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BUSCOM301 Business Communication

**Assignments Brief**

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| **01 – Unit Parameters** |

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| Unit Code | BUSCOM301 |
| Unit Title | Business Communication |
| Course Level | Higher Education – Equivalent to Diploma – AQF Levels 5 or 6 |
| Unit Type | [Core or elective, depending on course] |
| Credit Points | [Depending on course] |
| Pre-requisites | None |
| Co-requisites | BUSFND301 Business Fundamentals or  MKTFND301 Marketing Fundamentals |
| Delivery Type | Blended |
| Student Workload | Three hour workshops for 12 weeks and six hours personal study for 12 weeks, for a total of 108 hours for the unit. |
| Delivery Material | Unit Outline, PowerPoint Sessions, Assignments Brief, Assignment Booklets, Homework Booklet |
| Assignments | 1. Ten Weekly Practical Exercises  2. Analytical Report  3. Case Study and Draft Report  4. Oral Presentation and Final Report |

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| **02 – Assignments Table** |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Due** | **Grading** |
| 1. Ten Weekly Practical Exercises | Weeks 2 to 11 | 10% in total |
| 2. Analytical Report | Week 5 | 30% |
| 3. Case Study and Draft Report | Week 10 | 30”% |
| 4. Oral Presentation and Final Report | Weeks 11 and 12 | 30% |

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| **03.1 – Assignment 1 – Ten Weekly Practical Exercises** |

**Assessment Outline**

This assignment requires the submission of a weekly report of minimum 300 and maximum 600 words reflecting on the material of the previous week.

This is a practical exercise designed to assess the student’s ability to select a business project relevant to business communication issues and to relate the unit material to these issues and their possible resolution. Although it can be an actual business or a proposed one, the business and the issues must be consistent with a real-word project.

The first one of these reports must specify the actual or proposed business and its environment selected for ongoing reference and basis for assignments 2 to 4. It must include a short description and a reflection on relevance. All other reflections, weeks 3 to 11, must include a short description of at least one component of the material of the week and must also include a short critical analysis and some short suggestions as to the relevance of the material to the business to be used for assignments 2 to 4.

The reports may be used as starting points for class discussions and feedback.

**Assignment Criteria – Learning Outcomes**

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| --- | --- |
| 1.1 | Describe and discuss theories of business communication applicable to an actual business environment. |
| 1.2 | Demonstrate effective business research skills. |
| 1.3 | Critically analyse and evaluate business information. |
| 1.4 | Summarise business information in a business report format. |
| 2.1 | Describe and discuss how context affects business communication. |
| 2.2 | Describe and discuss how culture affects business communication. |
| 2.3 | Critically assess barriers to effective business communication. |
| 2.4 | Propose relevant ways to overcome barriers to effective business communication. |
| 3.1 | Demonstrate good communication skills grounded in effective listening, sound oral communication, and the ability to use feedback. |
| 3.2 | Demonstrate effective business writing skills, using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and formatting. |
| 3.3 | Demonstrate correct referencing and compliance with intellectual property considerations. |
| 3.4 | Demonstrate the ability to consolidate facts and figures with a view to effective business reporting. |

**Assignment Criteria – Marking**

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| **Submission Marking Criteria** | | **Grade** | |
| **1** | Compliance as defined in the template. |  | 1 |
| **2** | Relevant to business communication. |  | 1 |
| **3** | Relevant to the material for the week. |  | 1 |
| **4** | Relevant to actual business practice. |  | 1 |
| **5** | Quality of issues being addressed. |  | 1 |
| **6** | Quality of reflection on issues being addressed. |  | 1 |
| **7** | Quality of business writing practice. |  | 1 |
| **8** | Quality of formatting and presentation. |  | 1 |
| **9** | Includes relevant examples or illustrations. |  | 1 |
| **10** | Referencing or acknowledgment as required. |  | 1 |

Each one of the reports is graded out of 10. The total of the ten grades is divided by 10 for the 10% weighting for the grade for the unit.

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| **Grades** | **Weeks** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **02** | **03** | **04** | **05** | **06** | **07** | **08** | **09** | **10** | **11** | **/100** |
| **/10** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Assignment Criteria - Marking** | **Grade** | **Out Of** |
| **Adjusted Numeric Grade** |  | **10** |
| **Grade Code** |  |  |

**Assignment Due**

Weeks 2 to 11.

