

The Photo Essay Advice Document

- *Please read the whole document carefully.*
- *This is your extended guide to the photo essay task and your approach to it.*
- *If you have read the whole document carefully and any points are still unclear, please speak to the module organiser.*

The Assessment

The module is assessed through a single coursework 'photo' essay (100%) .

Deadline

The deadline is set as **Tuesday 2nd January 2024, 16:00**

The coursework submission dropbox will be open from Monday 18th December, though I am encouraging students to make full use of the study time available after term has finished.

Word Limit

The word limit is **2,750 words** excluding bibliography. This is a strict limit with no additional percentage allowance. You should be looking to make the most of the full word count available to you.

*Please make sure you are familiar with the following from the departmental undergraduate handbook: Late submission policy - Plagiarism policy
- Extenuating Circumstance and Extensions guidelines*

THE PHOTO ESSAY TASK

The photo essay will serve as a record of your learning on the module. As specified in the Module Outline, the task will provide an opportunity for you to show how one or other theories or approaches on the module (usually associated with a particular main text) has allowed you to see some aspect of your own everyday lived experience in a different way than you did before. You are also invited to share your reflections on how the insights you have gained from this application can provide you with a richer understanding of human relations in work, management and organisation.

The essay will be illustrated using three interrelated photographs (that you will have taken, or that are taken of you) that can help you unpack (1) different aspects of the example that you have chosen to focus on; and (2) different elements of the theory or approach you will be applying to that example.

What is being looked for is therefore not only a demonstration of the quality of your understanding of your chosen module theory or approach, but also your ability to *apply* that theory; and to show how this has led to a new perspective on some aspect of your everyday life. It is also an opportunity for you to relate these reflections to the wider relations of organisation and society in which we our lives are situated and in which we participate.

The text of the essay should include the following three things, ideally in this order and in their separate sections:

1) An introduction to and *explanation* of the key theory or approach from the module that you wish to focus on in your essay, briefly situated within the context of the wider module.

2) The *application* of your chosen theory or approach to some aspect of your everyday lived experience, as illustrated by your three interrelated photographs. This application should be based on an account of your learning experience of coming to

see this aspect of your everyday experience differently from the way you may have seen it before (this new perspective having arisen as a result of the application of your chosen theoretical perspective).

3) A reflection back on the application you have made in the previous section, where you will consider the possible value of the insights you have gained through this application for developing richer understandings of human relations in work, management and organisation.

The aspect of your lived experience on which you have chosen to focus may be some aspect of your personal or family life, or it could derive from your participation in education, work experience, paid employment, leisure time, community groups – or indeed any other aspect of your daily life.

The application you make will ideally arise naturally during the term as you start to get practice applying the concepts we are working with week-to-week to aspects of your everyday life. The experience in this regard might therefore be less of having chosen an idea, and instead more of *a sense of the idea as having chosen you* – with regard to such a selection having arisen in a quite organic way at some point in the term rather than having to sit down and make such a choice. In any case, hopefully you will already have lots of these kinds of associations recorded in the learning diary that you have been keeping week-to-week, as per advice given.

YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED AGAINST USING OFF-MODULE RESOURCES

Please note this advice well. You are being tested not only on your ability to write about module-related themes, but also of the quality of your engagement with module-specific texts and other resources. You will have *plenty* to work with in the key readings and topic-based extended reading lists, as detailed in the later pages of the module outline, so please follow this advice well and stick to these!

The only exception to this advice is if you wish to reference sources which would support the particular example that you have chosen to focus on, and would thereby be of a strictly supplementary nature. In other words, such supplementary sources should not be a substitute for your engagement with core, module-specific sources and ideas.

You will therefore be assessed on four things:

(1) Your ability to *explain* your chosen theory or approach through careful engagement with appropriate supporting material, and to briefly situate this within the wider module.

(2) Your ability to *apply* your chosen theory / idea to a specific example from personal experience, drawing out this application in proper detail, as an account of your own experience of coming to see something in your own life differently from the way you saw it before.

(3) Your ability to reflect on the significance of the insights gained from that application – and the experience of learning that it has involved – for arriving at richer understandings of human relations in work, management and organisation.

(4) Adhering to the guidelines for *presentation, formatting and referencing* are also important – as detailed in the next section.

