

COMP1635 (2016/17)	Professionalism in the IT Industry	Faculty Header ID: 300142	Contribution: 60% of course
Course Leader: Mrs Aditi Rawal	Business Plan Group Report		Deadline Date: Friday 06/01/2017
<p>This coursework should take an average student who is up-to-date with tutorial work approximately 30 hours</p> <p>Feedback and grades are normally made available within 15 working days of the coursework deadline</p>			
<p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <p>A. Apply employability skills to vocational situations;</p> <p>B. Demonstrate appropriate business communication skills;</p> <p>C. Apply critical thinking skills to a workplace situation;</p> <p>D. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the IT professional</p>			

Plagiarism is presenting somebody else's work as your own. It includes: copying information directly from the Web or books without referencing the material; submitting joint coursework as an individual effort; copying another student's coursework; stealing coursework from another student and submitting it as your own work. Suspected plagiarism will be investigated and if found to have occurred will be dealt with according to the procedures set down by the University. Please see your student handbook for further details of what is / isn't plagiarism.

All material copied or amended from any source (e.g. internet, books) must be referenced correctly according to the reference style you are using.

Your work will be submitted for plagiarism checking. Any attempt to bypass our plagiarism detection systems will be treated as a severe Assessment Offence.

Coursework Submission Requirements

- An electronic copy of your work for this coursework must be fully uploaded on the Deadline Date of **Friday 06/01/2017** using the link on the coursework Moodle page for COMP1635.
- For this coursework you must submit a single PDF document. In general, any text in the document must not be an image (i.e. must not be scanned) and would normally be generated from other documents (e.g. MS Office using "Save As .. PDF"). An exception to this is hand written mathematical notation, but when scanning do ensure the file size is not excessive.
- For this coursework you must also upload a single **ZIP** file containing supporting evidence.
- There are limits on the file size (see the relevant course Moodle page).
- Make sure that any files you upload are virus-free and not protected by a password or corrupted otherwise they will be treated as null submissions.
- Your work will not be printed in colour. Please ensure that any pages with colour are acceptable when printed in Black and White.
- You must NOT submit a paper copy of this coursework.
- All courseworks must be submitted as above. Under no circumstances can they be accepted by academic staff

The University website has details of the current Coursework Regulations, including details of penalties for late submission, procedures for Extenuating Circumstances, and penalties for Assessment Offences. See <http://www2.gre.ac.uk/current-students/regs>

Detailed specification

This work comprises two parts. **Submitting BOTH parts is compulsory for all students.**

Failing to submit one of the two parts will lead to failing the coursework overall.

PART 1. The Group Business Plan: Identical copies of this will be submitted by all members of your team. Please read the detailed description below.

PART 2. The individual Critical Reflection and Team Assessment Feedback: Individual work to be submitted by each student separately attached with your group work. Please read the detailed description below.

Guidelines

The Group Business Plan Document

Your task for this assignment is to write a business plan for a start-up firm. Your word limit (3000 words approximately + appendices) is less than for most business plans and therefore the following guidelines have been written to provide more specific guidance for your work. Please note that you can find useful information on the various parts of a business plan in many Enterprise and Entrepreneurship books at the library (Barringer and Ireland, 2012 and Stokes and Wilson, 2010) and from many other sources. Please ensure that your business plan is written in a formal and concise style and ensure that the proposals and projections you make are realistic.

Please use the following headings (some guidelines have been provided for a suggested length of each section, although your group can decide to deviate from these and long as you stay within the overall word limit).

i) Cover Page / Table of Contents - Please indicate the group members on the cover page followed by the table of contents

ii) Executive Summary (200 words) – this provides an overall summary of the main points of your report; you should complete this towards the end, once you have put together the main body of your work.

iii) Product Description (400 words) - In this section you need to provide an introduction to your planned product or service. Try to put across the **excitement and potential of the business idea**. Some questions you should answer are:-

What benefits will your product or service bring? What problem does it solve?

Why would somebody buy / use it? What value does it add to the customer?

iv) Company Information/ management team (300 words) – As this is a start-up firm you will obviously not include a detailed company history but you should include a brief explanation of how your firm has come together. This section should be fairly short, provide a concise explanation of the skills of the various team members and how they will divide up the various tasks within the business.

V) Environmental Analysis (800 words) –

- Use either a PESTLE or SWOT analysis to show you understand your intended industry environment.
- Competitor Analysis - Identify competitor or substitute products or services and outline the advantages that your product has over these competitors.

vi) Target Market analysis (500 words) - Within this section you should describe your target market. Try to describe a typical buyer – for example, male or female, age profile, income profile, social / ethnic factors, social class, their 'typical' lifestyle and any other relevant information. Include in this section details of any initial market research that you have done. Please refer to any relevant sources as evidence of your research.

