



**Faculty of Business and Law**  
**Assignment Brief 2022/23**

Unit Title: Executing Projects in Uncertainty (EPU)		
Unit Code: 5Z7V0002	Core: YES (MSc PM)	Level: 7
Assignment Identifier: <b>EPU Individual Assignment-SIT</b>		
Unit Leader: Dr. Amin Akhavan Tabassi		
Contact Details: Email address: <a href="mailto:A.Akhavan.Tabassi@mmu.ac.uk">A.Akhavan.Tabassi@mmu.ac.uk</a> ; Room Number BS. 6.17; Telephone Number: 0161 247 55161		
Submission Date: See date on Moodle – to be submitted before 21:00 hours GMT	Feedback Return Date: See Date on Moodle. Week Commencing - Four weeks after submission deadline.	
Submission Instructions: Submit electronically via Moodle. Details on how to do this are on Moodle. Note that the assignment will be checked using Turnitin. (See section on Plagiarism below.)		
Feedback Return Information: Marks and Feedback will be given on Moodle four weeks after the submission deadline.		
<b>Assignment Task and word count</b>  Create and describe a plan for delivering a major international project, using adaptive or hybrid project management methods. Critically analyse the impact of a crisis (e.g. COVID-19) and/or uncertain situations on the implementation of this project. Provide recommendations for the project manager to address the issues. Use examples from practice to support your work.  <b>This is an individual piece of work of a maximum 3500 words (excluding the reference list). Note that excess will be ignored.</b>		
<b><u>Assignment Support:</u></b> 1. Contact Information/assignment support: For any assignment support contact your Tutor: Dr Amin A Tabassi (a.akhavan.tabassi@mmu.ac.uk).		
<b><u>Feedback Return Information:</u></b> 1. Feedback on your Assignment submissions will be available on Moodle. 2. Feedback return date is shown above.		
<b><u>Unit Learning Outcomes Assessed:</u></b>  1. Evaluate and critically reflect on executing, monitoring and control techniques for projects		

2. Critically assess the environmental factors, including political issues, for complex projects.

**World Class Professional Skills (PLOs) being assessed or developed/assessed:**

This assignment will help further develop information gathering capabilities, critical analysis and thinking skills and practical decision making as well as enhancing written communication skills, which are essential for employability and lifelong learning. The appropriate Programme Learning Outcomes are -

PLO1. Identify and apply information critically in relation to context (developed)

PLO2. Demonstrate communication skills at the appropriate level and using appropriate media (developed)

PLO3. Identify and interrogate issues of ethics, responsibility and sustainability (developed)

**PLO4. Demonstrate critical professional and commercial/corporate awareness in your discipline (assessed)**

**Assignment Details and Instructions:**

You are required to select the main elements of international projects, delivered using Agile or Hybrid methods, to be investigated by this assignment. You need to produce a literature review of the selected areas, giving a critique of each selected one. The main criteria for the assignment are covered below.

Describe and Analyse a plan for delivering an International Project in the situation of a crisis and/or uncertainty

You need to formulate and describe a plan for delivering a major international project, using the techniques of Agile or Hybrid Project Management. You should then provide a critical analysis of the main issues that may affect the project implementation in the situation of a crisis and/or uncertainty (e.g. COVID-19 Pandemic). You should use examples from practice and produce a literature review, summarising the important academic literature sources, in respect of each element. You must also provide recommendations to address the identified issues and thus assist the project manager in delivering a successful project responding to the business impacts of the situation.

You are, thus, required to give evidence of appropriate reading (either practitioner or academic) to support your points in respect of the main elements of projects delivered using Agile or Hybrid methods. This work should comprise a critical analysis of the key issues, namely a thorough investigation of the strengths, weaknesses and alternatives in respect of the main elements of such projects.

**Quality of Analysis**

The quality of your analysis will be considered. This should comprise a critical use of the literature, to underpin and ground evidence, data, models, and theory. You will also reflect on the strengths, weaknesses, and alternatives in respect of the project factors.

**Presentation**

The assignment should be presented in a well-structured essay, with appropriate topics chosen, identifying key themes and sub-themes and be well-scoped. A clear, coherent assignment with appropriate referencing should be produced.