Part of the challenge of this task is the development of an *applied* relationship to module theories and ideas. In order to develop this approach, it will not only be important to achieve a thorough engagement with key module texts and ideas, through careful private study and week-to-week participation, but also to practice taking a reflective relationship to your everyday experience through the weekly applied tasks (see Module Outline).

Essay Formatting

The essay should have a cover page with title and other details, and be formatted as follows:

- Times font size 12
- [Double line spacing](#),
- Justified margins
- Numbered pages
- Paragraph line breaks

You should create your own title which should take this form:

Your title here: A Photo Essay

The whole essay should be properly referenced in the Harvard style with a full bibliography. As with all academic work, if you are referring to a part of a text rather than the text as a whole or quoting a passage of text, specific page numbers should be given (e.g. Curtis, 2023: 19).

Your three photographs should be pasted into the Word document at appropriate places in the essay narrative (i.e. in the applied section) and given numbered titles that you can refer to in the body of your essay (e.g. Image One: Image title here).

There is no need for an essay coversheet, but it would be good to include your student number at the top of the first page.

WRITTEN FEEDBACK

In the second half of term, everybody will have the chance to have one round of formal written feedback on their photo essay idea.

The idea should be laid out using the below template with no more than 2-3 sentences under each numbered heading. The completed outline should be sent to me as an attachment with the heading 'PHOTO ESSAY OUTLINE' with a covering email message to my usual email address r.curtis@qmul.ac.uk. Feedback will not be provided on any other types of submissions. Please also don't send me any photographs.

You should send your completed form to me by end of SUNDAY 10TH DECEMBER at the latest. I will endeavour to get back to your email within a week but it may take longer depending on the volume received. I will work through the outlines in the order that they are received. Please give some proper thought to the idea before you send me your outline as you will only get one round of written feedback. Once you have your written feedback, if necessary this can then be followed up with a one-to-one meeting in my office hours.

PHOTO ESSAY FEEDBACK REQUEST FORM

NAME:

STUDENT NUMBER:

1) PROPOSED TITLE: Your title here: A Photo Essay

<This should be concise and reflect your overall themes of interest >

2) KEY MODULE IDEA / THEORY / READING:

<The single main theory/approach/reading on which you have chosen to focus, and the specific concepts that will be most important for the interpretations that you will be developing in your application (as below)>

3) ASPECT OF YOUR LIVED EXPERIENCE:

<The aspect of your everyday lived experience that will be the focus of your photo essay, an indication of the change in perspective on which you will be focussing, and the concepts from your chosen theory/approach/reading that have been most important in these regards (as above)>

4) CONNECTION TO MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION:

<Some indication of the value of the insights you have been gaining for developing richer understandings of human relations in management and organization, and the specific further readings that might help you to develop these connections>

5) KEY REFERENCES (3-5 maximum):

<Try and include in these: (i) one set seminar reading, (ii) appropriate sections of the Knights & Willmott companion text and (iii) 2-3 further readings that may help you develop the specific themes that will be of interest.>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. When should I be looking to start working on my photo essay?

A. My suggestion is that in the first half of term you don't worry too much about the photo essay itself but put your focus on (1) preparing for and engaging in the weekly seminar discussions; as well as (2) getting practice applying the ideas to aspects of your own day-to-day life experience; while (3) keeping a 'learning diary' to note down these thoughts and associations as they arise through the term. You are also encouraged (4) to get some practice taking photographs to reflect these experiences, and you will be able to share one of these in the Week 8 seminar after reading week (more details to follow).

Q. What is the best way to choose a theme for my photo essay?

A. As indicated above, my strong suggestion is to allow your idea for the photo essay to arise out of your week-to-week engagement with module ideas, and your experiments with applying the ideas to aspects of your day-to-day life experience – on the understanding that much of the learning on the module may take place outside the lecture or seminar room. This should help you to arrive at a focus for your photo essay that arises organically through the module, rather than trying to choose one in abstraction, with the latter approach likely to result in writing that is lacking the kind of rich insights and development that arise from reflections on your own learning experiences through the term

Q. What does it mean 'to show how one or other idea may have helped you to see something differently from the way you saw it before'?

A. Think of this a bit like the experience of going to the cinema and seeing a thought-provoking film, and the way the world can look different when you leave the cinema from when you went in, even though it is the same street you walked down on the way there. On this module we appreciate how ideas, theories and academic texts can change our ways of seeing and being-in-the-world, in a similar way to the way a good film, novel, travel experience or even conversation can. This is one of the reasons why the watching of quality films and the reading of novels are encouraged within the module. I will be hoping to hear about one of your own transformative experiences that may have taken place during the term as a result of your engagement with specific module materials.

