**Assignment 1/Coursework Remit**

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| **Programme Title** | MSc Management | | |
| **Module Title** | LM Strategic Outsourcing, Procurement and Supplier Management | | |
| **Module Code** | 07 38009 | | |
| **Assignment Title** | Individual case study | | |
| **Level** | Masters | | |
| **Weighting** | 50% | | |
| **Lecturers** | Dr. Xishu Li | | |
| **Hand Out Date** | 05/02/2024 | | |
| **Deadline Date & Time** | 29/03/2024 | | **12pm** |
| **Feedback Post Date** | 16th working day after submission | | |
| **Assignment Format** | Essay | | |
| **Assignment Length** | 1750 words  The references list at the end of the assignment and diagrams do not count in the word count, but any text-based tables and appendices do count. Note that any assignments over the 1,750-word limit may receive deductions in their marks. No 10% leeway.  The assignment should be properly presented, with a title, sections (introduction, etc.), numbering and titling of tables and diagrams, and references. | | |
| **Submission Format** | Online | Individual | |

**Assignment:**

What is sought from students is that they show they understand (a) what a value chain is in this context, WHICH IS **NOT** PORTER’S VALUE CHAIN; (b) the factors that determine the relative attractiveness of different stages of the value chain; and (c) how these link to a firm’s strategic positioning decisions, whether that is a decision to attempt a re-positioning or a decision that a particular strategic ambition is not feasible – or a decision to retain the status quo.

Of the three tasks, it is tasks (b) and (c) that are the most critical to the assignment. However, as a baseline, students are expected to show that they know what a value chain is and, to state it again, not confuse it with Porter’s work on the ‘internal value chain’.

In developing their arguments, students are expected to draw upon the core readings, notably those that relate to the competitive dynamics of a value chain and the tangible / intangible resource sets and capabilities that help to shape these dynamics.

Given the word limit, this is a challenging assignment. As well as requiring students to juggle what can be quite a complicated set of ideas, it puts their organisational abilities to the test. There is potentially quite a lot of ground to cover in what is a limited word count. Students who spend too long describing the key concepts and ideas will find that they have insufficient room to explore and apply them.

Weak essays will be confused about the core concepts; be overly descriptive; show a lack of awareness of the debates around value chain positioning; and/or fail to link their discussion to case material, a key part of addressing this assignment task. Strong essays will contain the reverse of this and, in the context of a 1,750-word assignment, show an ability to write concisely.

**Please also note:**

Relevant cases from the module **CAN** be used in your essay, although you are also encouraged to find your own case examples if you prefer. In your essay, you can either illustrate your argument via one case firm or a number of firms.

Cases and diagrams taken from the module material should be referenced as follows:

* Lonsdale, C. and Watson, G. (2023) ‘Diagram name’, Module name, lecture notes, Session X.
* Lonsdale, C. and Watson, G. (2023) ‘Case name’, Module name, lecture notes, Session X.

Please do not quote text from the module power point slides (unless it is from a case study within the power point slides).

The module reader is referenced as follows:

* Watson, G. and Lonsdale, C. (eds.) (2021) *Managing the Supply Base within Business Networks: A Module Reader*. Birmingham, University of Birmingham.

Chapter 14 is the relevant chapter in this textbook.

**Further guidance will be provided during the module**

**Module Learning Outcomes:**

# In this assessment the following learning outcomes will be covered:

* Understand the concept of the extended value chain;
* Understand the factors driving firm positioning within extended value chains;
* Be able to interpret case examples of firms operating within extended value chains.

**Grading Criteria:**

* Effectiveness in addressing task;
* Quality of argument;
* Use of evidence;
* Use of literature.

**Feedback to Students:**

Both Summative and Formative feedback is given to encourage students to reflect on their learning that feed forward into following assessment tasks. The preparation for all assessment tasks will be supported by formative feedback within the tutorials/seminars. Written feedback is provided as appropriate. Please be aware to use the browser and not the Canvas App as you may not be able to view all comments.

**Plagiarism:**

It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand correct referencing practices. You are expected to use appropriate references and keep carefully detailed notes of all your information sources, including any material downloaded from the Internet. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are not vulnerable to any alleged breaches of the assessment regulations. More information is available at <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/conduct/plagiarism/index.aspx>.

**Use of Generative AI:**

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, students should assume that the use of generative AI within an assessment or assignment is not permitted. Any assessment submitted that is not a student’s own work, including that written by generative AI tools, are in breach of the University’s Code of Practice on Academic Integrity (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/conduct/plagiarism/index.aspx>

**Wellbeing Extenuating Circumstances:**

The process for Extenuating Circumstances is to support students who have experienced unforeseen issues that have impacted their ability to engage with their studies and/or complete assessments. Students should notify Wellbeing of any extenuating circumstances as soon as possible via the online form, following the guidance provided.

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/social-sciences/college-services/wellbeing/index.aspx>