**Assignment Weighting**

10% in total.

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| **03.2 – Assignment 2 – Analytical Report** |

**Assignment Outline**

This assignment requires the submission of an analytical report of minimum 900 and maximum 1600 words reflecting on information gathered about the business selected for the first report of Assignment 1.

The analysis must cover the business details, key business parameters, and critical environmental issues affecting or likely to affect the business.

The analytical report must:

* demonstrate the ability to research business information and identify assumptions and information bias,
* demonstrate the ability to propose strategies to mitigate assumptions and information bias,
* include relevant key facts and figures,
* demonstrate effective business writing skills, using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and formatting, and
* demonstrate correct referencing and compliance with intellectual property considerations.

The report will normally be used as starting point for the case study to be used for assignments 3 and 4.

**Assignment Criteria – Learning Outcomes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1.1 | Describe and discuss theories of business communication applicable to an actual business environment. |
| 1.2 | Demonstrate effective business research skills. |
| 1.3 | Critically analyse and evaluate business information. |
| 1.4 | Summarise business information in a business report format. |
| 3.2 | Demonstrate effective business writing skills, using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and formatting. |
| 3.3 | Demonstrate correct referencing and compliance with intellectual property considerations. |

**Assignment Criteria – Marking**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Submission Marking Criteria** | | **Grade** | |
| **1** | Relevant to selected business. |  | 5 |
| **2** | The business details are covered. |  | 5 |
| **3** | The key business parameters are covered. |  | 10 |
| **4** | The critical issues are covered. |  | 10 |
| **5** | Assumptions and bias are identified. |  | 10 |
| **6** | Relevant mitigations strategies are proposed. |  | 10 |
| **7** | Relevant facts and figures are provided. |  | 10 |
| **8** | Quality of the analysis. |  | 20 |
| **9** | Word count is within accepted limits. |  | 5 |
| **10** | Quality of business writing practice. |  | 5 |
| **11** | Quality of formatting and presentation. |  | 5 |
| **12** | Referencing or acknowledgment as required. |  | 5 |

The analytical report is graded out of 30% for the unit.

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| **Result** | **Grade** | **Out Of** |
| **Numeric Grade** |  | 100 |
| **Adjusted Numeric Grade** |  | 30 |
| **Grade Code** |  |  |

**Assignment Due**

Week 5.

**Assignment Weighting**

30%.

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| **03.3 – Assignment 3 – Case Study and Draft Report** |

**Assignment Outline**

This assignment requires a case study to be performed and must lead to a draft analytical business report to be submitted for assessment.

The case study must be based on the business proposed in the first weekly report for Assignment 1. The draft report must be of minimum 1500 and maximum 2500 words. It is a record of the result of the case study.

The draft report must:

* include a Methodology section outlining the approaches to the research involved in the case study and the analysis of information,
* include a Data section reporting the facts and figures identified during the research,
* included a critical evaluation Discussion section outlining the issues arising, the potential implications, and proposed strategies to take advantage of strength and mitigate weaknesses,
* demonstrate the ability to research business information and identify assumptions, information bias, cultural issues, and barriers to communication,
* demonstrate the ability to propose strategies to mitigate assumptions, information bias, cultural issues, and barriers to communication,
* demonstrate effective business writing skills, using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and formatting, and
* demonstrate correct referencing and compliance with intellectual property considerations.

The draft report will be used as material for the oral presentation and the final report for Assignment 4.

**Assignment Criteria – Learning Outcomes**

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| --- | --- |
| 1.1 | Describe and discuss theories of business communication applicable to an actual business environment. |
| 1.2 | Demonstrate effective business research skills. |
| 1.3 | Critically analyse and evaluate business information. |
| 1.4 | Summarise business information in a business report format. |
| 2.1 | Describe and discuss how context affects business communication. |
| 2.2 | Describe and discuss how culture affects business communication. |
| 2.3 | Critically assess barriers to effective business communication. |
| 2.4 | Propose relevant ways to overcome barriers to effective business communication. |
| 3.2 | Demonstrate effective business writing skills, using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and formatting. |
| 3.3 | Demonstrate correct referencing and compliance with intellectual property considerations. |