Q. What do we mean by ‘thinking sociologically’ and why is this important on the module?

A. By ‘thinking sociologically’ (esp. wk 5 & 6) we mean developing an appreciation of how problems or experiences of a ‘personal’ nature are always-already also ‘social’ experiences, while reflecting on our everyday lives as involving forms of participation in wider social and organisational relations. As we will be exploring on the module, in accordance with such sociological thinking, we would also not expect to be able to understand such wider social relations (and the ways in which they are reproduced or transformed) without exploring how they get enacted through the everyday lives of its participants.

As we will be exploring through the first half of term, such sociological perspectives are distinct from individualistic forms of thought, such as we will consider in behaviourism, which tend to treat the individual in an abstracted, isolated way. As we explore within the module, relational psychologies such as symbolic interactionism go some way to helping us to think in more relational terms, though which tend to be restricted in their analyses to bounded, localised groups, rather than developing an understanding of these local interactions as forms of participation in wider social formations and historical transformations (though as we explore in week 4, Blumer starts to develop a sociological appreciation of these kinds through the notion of ‘joint action’). Such psychological approaches also have a tendency to neglect the kinds of questions of power and inequality that we will also be developing through the term (see below for more on this) (esp. weeks 6 and 10).

Q. What do you mean by reflexivity and is this important in the photo essay task?

A. By reflexivity we mean our ability to take ourselves and our personal experiences as the objects of our own work of reflection (see esp wks. 4, 5). This is a very important element of the coursework task, and your ability to think, write and apply module ideas reflexively will be something I will be keen to reward in your photo essays. In approaching the photo essay task, you might ask yourself questions like: ‘Where am I in this scenario?’; ‘What is it that makes this question or problem of *personal* relevance?’; ‘What are the *emotional* and/or *embodied* dimensions of this experience?’. Such reflexive considerations might also include reflections on your own experiences of participating in the module and your engagement

with the photo essay task. I hope you may also develop reflections on such questions of reflexivity through your engagement with specific relevant module resources (esp. week 4 and 9).

Q. In what sense is this module a *critical* module, and in which ways should we be showing signs of thinking critically in our photo essays?

A. In academic work, in describing something as critical, we may simply be referring to the evaluation of sources and the interrogation of arguments for the particular framing assumptions they may make. In this regard, I will indeed be looking for signs of such critical evaluation of the texts and ideas you will be working with rather than just a straightforward application – including the testing of the value of the ideas that you are working with through application to your chosen example. To the extent that you might identify particular limitations of the sources and perspectives you are working with in these regards, you might also consider how one or other of the further readings might help to overcome such limitations to some extent.

Within sociological traditions of inquiry however, thinking critically can also mean taking into account of questions of *power and inequality* – including the ways in which particular framings of management and organisation may neglect the more political and *contested* aspects of organisational life. Through these notions of power and inequality we will explore the limitations of unitaristic perspectives (week 6) that would reduce these aspects of organisational life to merely technical problems of optimisation and efficiency, to consider specifically who might be served by particular organisational arrangements, outcomes and priorities (see also week 10).

Q. Can I use the first-person tense in my writing?

A. Yes, contrary to usual academic convention where the third person is routinely expected, given that you will be expected to explore dimensions of lived experience in reflexive ways (see above), the first-person tense is welcomed and probably essential. That said, the photo essay is still an academic essay, and broadly speaking all other normal academic habits and formalities of referencing etc. should still be observed (see formatting guidelines, above).

Q. Are you interested to hear about my opinions in the photo essay?

A. While you will certainly be developing a perspective within your photo essay which I hope will be reflective of certain personal preoccupations that develop through the term, as in your wider academic work, statements of opinion or 'soapbox' ranting are not substitutes for careful scholarly engagement (with key module texts and concepts and their careful and focussed application), so please try and avoid deviations into polemical rambling, which are likely to detract from the specific task at hand.

Q. Would you like to see a wide range of different ideas and theories in my photo essay?

A. The coursework task is to show how one or other theory/approach/reading has enabled you to see something in your own life differently from the way you saw it before. In responding to the task it is important that you find a clear point of focus for your essay, to isolate one particular theory or reading that has been important for you, and to introduce, explain and apply it in the ways described above. As with many things in life, breadth is often at the expense of depth, and I would suggest that the best photo essays have been ones which achieve a clarity of focus and a selectivity in use of materials, to allow you to unpack, explain and apply the idea in proper depth and detail rather than skimming the surface of many different elements.