### Notes

The individual assignment accounts for **100 percent** of the marks awarded for this unit.

This comprises an individual piece of work of a maximum **3500 words** for **100 percent** (as specified in this brief).

See the Executing Projects in Uncertainty folder on Moodle for further information.

### Academic Integrity, Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism

Academic Integrity is about engaging in good academic practice. It means being honest and transparent, and demonstrating rigour and accuracy in your work. This can include the proper citation and referencing of the sources of your ideas and information, ensuring that you are using appropriate research methods, or checking that your work is free of errors.

Additional information, video tutorials and guides to support good academic practice and maintain Academic Integrity in your assignments can be found on the Academic Integrity area of the [Academic and Study Skills page on Moodle](#).

Academic Misconduct is any action that could give you an unfair advantage in coursework, exams, or any other assessed work, which could lead to undermining the academic standards of the University. This includes practices such as plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating or falsification of data. Full details of the Manchester Metropolitan University guidelines for Academic Misconduct and definitions of terms can be found [here](#).

### Late submissions & Assessment Mitigations:

Please refer to [this link](#) which will take you to MMU Student Life Assessment & Results guidance. Here you will find information for MMU's assessment mitigations process. Further guidance can be found in this [video link](#) for step-by-step instructions on how to apply for your extension via Moodle.

**Please Note:** If you think you are unable to submit on time due to a health or some other unforeseen issue you must request this via your unit Moodle page, referring to the guidance in the links provided above.

### Recommended Reading:

Meredith, J.R., Mantel, S.J. and Shafer, S.M. (2016), Project Management: A Managerial Approach, (9/e), John Wiley and Sons, Inc. *All Saints Library 658.404MER*

Nicholas, J. M. and Steyn, H. (2017) *Project management for engineering, business and technology*. Fifth edn. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group. *All Saints Library* 658.404 NIC

Wysocki, R. K. (2019) *Effective project management : traditional, agile, extreme*. 8th edn. Newark: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated(Available at: <https://mmu.on.worldcat.org/v2/oclc/1096533428>)

Highsmith, J.A. (2010), *Agile Project Management: Creating Innovative Products*, (2/e), Addison-Wesley, London., *All Saints Library* 005.12 HIG

Maylor, H. (2010), *Project management*, FT Prentice Hall, Harlow, England., *All Saints Library* 658.404MAY

### **Additional Reading:**

Yang, S. S. and Chong, Z. (2021) "Smart City Projects against Covid-19: Quantitative Evidence from China," *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 70. doi: 10.1016/j.scs.2021.102897.

Cadle, J. and Yeates, D. (2007), *Project Management for Information Systems* (3/e), FT Prentice Hall, Harlow, England., *All Saints Library* 658.4038PRO

Cleland, D.I. and Ireland, L.R. (2007), *Project Management: Strategic Design and Implementation* (5/e), McGraw-Hill, USA. *All Saints Library* 658.404CLE

Gardiner, P.D. (2005), *Project Management: A Strategic Planning Approach*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke., *All Saints Library* 658.404GAR

Project Management Institute (2017) *A guide to the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK guide)*. Sixth edn. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute (PMBOK guide).

Bible, M. J. and Bivins, S. S. (2019) *Project interface management: reducing risk on major projects*. Chicago: J. Ross Publishing.

Pinto, J. K. (2020) *Project management: achieving competitive advantage*. Fifth edition, Global edn. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited.

Lientz, B. and Rea, K.P. (2002), *Project Management for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, London Academic Press, San Diego., *All Saints Library* 658.404LIE

### Journals:

European Journal of Information Systems

Harvard Business Review

International Journal of Project Management

Journal of Information Technology

**Websites:**

Association for Project Management (APM) [www.apm.org.uk](http://www.apm.org.uk)

Project Management Institute (PMI): [www.pmi.org](http://www.pmi.org)

**Further Assignment Guidance:**

There are diverse arguments that are of potential relevance to this essay question. You are invited to make an assessment of the question that is supported by evidence.