**Assignment Criteria – Marking**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Submission Marking Criteria** | | **Grade** | |
| **1** | Relevant to selected business issues. |  | 5 |
| **2** | Quality of Abstract. |  | 5 |
| **3** | Quality of Executive Summary. |  | 5 |
| **4** | Quality of Methodology section. |  | 15 |
| **5** | Quality of case study and research data. |  | 15 |
| **6** | Quality of Data section drafting and presentation. |  | 15 |
| **7** | Quality of analysis and Discussion section. |  | 15 |
| **8** | Quality of Conclusion. |  | 5 |
| **9** | Word count is within accepted limits. |  | 5 |
| **10** | Quality of business writing practice. |  | 5 |
| **11** | Quality of formatting and presentation. |  | 5 |
| **12** | Referencing or acknowledgment as required. |  | 5 |

The case study with draft report is an assignment graded out of 30% for the unit.

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| **Result** | **Grade** | **Out Of** |
| **Numeric Grade** |  | 100 |
| **Adjusted Numeric Grade** |  | 30 |
| **Grade Code** |  |  |

**Assignment Due**

Week 10.

**Assignment Weighting**

30%.

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| **03.4 – Assignment 4 – Oral Presentation and Final Report** |

**Assignment Outline**

This assignment has two elements. It requires the presentation, in a physical location or online, of the material from the report on the case study prepared for Assignment 3. It also requires the submission of a final report on the case study. This final report will be grounded in the draft report from Assignment 3 updated with information provided as feedback to the oral presentation component of this Assignment 4.

The final report must be of minimum 1600 and maximum 2800 words. It must include the same sections as the draft report outlined above and must demonstrate the same competency in regard to research, strategies, writing, and referencing.

**Assignment Criteria – Learning Outcomes**

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| --- | --- |
| 1.1 | Describe and discuss theories of business communication applicable to an actual business environment. |
| 1.2 | Demonstrate effective business research skills. |
| 1.3 | Critically analyse and evaluate business information. |
| 1.4 | Summarise business information in a business report format. |
| 2.1 | Describe and discuss how context affects business communication. |
| 2.2 | Describe and discuss how culture affects business communication. |
| 2.3 | Critically assess barriers to effective business communication. |
| 2.4 | Propose relevant ways to overcome barriers to effective business communication. |
| 3.1 | Demonstrate good communication skills grounded in effective listening, sound oral communication, and the ability to use feedback. |
| 3.2 | Demonstrate effective business writing skills, using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and formatting. |
| 3.3 | Demonstrate correct referencing and compliance with intellectual property considerations. |
| 3.4 | Demonstrate the ability to consolidate facts and figures with a view to effective business reporting. |

**Assignment Criteria – Marking**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Submission Marking Criteria** | | **Grade** | |
| **1** | Relevant to selected business issues. |  | 5 |
| **2** | Effectiveness of preparation of the presentation. |  | 5 |
| **3** | Quality of the presentation material. |  | 15 |
| **4** | Quality of the actual presentation. |  | 5 |
| **5** | Effectiveness of request for feedback. |  | 5 |
| **6** | Use of feedback the edit draft report. |  | 15 |
| **7** | Quality edited report. |  | 20 |
| **8** | Quality of revised conclusion. |  | 10 |
| **9** | Word count is within accepted limits. |  | 5 |
| **10** | Quality of business writing practice. |  | 5 |
| **11** | Quality of formatting and presentation. |  | 5 |
| **12** | Referencing or acknowledgment as required. |  | 5 |

The oral presentation and the final report are the components of this assignment graded as a whole out of 30% for the unit.

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| **Result** | **Grade** | **Out Of** |
| **Numeric Grade** |  | 100 |
| **Adjusted Numeric Grade** |  | 30 |
| **Grade Code** |  |  |

**Assignment Due**

Weeks 11 and 12.

**Assignment Weighting**

30%.

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| **04 – Submission Mode and Deadlines** |

The oral presentation component of Assignment 4 must be organised with the lecturer or tutor. The audience for the presentation must also include an audience of at least five students or competent guests who will provide feedback.

The written assignments will generally be due electronically on the Sunday at the end of the due week for the assignment, based on the assignments table and outlines under 2 and 3 above. The precise mode of submission will be a function of the learning platform used and will be defined as part of the assignment documents on the platform.

Assessed assignments will be returned with assessor’s comments.