It may also of course be that you bring one or other ideas (and related further readings) in in a secondary role, perhaps in the discussion section towards the end of your essay, which can help you build and expand upon your original point of focus. In introducing the main theory or approach you wish to work with, I hope you may also be able to briefly contextualise this within the wider module. None of this should be at the expense of a clear point of focus on the particular theoretical perspective on which you have decided to focus and on the example to which it will be applied.

Q. In choosing my 'module theory or perspective' for the photo essay, do you mean one of the weekly topics?

The idea you choose could be a particular theory, concept or theme. This will likely result in a focus on a particular set reading and topic week. That said, while it is important to find a clear point of focus, I always stress that the different weeks of the module relate to each

other in a *holistic* manner, so your ability to write a good photo essay on any particular topic will also be a product of your feel for the module as a whole and the way its different elements relate, rather than treating each topic as strictly self-contained. It is usually very clear from the ways in which the photo essays are written as to whether this more holistic engagement with the module and its topics has taken place during the term. This is one of the main reasons why I have been stressing the importance of consistent engagement and participation through the different weeks of the module.

Q. Can I write my photo essay by comparing and contrasting two different ideas from the module?

A. This is one possible approach, though it can be difficult to do well and can result in spreading yourself too thinly. If you do decide to follow this approach please make sure that you use the applied aspect of your photo essay to compare and contrast the ways in which the same example might be seen differently according to the two different perspectives, rather than applying different ideas to different examples. This will help you to demonstrate the contrast between these different perspectives, and thereby to evaluate their relative strengths and weaknesses through the application that you make. I would suggest letting me know if you have particular ideas in this regard to make sure you're on the right lines.

Q. Will my photo essay be primarily assessed on the applied section or the theoretical material?

A. The important thing with the photo essay task is to take up the applied task in a way that brings the theoretical material to bear on a particular aspect of your own life experience. In this regard, your ability to make such an effective application will be dependent upon *the quality of your scholarship and close reading of the texts and ideas we will be working with week-by-week*. It's the quality of your engagement in these regards – and your ability to reflect on the learning experiences that have taken place through that engagement – that I will be looking for. As per the advice above, this is an approach best developed through consistent participation in the week-to-week module programme.

Q. Am I expected to share intimate personal details?

A. It is in the nature of the task that I would also expect all photo essays to involve some reflection on the personal meaning and significance of the idea you have chosen to work with and your chosen aspect of from your everyday experience that you come to reflect on. In so doing, it would therefore be good to see some signs of reflexive thinking and awareness (see the Q&A point on 'reflexivity', above). That said, as I will be emphasising in our weekly seminar discussions, it is also important that you only share those things that you feel comfortable in so doing. In addition to this, through the learning we will be doing on the module, I hope that you will also have begun to consider the limitations of simple binary separations between aspects of the 'personal' and the 'social' – or the 'in here' and 'out there' – so it would also be really good to see some signs of this learning in your writing and approach (see also the Q&A point on 'thinking sociologically', above).

Q. Does this task involve storytelling?

A. In some ways a good photo essay will likely share some of the characteristics of good storytelling: being able to use descriptive language to evoke aspects of lived experience so that the reader is able to relate and potentially to learn from the them, particular as they are then further interpreted through module ideas. This is one of the reasons why take an interest in novels and films in this module. (see also the Lawler set reading in week 5 on the narrative nature of identity and selfhood.) Good storytelling alone will not be enough though, and, as I have been stressing, I will also be looking for rigorous engagement with the particular module concepts you have chosen to work with and apply.

Q. Do I have to make connections to management and organization throughout my photo essay?

A. In their exploration of aspects of human experience, it is likely that many of your photo essays will drift quite far away from anything we might conventionally think of as work, management and organization. It will also be important for you to be able to bring things back round in your photo essay, however, particularly in the essay's third discussion section, to consider the value of the insights explored through your applied section for arriving at a richer understanding of human relations in management and organisation. I will be helping you to make these connections through the different weeks of the module, including in the

weekly lecture. The second half of term will also be focussed on developments and applications of the perspectives we will have had an induction to in the first half of term, and the set seminar readings will be of an applied, case study nature with clear connections to lived experience in work, management and organisation.