Some of the other challenges of this assignment are the ability to demonstrate that:

- You have engaged with a sufficient and varied range of research sources (at least Fifteen different sources) to improve the potential quality of your work
- You have correctly interpreted and evaluated such diverse sources
- You can structure your work appropriately and you write in a coherent manner
- You have been selective in the sources you eventually chose, with reference to them and with some justification as to why they are perceived to be significant
- You can avoid the excessive use of descriptive text in order to allow sufficient space for more analytical work.

Further guidance on this assignment will be provided in the Assignment Hand Out lecture. A guide to the assignment content will be provided at this session.

**Formative feedback:**

During tutorial sessions,

1. You will be required to complete certain tasks individually for formative assessment and feedback.
2. Formative feedback will be given to students when they book a slot to meet their tutor.

Resources

Lectures, coursework, library and see the Executing Projects in Uncertainty folder on Moodle.

**Ethics:**

Making use of empirical data, or access to sensitive documents that are not available in public domains will require you to apply for Ethics approval. To get more about research ethics and governance visit:

<https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/research/staff/ethics-and-governance/ethics/>

It is, however, advised to use only published work for this assignment.

**Resources:**

Lectures, coursework, library and see the Executing Projects in Uncertainty folder on Moodle.

**Marking Criteria: \***

See below for the Assessment Marking Criteria (including Programme Learning Outcomes Assessment Criteria, as applicable).

Note that the pass mark for this assignment is 50%.

**Group Work Guidelines (If applicable):**

Not applicable.

See Moodle for Unit Specification

**Marking Criteria** – the University Step Marking scheme will be used for each element of the assignment. The marking rubrics at the end of this brief gives the more specific criteria for guiding the marks awarded in the context of this unit.

Mark	PGT Classification
95 - 100%	First Distinction
90%	
85%	
80%	
75%	
72%	Marginal Distinction
68%	Merit
65%	
62%	
58%	Pass
55%	
52%	Marginal pass
48%	Marginal Fail
45%	
42%	
38%	Fail
35%	
32%	
28%	
25%	
22%	
18%	
15%	
12%	
8%	
5%	
2%	
0%	No Submission

## Assessment Marking Criteria Rubric \*

The University has introduced a step marking scheme. Within a grade band you will be awarded a mark of 2, 5, or 8 eg 52, 55, 58 or 62, 65, 68, indicating whether your work is overall mid, low, or high within that grade band. The full step marking scheme can be found at [https://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/assessment/lifecycle/5\\_step\\_marking.php](https://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/assessment/lifecycle/5_step_marking.php)

### Report (100% weighting)

Assessment descriptor	Fail 0-19%	Fail 20-44%	Marginal fail 45-49%	Pass 50-59%	Merit 60-69%	Marginal Distinction 70-85%	Distinction 86-100%
<b><i>Understanding of the Question</i></b> Do the issues raised primarily relate to the remit of the question, namely creating a project plan using agile or hybrid methods then providing a critical analysis of the implementation of this plan to run an international project, using examples from practice and providing recommendations for the project manager to assist in delivering a successful project?  <b>PLO3</b>	Unable to show that the issues raised relate to the remit of the question.	Insufficient effort to show that the issues raised relate to the remit of the question.	Some ability to make a limited assessment of the issues involved in answering the question.	A fair to good attempt to show that the issues raised relate well to the remit of the question.	A good to very good attempt to show that the issues raised relate well to the remit of the question.	An excellent demonstration that almost all of the issues raised relate well to the remit of the question.	An outstanding answer that shows that all of the issues raised relate well to the remit of the question.
<b><i>Quality of Analysis</i></b> Selection and understanding of the literature. Does the work seek to reflect further on such ideas or critique some of the views, or is it too descriptive? Does it demonstrate global and/or international awareness of business practice and critical professional and commercial/corporate awareness in your discipline?  <b>PLO4</b>	Misunderstanding of the topic and not enough scholarly activity. The work is weak in terms of analysis. Does not demonstrate global awareness of business practice and professional awareness.	Some attempt made to use core knowledge, may still be limited and/or lack clarity. The work is weak in terms of analysis. Demonstrates very low level of global awareness of business practice and professional awareness.	Insufficient grasp and weak in terms of scholarly research. The analysis is often insufficient. Demonstrates low level of global awareness of business practice and professional awareness.	A fairly good grasp. Evidence of some scholarly activity. However, the work produced is often is more descriptive than analytical. Demonstrates satisfactory level of global awareness of business practice and professional awareness.	A very good grasp. Good scholarly activity. The work is more analytical than descriptive. Demonstrates good level of global awareness of business practice and professional awareness.	An excellent grasp of the literature. Strong evidence of scholarly research and reflection. Demonstrates excellent level of global awareness of business practice and professional awareness.	An outstanding grasp. The arguments are based on sound ideas. Most issues are maturely handled in an outstanding analysis. Demonstrates outstanding level of global awareness of business practice and professional awareness.
<b><i>Use of contemporary and relevant secondary sources to frame analysis and evaluation and evidence core knowledge</i></b>  <b>PLO1</b>	Little/no/inappropriate use of secondary source or sources not relevant.	Limited or weak use of secondary sources, and/or sources of poor quality	Some descriptive use of relevant sources to evidence knowledge, but still weak in application to analysis and design.	Some attempt to adopt critical approach to using relevant sources.	Competent critical use of good quality, relevant sources.	Rigorous and critical approach to using a wide range of relevant sources.	In addition to lower grade band, demonstrates originality in critical analysis and use of sources.