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| **05 – Format and Referencing** |

The following guidelines are provided to assist in planning and presenting assignments in the appropriate format and with proper referencing. Any provided templates must be used.

Written documents must normally be submitted in MS Word or compatible. The submissions cannot be in PDF or other non-editable formats. Inserted objects may be in different formats as agreed with the teacher prior to submission.

Page size: A4, white background, standard margins, and portrait; unless another format is agreed with the relevant teacher prior to submission. Front page: unit code, unit title, student full name, student number, date of submission. Font: default font as per template, if provided, or plain front such as Arial or Times New Roman, with a standard size of 11pts or 12pts throughout, except for indented quotes and similar inclusions that may need a reduction by 1 pt.

A reference list must be included. The referencing standard may be defined as part of the assignment documents. If not, a common standard may be selected. The same standard must be applied throughout all the assignments for the unit.

Many universities offer free access to referencing guides as part of their online library system. An example of this is the following.

[Home - Citing and referencing - Subject guides at Monash University](https://guides.lib.monash.edu/citing-referencing)

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| **06 – Late Submissions** |

The following guidelines are provided to assist in planning and presenting assignments in the appropriate format and with proper referencing.

If an assignment is submitted late, a late penalty may be applied. The penalty may be specified in the assignment documents. It is common for the penalty to specify that late work will be graded as either a PASS or a FAIL, so that the highest possible outcome will be a PASS grade with a mark of 50%. Penalties and exemptions must be provided by the teacher for the unit, if not specified in the learning management system.

Assignments submitted more than two weeks after the due date without special consideration approval can be rejected outright.

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| **07 – Plagiarism and Malpractice** |

Plagiarism as a form of misconduct. Students will be held accountable should plagiarism or other forms of malpractice be uncovered.

Any breach of proper practice can be recorded and held as evidence and can be used to justify a penalty with loss of marks, possible need to resubmit, or even a FAIL grade for the unit, and in serious repeated offences a FAIL grade for the course and possibly expulsion.

If in doubt about proper practice, the student must contact the teacher as soon as possible in order to request guidance and support.

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| **08 – Assignment Criteria** |

**Learning Outcomes**

Learning outcomes at the level of this unit must be consistent with the course level of Higher Education – Equivalent to Diploma – AQF Levels 5 or 6. Not all of the learning outcomes must necessarily be met in all assignments for the unit but the level of combined demonstration of competency can lead to the grades being adjusted, especially when a concessional pass may be considered.

**Marking – Grades**

You must aim to demonstrated your ability to address all the marking criteria with every submission. You must ask your teacher for guidance if you struggle with any of these and you may need to discuss the weekly feedback, if any.

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| **09 – Special Consideration, Grievances, and Appeals** |

To apply for an appeal or special consideration, students must complete the relevant form. Any such form will normally be included as part of the material available on the learning management system. If in doubt, the student must contact the teacher as soon as possible in order to request guidance and support.

Special consideration must normally be submitted prior to the relevant deadline for the assessment concerned, unless the circumstances leading to the request happen at such a time that the request cannot be made on time.

Except in exceptional circumstances to be cleared by the lecturer or higher authority, grievances and appeals must normally be submitted within a week of the relevant incident causing grievance or from the return of the assessed assignment.

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| **10 – Grading Interpretation** |

A common approach to grading is provided below. Another form of grading may be used for a specific delivery of the unit. If this is the case, the grading formula must be specified in the learning management system.

Grades are released to students after confirmation by the academic board or similar authority.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Code | Meaning | % | Relevance |
| HD | High Distinction | =>80 <=100 | Outstanding work in terms of understanding, interpretation, and presentation.  Genuine originality and sophistication of thought.  Informed, up-to-date, highly independent, and persuasive |
| D | Distinction | =>70 <80 | High standard of work; demonstrating sound insight and originality.  Informed, up-to-date, and sustaining a clear, cogent, and persuasive argument.  Evidence of sound reading, good listening, and effective assimilation of knowledge. |
| C | Credit | =>60 <70 | Good understanding and presentation with a degree of insight and originality.  Good submissions but arguments may lack clarity, be very derivative, or be poorly structured.  It may be work that is generally good but that goes astray on crucial points. |
| P | Pass | =>50 <60 | Satisfies the minimum requirements. |
| N | Fail | <50 | Not achieving minimum requirements |