Q. Is it important to be consistent through the different sections of my essay?

A. It is very important that you establish a clear theme and point of focus at the outset of your photo essay and to follow a clear line through the expository, applied and discursive sections of your essay. Finding this clear focus and working it through will be an important and integral part of the task.

Q. Is it important for my photo essay to have an Introduction and Conclusion?

A. Yes, these are very important, and can really help to bring together the different elements of the essay into a coherent whole for the reader to understand what its main contributions and insights will be. The Introduction should provide a clear and concise overview of the essay, its chosen focus and its main sections and elements. This should ideally be no longer than 4-5 sentences. The Conclusion should provide a clear and concise review of the essay and its main contributions and insights. I would suggest that this should be no longer than 5-6 sentences. My strong advice would be to avoid waffly, rambling introductions, which often add little of value to your essay and use up valuable word count. I would also suggest avoiding introducing points in your Conclusion which haven't already been engaged with in the main body of your essay. If the points are worth making then I would suggest they should be worth making the space in the main body of your essay to explain and develop them properly.

Q. What is the role of the further readings?

A. The further readings are to enable to build upon and develop your reading beyond the weekly set seminar reading. Once you start to develop a specific area of interest within the module, I recommend having a skim through all the further readings in that area and getting a feel for which might be most interesting or relevant for the particular perspectives and ideas you are developing.

Q. What is the role of the Knights & Willmott text?

A. As stated in the module outline, the Knights & Willmott (1999) *Management Lives* text is designated as a *companion* text rather than a textbook. This is to make clear that this is not a compendium of all the things you might need to study in the module, nor a substitute for the key readings we will be working with together in your weekly seminar. I strongly recommend *Management Lives* as a support to your week-to-week learning, however, and to help you to orient yourself in the module as a whole.

As the module goes on the 'four concepts' that Knights & Willmott explore in the book will become increasingly important for us in how we think about relations in management and organisation and more broadly. You will also see sections of the book provide our set seminar readings in weeks 3 and 8, and that I recommend particular chapters from this text in the topic-by-topic further reading lists. The Knights & Willmott text is not a substitute for engagement with the set seminar readings however, and will not suffice as a single resource for your photo essay.

Q. What is the role of Knights & Willmott's 'four concepts' model?

A. The 'four concepts' model is not a theory as such, but more of a learning aid, to make sure that we understand these different elements in their interrelations rather than separately: so if you find yourself focussed on themes of identity you don't forget to explore them in their interrelation with experiences of insecurity; or if you find yourself focussed on this identity-insecurity relation, that it can provide a helpful reminder that you should be considering the significance of its interrelation with themes of power and inequality, and vice versa.

Q. Should I draw on off-module resources?

A. The short answer to this is a clear and firm '**No**'. You will have seen in the module outline that we have a huge range of carefully selected reading material on the module for you to choose from and there should be no need for you to go 'off module'. That said, you may feel it important to bring in one or more sources in a supplementary role that relate to the kind of applied theme you are exploring, but **do not** let it be a substitute for engagement with module specific resources. I emphasise this as the rare times that people fail the module is

usually where they have either ignored a key feature of the task, or where they have failed to engage with the module-specific materials. You are assessed in this task not only on your ability to engage with key module themes, but also for the quality of your engagement with module-specific readings and the other resources we will be working with week-to-week.

One more time... **Stick to module-specific readings!**

Q. Can I draw on one of the four module novels in my photo essay?

A. Yes indeed – many students have in previous years taken a particular interest in one or more of the four novels, and some decide to draw upon sections to help illustrate and bring out aspects of personal experience in their photo essays. As with all your photo essays, however, make sure you don't neglect your engagement with the theoretical material from the module. Don't also neglect the personal, reflexive dimensions of the task, so you are not only talking about the experiences of particular characters in the novels, but also your own relationship to these things and their significance in your own everyday life.

Q. How many references do you want to see in the photo essay bibliography?

A. My advice on this module is to go for quality of engagement over quantity: better to have read and engaged 2-3 sources really thoroughly, rather than 8-12 sources that you have just skimmed and from which you are extracting abstracted elements. As in the photo essay outline exercise, I would suggest all photo essays should probably feature one of the key readings as a reference point (they are key readings for a reason) and would likely also make reference to the Knights & Willmott companion text as a supplement to the other academic source material.