<b>Application of MMU Harvard referencing standard</b>	Very few references and citations, and/or unable to apply Harvard referencing standard.	Some references and in text citation. Not in the Harvard style or inconsistently applied.	Adequate Harvard referencing/citation, but still inconsistencies or inaccuracy.	Satisfactory application of Harvard referencing standard with some inconsistency.	Careful application of Harvard referencing standard. Able to apply to a range of types of sources with only minor inconsistencies.	In addition to lower grade band, no noticeable errors or inconsistencies	Sophisticated application of Harvard referencing standard to a wide range of types of sources with no noticeable errors or inconsistencies.
<b>Standard of written communication</b> Is the work well structured e.g. orderly and coherent? Are the topics chosen and sub themes sensibly scoped? Is the work well referenced?  <b>PLO2</b>	Inappropriate language. Unacceptable standard of grammar, spelling, presentation. Unstructured/ disorganised. Careless presentation. No/extremely poor cross-referencing. The work struggles to meet most of the specific criteria.	Some inappropriate writing style for business report. Still noticeable errors in spelling and grammar. Some structure and logic but still noticeable gaps. Insufficient care in presentation.	Acceptable use of language and standard of spelling and grammar. Some lack of conciseness. Structure and flow sufficient to convey clarity in argument. Presentation consistent but basic. Some meeting of the specific criteria but insufficient at this academic level.	Appropriate use of language for business report. Clear, concise. Very occasional and minor spelling and grammar errors. Coherent and logical. Uses commonly accepted conventions for presentation. A fairly good demonstration that most of the specified criteria has been met.	Competent standard of writing for business purposes in all areas. Demonstrates good knowledge of use of word processing tools. A very good demonstration that most of the specified criteria has been met.	In addition to lower grade band may correctly use some sophisticated vocabulary relevant to theory and practice area. No noticeable errors in writing or presentation. An excellent demonstration that most of the specified criteria has been met.	In addition to lower grade band may demonstrate imaginative approach to enhancing communication and presentation. Professional standard report. The work produced is outstanding in terms of the specified criteria.
<b>Conclusions and recommendations</b> logically supported by analysis, evaluation, and evidence  <b>PLO4</b>	None or extremely limited conclusions and recommendations with weak connection to discussion.	Limited conclusions/ recommendations. Some connection to discussion. May still lack clarity or not be well supported.	Partial identification of conclusions/ recommendations. May still be unsupported/ or arguments not fully developed to conclusion.	Identification of sensible conclusions and recommendations logically supported by analysis, evaluation, and evidence.	Confident and thorough identification of conclusions and recommendations robustly supported by analysis, evaluation, and evidence.	In addition to lower grade band, critically considers strengths/limitation of conclusions and complexity of implications of Model.	In addition to lower grade band, demonstrates originality and creativity in modelling and analysis.

### Exceeding the max word count

If you exceed the max word limit in the Report, your assessor will not assess beyond the word limit for that element.