You need to break the industry down into segments and highlight which segment your firm will participate in. Give some details of what you consider to be the potential size of the market and, in addition, outline if the market is scalable.

vii) Marketing plan (500 words) - You need to describe how your business will market and sell its product. You will need to make clear how your firm will position itself in the market and how it will differentiate itself from competitors. As you will be explaining your product adequately in other sections of your plan, concentrate on your firm's approach to price, promotion and distribution. The decisions which you outline here need to correspond with what you describe in other sections and your positioning of the product and points of distribution.

viii) Financial projections (300 words) - For this section you need to make some projections about the financial development of your firm. You need to outline any assumptions that you have made in putting together these projections. It is very important that you are realistic in the projections that you make. In order to do this try to answer the following questions:-

Indicate how your business will be funded. How many products / services do you expect to sell? (Try to predict sales over a 3 year period and explain the evidence you are using to support your predictions). Explain how much do you expect to be able to charge for your product or service and how this compares with competitors and substitutes. Explain whether you intend to apply any discounts? Outline what costs will you incur, including fixed and direct costs (itemise these as accurately as you can).

For this section you will need to provide and explain your 'Projected Financial Statements', (referred to as Pro forma financial statements in the Barringer and Ireland textbook).

Finally

A couple of final points of advice. Firstly, make sure that the different sections of your business plan fit together well and that there are no contradictions / inconsistencies in the plan. Please also remember that for this work you are required to reference your sources. This would not be the case in a normal business plan but is a requirement here as, for an assignment, referencing provides evidence of the research you have done.

Finally, remember that you need to try and convey to the reader the excitement and potential of your business idea. Hopefully you will find this work both enjoyable and creative – Good luck!

2. The individual Critical Reflection and Team Assessment Feedback

A 400-500 word document that will provide:

- a. A critical review of YOUR performance in the team (e.g. reflecting on what you could have done more, or how you believe you could have put your skills to work in a more effective way).
- b. Also include a critical reflection on what YOU believe could have been done better, overall, to enhance your team's performance and improve the quality & impact of the Business Plan.
- c. **Team Performa (To be completed and submitted with the report).**

Team Performa:			Notes
Group member name	Task description		
		Contribution%	

Total

Initials

Notes:

Grading and Assessment Criteria

80% +	<p>You would be expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An outstanding piece of work must demonstrate a strong level of engagement with the topic and the ability to apply techniques/concepts studied in class to a professional standard. • An exemplary approach to writing your report and conveying a novel argument. • A thorough and detailed understanding of the need to select appropriate information sources • The ability to critically evaluate and discuss all appropriate information sources in an effective way. • Proper use of referencing throughout your report.
70%-79%	<p>You would be expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellent approach to writing your report and conveying your argument. • An impressive demonstration of initiative, research, critical analysis, organisation, engagement and application • A detailed understanding of the need to select appropriate information sources • The ability to critically evaluate and discuss all appropriate information sources in an effective way. • Proper use of referencing throughout your report.
60%-69%	<p>You would be expected to demonstrate a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good to very good attempt in demonstrating a strong understanding of the requirements of the assignment. • A clear, concise approach to writing your report and conveying your argument. • An understanding of the need to select information sources that will provide you with the opportunity to make a well-rounded argument. • The ability to critically evaluate the main issues raised in the information sources that you have used and present this as a reasonable discussion. • Proper use of referencing throughout your report.
50%-59%	<p>You would be expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sound approach to writing your report and conveying your argument • Report writing skills that enable you to present facts/argument in a straightforward way. • The ability to make a sensible choice of information sources. • An attempt to critically evaluate your information sources and provide a competent discussion. • Proper use of referencing throughout your report.
40%-49%	<p>You would be expected to demonstrate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barely sufficient evidence of effective understanding of the assignment • Basic report writing skills that enable you to set out a structured, if weak, argument. • The ability to choose information sources relating to the subject matter that may provide you with the basis for a basic discussion. • A basic attempt at critical evaluation and discussion. • Proper use of referencing throughout your report.
30-39%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrowly fails to provide sufficient evidence of effective understanding

	<p>of the requirements of the assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A poor display of research, organisation, initiative, analysis and application. • Work that does not meet the requirements of the exercises, shows little effort and a lack of understanding of the techniques/concepts studied in class will be graded as a Fail. • You don't reference your report adequately.
0-29%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little to no understanding of the requirements of the assignment. • Little effort involved in research, organisation, initiative, analysis or application. • Work that does not meet the requirements of the exercises, shows little effort and a lack of understanding of the techniques/concepts studied in class will be graded as a Fail. • You don't reference your report adequately.