Q. Can we please have some examples of some good past 'photo essays'?

A. This is an understandable request; however I make a principled point of not sharing past student work on this module as it is an important part of the coursework task that it should be an original and personally-specific piece of work. In sharing past student work there would be a strong likelihood that the work would be imitated in various ways, and this would clearly work against what is distinctive and arguably most challenging about the task. In place of such sample essays, through this document and through other channels, you are instead provided with extensive advice on your approach to the task. You will also be given

plentiful opportunities to get feedback on your ideas and other support throughout the term (including through the photo essay outline written feedback process, detailed above).

Q. Will you read my draft essay?

A. In a word, no! There are currently over 200 students registered on the module, so there is no way I could fit in reading everyone's draft and it would not be fair to give such feedback to some and not others. Everyone has the opportunity before the end of term to gain formal written feedback on their essay idea, however, as detailed above.

Q. I find the module ideas and readings hard – is this just me?

A. This is a final year module, and one which engages themes of a philosophical and reflective nature. It is therefore well understood that you may find some of the texts and the concepts therein challenging, and that some of the language may be unfamiliar. Some dedicated application will be required from all students to work with these source and ideas and to develop your understanding.

As detailed in the Guide to Module Participation, I will also be supporting students in developing a slower and more patient style of reading than you may be used to on other modules. Through consistent engagement and private study you will find though that your reading of the texts will get easier as you get week-to-week practice with reading and discussing the texts in your groups. You are therefore encouraged to think of the seminars as a kind of study group where we not only discuss the set question but also get support with the specific things we may be finding difficult. The more specific you can be on these points of difficulty the more able we will be able to work on these together, such as particular sections of the texts or particular concepts. Often the thing that one person finds difficult is shared by others and so we can help each other through our weekly session.

If you put in the private study time, participate in seminars and make use of the support that is available to you, things will get easier for sure! One-to-one support is also available for those who feel like they may need it, so if you are feeling like you are having specific difficulties as the module goes on, please get in touch to make an appointment.

Q. I still haven't come up with an idea for my photo essay – what should I do?

A. If you haven't yet found that one more of the ideas has connected for you in the ways in which I have been describing, this may well be because you need to go back to the readings and develop a more thorough engagement with the particular ideas that they contain. Once you have that thorough engagement with the texts and their ideas then you will be in a better position to start to see how they may be applied to aspects of your everyday life. Putting in the study time and creating a calm space for thought and reflection will be important to your development of this approach. As above, if you are doing these things and still having difficulty, please let me know and I will be happy to make time to see you in my office hours.

Q. Do the photographs have to be taken by me?

A. The photographs should either be taken by you or should be of you. This is an important part of the task and it is not appropriate to just lift photographs from the internet or other such sources.

Q. Can the three photos be of three different things?

A. The three photos are expected to help you draw out different aspects of the same example, and hopefully different aspects of the particular theoretical approach you wish to work with. As with regard to the theoretical material, so with the examples from your own experience, it is much better to find a clear point of focus and expand in proper detail than to try to move across multiple examples and thereby spread yourself too thinly. In sum, I strongly recommend you use the three photos to help unpack different aspects of a single example rather than introducing multiple different examples. Please heed this advice well as it can make a big difference to the quality and depth of your engagements.

Q. Will we be marked on the quality of the photographs?

A. No, this is not a photography competition – it's the use you make of the photographs and the commentary you offer on them that will be important here. That said, it should be clear how they are helping you to illustrate the example you have chosen to talk about (see previous point) and it will be helpful if you can please give each of the three photographs a number and title so you can refer to them in the text (e.g. Image One: <Image title here>).

Q. Where should I put the three photographs?

A. They should be cut-and-pasted into your essay Word document at the relevant points in your essay where you wish to refer to them, and will likely appear in the middle applied section of your essay.

Q. Can I do something more creative with the images?

A. Some students with an art or photographic background have in the past done some more creative things with the three images. If you are thinking of doing something like this I recommend coming to talk to me about it first to make sure you're on the right lines.

Q. Is the title I choose important?

A. The title is important, and should reflect the content and themes of your essay. You may find the process of finding a title and adapting it helpful as part of finding a clear focus as you draft and redraft your essay.

Q. Is the 2,750 word limit a strict one?

A. Yes, please do not write more than this amount or you may be penalised. You can of course write less than the lower end of the range but it is likely to be harder for you to gain full credit. This limit excludes your bibliography / reference list.

