evaluated | Low level of critical evaluation – limited, with some lost opportunities or misunderstandings. |
| **Presentation/**  **Communication**  **10%** | High quality presentation  Exceptional clarity of ideas  Sophisticated written or verbal communication skills, precision in grammar/ spelling/delivery  Logical organisation and flow of information | Very good standard of presentation  Pleasing clarity of ideas  Effective written or verbal communication, few errors in spelling/ grammar/delivery  Logical structure helps the reader/audience to easily follow the argument | Good standard of presentation but with some deficiencies. Ideas generally clear and coherent  Some spelling/grammar /delivery slips but this does not interfere significantly with the flow of work  Structure enables the reader/audience to follow the argument | Below acceptable standard, some weaknesses in style  Significant spelling/ grammar/delivery errors but ideas still fairly clear and coherent. |
| **Referencing**  **10%** | Complete and precise use of Harvard System in text and in reference section. | Good Harvard referencing demonstrated in text and in reference section with minor errors or omissions only. | Use of Harvard referencing with limited errors and omissions. A clear demonstration of understanding the conventions should be made. | Use of a different system of referencing and/or a range of errors made using the Harvard system. |

# **Anonymous Marking**

You must submit your work using your **student number** to identify yourself, not your name. You must not use your name in the text of the work at any point. When you submit your work in Turnitin you must submit your student number within the assignment document and in the *Submission title* field in Turnitin.

# **Assessment Regulations**

The [University’s regulations, policies and procedures](https://www.derby.ac.uk/about/academic-regulations/) for students define the framework within which teaching and assessment are conducted. Please make sure you are familiar with these regulations, policies and procedures.

# **The Postgraduate Marking Scale**

The Postgraduate Marking Scale applies to Level 7 modules. Level 8 modules are graded as pass or fail, and some Level 7 modules are validated to be marked as pass or fail only.