Q. Do I need to keep to the three-section structure for the essay?

A. The three-section structure is recommended as it should help to make sure you cover the specific things the things that I will be looking for in your essay. You are free to shape your essay in a different way, but my advice would be to make sure this doesn't end up with key elements of the task being neglected. Again, if you have specific ideas in this regard you might like to come and talk them through with me first.

Q. How should I distribute the wordcount within my essay?

A. I will provide a separate diagram which will make some recommendations in this regard.

Q. Is it a good idea to draft and redraft my photo essay?

A. Yes – this is a very good idea. You might for example like to aim to have a draft before Christmas and then redraft after. Careful proof reading is also highly recommended. I would suggest this can add 5-10% to your overall mark by avoiding silly errors and helping to edit down and refine your work in key areas. Such drafting, editing and proof reading will be important to make the most of the limited word count that is available to you. Please make sure you also adhere to the formatting instructions, which will make your essay easier to read and which can help improve the mood of your marker when they happen to be marking a large volume of your essays (!).

Q. How do I know what is expected for me to achieve particular marks?

A. There is an indicative mark scheme by degree class in the module outline. I will also be developing a marking rubric, which I will share separately.

Further advice based on conversations with students in previous years:

- Take the time to explain properly the most important key terms and ideas in your essay. For example, it might be that you introduce the idea, then in a second sentence you explain it in the a different way ('By this we mean that...'). This way it should be really clear that you understand the idea should set you up well for your subsequent applications. Avoid applying ideas in your essay without such careful explanation.
- I will be looking for a close, scholarly reading of the key texts you are working with, including the ability to draw selectively on brief quotations to support your reading of them where appropriate, though this should not be a substitute for explanation in your own words (with proper Harvard in-text referencing with page numbers, as usual).
- If you are talking about a particular experience that you have had, try to share some of the detail of the lived experience in its embodied and emotional dimensions. This will really help the reader to understand why engaging with such lived experience may be important for understanding human relations in organisational life, and which may be neglected in more abstract 'textbook' approaches (see weeks 2, 8 and 9 especially).

- Identity: try to move beyond simplistic notions of identity as some kind of inner essence to the more fluid, dynamic, relational and contextual ways of understanding that we will be developing together, including with regard to the kind of experiences of insecurity and ‘othering’ we will be exploring (see esp. weeks 4, 5, 9, 10, 11).
- Self and authenticity: the commonplace notion that we have some kind of inner real self is a notion that we subject to extended critical scrutiny on the module. This relates to the above point about identity, which will also extend to reflections on the *performative* dimensions of selfhood (see esp. week 11 set reading but also Lawler week 5 on narrative, and week 5 further readings).
- Motivation theory: though we will consider questions of motivation along the way, we do not work with motivation theory as such on this module – in fact the Sievers further reading (week 8) offers *a critique of* motivation theory, is seen as having become a kind of *surrogate* for the kind of dimensions of meaning with which we will be engaged on the module.
- Importance of avoiding a purely ‘managerial’ perspective: remember that we are approaching questions of management and organisation as a student of management and organisation through engagement with ideas from the humanities and social sciences, not as a management consultant or technician. It may of course be that among the perspectives that we consider will be how things may be experienced by such managers or technicians in their everyday lives, but this is not the same thing as a kind of abstracted textbook perspective or account of the interests of ‘the organisation’ or ‘management’ per se. In developing sociological perspectives on organisational life, hopefully you will also be able to *vary* your perspective, to so consider how particular organisational outcomes or arrangements may look different depending on whose perspective we take, including with regard to the contrasting interests and experiences of different constituencies and ‘stakeholders’ in organisational life (see week 6 and 10 especially on relations of power in work and employment).
- Let me say this one more time in case it has been missed – **BEHAVIOURISM IS NOT A SUFFICIENT OR APPROPRIATE FOCUS ALONE**. We use behaviourism as an example of a 'behavioural' or 'management science' perspective, and a jumping-off point for the module to contrast it with perspectives that engage with the symbolic, the relational

and aspects of lived experience, all of which behaviourist approaches neglect in different ways.

Try and enjoy the task – as an opportunity to share your learning on the module and the reflections on aspects of your own lived experience that you have developed through engagement with particular module ideas – while not forgetting that academic rigour is definitely also required.

I shall look forward to reading your photo essays in the new year!