

## **BUS133 on Organisation Studies: ASSIGNMENT 2021-2022 Sem B**

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### **Assessment**

Type	Weighting	Details	Submission date
Coursework	100%	2500-word essay	3 pm, Friday, 22 <sup>th</sup> April

### **Additional information/breakdown regarding coursework assessment details:**

The word count for this assessment is 2500 words. This does **not** include reference lists and bibliographies. The stated word count may be exceeded by a maximum of 10%.

### **ESSAY QUESTIONS**

Please choose one of the essay options noted below to write your coursework assignment. This assignment is 2500 words in length excluding the references.

**Q1 Critically assess the efficacy of content theories (e.g. Maslow's hierarchy of needs; McGregor's theory x and theory y; Herzberg's two factor theory; McClelland's need for achievement theory) vs. process theories (Adams' equity theory; Vroom's Expectancy theory) in relation to an organization of your own choice.**

Please note that in your essay you should discuss in detail one content theory and one process theory, based on your own choice from the examples provided in brackets above. You can use some of the readings under week 2, where the main topic is motivation, to answer this question. However, you should also display your capacity for independent research by incorporating some outside sources that are not on the module list. Additionally, you should attempt to incorporate relevant ideas from topics covered in other weeks in order to enrich your essay, and make it more multidimensional, although this should not come at the expense of coherence.

**OR**

**Q2 Critically discuss barriers that hinder women's advancement to leadership posts in organisations.**

You can use some of the suggested readings under week 3 to answer this question – the seminar reading, in particular, is a useful source. However, you should also display your capacity for independent research by incorporating some outside references. Additionally, you should attempt to incorporate relevant ideas from topics covered in other weeks in order to enrich your essay, although this should not come at the expense of coherence.

## **ESSAY WRITING TECHNIQUES**

### **1) Analyse the question**

Questions tend to be either specific and tailored towards a particular issue, or general. The former ties you closely to a specific narrative in your response, whilst the latter invites you to present and defend your own interpretation. In analysing the question you are looking to break it down in order to establish what the question is concerned with, how you intend to interpret it and respond to it and what the parameters of your essay will be as a consequence. The hardest part of the essay is deciding what to leave out rather than what to include. If you have looked into a topic, followed all of the reading suggestions, and gone further, you are likely to have more information than you need, in terms of ideas and evidence, to back up an argument. Your task is to set out your own interpretation and defend it, and the way you read the question is crucial to it. Remember that we assess your ability to construct and defend an argument, not to recite what other people argue about a subject. This does not mean that anything goes by way of response to a question. A good essay shows your ability to persuade the reader that your interpretation is both valid and powerfully stated. Essay plans can be useful to this purpose if they help you focus on what your argument actually is and encourage you to sift out all the less relevant material and ideas.

Possible weakness to avoid:

A poor essay offers little explanation as to why it is addressing the question the way it does, or a coherent and clear account of the case that it is defending.

### **2) Introduce**

Your introduction can explain what you think the question is concerned with, and where questions are ambiguous clarify your reading of them, how you intend to answer and what you are defending. Without giving it all away here, you can spend a few paragraphs taking the question apart and explaining it in a way that the reader knows how your essay is going to be structured and why. You are guiding the reader into your interpretation, without stating the obvious, just by establishing your parameters.

Potential weakness to avoid:

If introductions are unclear, absent or understated the reader has to impose their own structure to your essay and this can be problematic.

### **3) Explain and discuss**

The main content of the essay is where you present your case and defend it from counter claims and challenges to your interpretation. If you are discussing an issue, you don't need to set out every possible argument for or against it in a merely

rhetorical manner. Avoid listing points and try to construct a coherent narrative to persuade the reader that these are important issues to be engaging with, by means of reasoned argument and evidence. While there are other arguments to be used, this is your interpretation and what you think is of most significance for anyone trying to understand the issues the essay addresses.

Potential weaknesses to avoid:

Lack of a clear structure. Remember to include signposts to link together the different arguments you wish to set out, so that when moving from one point to the next you link them by a sentence telling the reader why you are making the move.

Use of anecdotal evidence (opinionated one-liners, hearsay, etc.). To avoid this remember to use references and always acknowledge the sources of your information, this shows that you have researched the topic as well as thought about it.

#### **4) Conclude**

Conclusions are not something tagged on at the end. They are the answer to the question! There is no pressure to be definitive if you are still undecided, but you do need to tie things together and offer an answer to the question in the conclusion. Here you can also try to draw out an overall picture from the discussion and argument you defended in the essay.

Potential weakness to avoid:

Your interpretation only emerges in the conclusion, giving the impression that you were unable to handle the question thoroughly.

#### **5) Acknowledge**

Academic essays require full references and bibliography. For an example of how to do this, read the Harvard Referencing Style.

<https://qplus.qmul.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=653429&chapterid=66164>

Guidelines for analysing a text, and making notes

These are some simple guidelines on how to analyse a text and how to make notes on it.

#### **Text analysis:**

The following might help you reading critically a text. Read the text once to have a rough idea of the content, then re-read carefully looking at the following questions:

- **What** - what is the text about, what is the main content, what are the main arguments/ideas conveyed (note that this point can be addressed at several different levels, i.e. the text can be thought of as an onion, with many layers to peel off)
- **How** - how does the author make his/her arguments, which evidences he/she bring to support them
- **Who** - knowing about the author of the article can help you placing the text in a wider context... is the author a journalist, the president of the US, and academic, etc...
- **When** - again, this can help you placing the text in a wider context, e.g. is it a contemporary text? Was it written during the cold war? Or in the Middle Ages?
- **Why** - you might want to think why the author is making particular arguments. This is usually the most difficult point,

### **Making notes:**

- 1) Summarize the whole text in one/sentences (this helps you summarising complex information in few words and allow you to remember an article just by reading a few sentences!)
- 2) Make a short and crisp review of main arguments (note the difference between summarising an article and identifying the main arguments)
- 3) Identify 3/4 (or more!!) strengths, things you agree with, or like, and specify why you agree with/like those points
- 4) Identify 3/4 (or more!!) weaknesses, things you don't agree with, or don't like, and specify why
- 5) Identify things you do not understand or questions for class discussion

These notes and readings should form the basis of your essay and the preparation for your exam.

### **Mark Scheme**

#### **70% and above First (1:1)**

- Shows evidence of wide and relevant reading and an engagement with the conceptual issues
- Develops a rigorous argument
- Shows a sophisticated understanding of relevant source materials. Materials are evaluated directly and their assumptions and arguments challenged and/or appraised
- Shows independent thinking, originality and/or creativity

#### **60-69.9% Upper Second (2:1)**

- Shows strong evidence of analytical insight and critical thinking
- Shows a clear understanding of the major factual and/or theoretical issues
- Directly engages with the relevant literature on the topic
- Develops and sustains a focused argument
- Shows strong evidence of planning and appropriate choice of sources

#### **50-59.9% Lower Second (2:2)**

- Shows a reasonable understanding of the major factual and/or theoretical issues involved
- Shows evidence of planning and selection from appropriate sources
- Demonstrates some knowledge of the literature
- The text shows, in places, examples of a clear train of thought or argument
- The text is introduced and concludes appropriately

#### **45-49.9% Third (3:3)**

- Shows some awareness and understanding of the factual and/or theoretical issues, but with little development
- Misunderstandings are evident
- Shows some evidence of planning, although irrelevant/unrelated material or arguments are included

**40-44.9%                      Pass Degree**

- Shows some understanding but very little development.
- Severe misunderstandings evident
- Considerable amount of irrelevant material included

**0-39%                              Fail**

- Fails to answer the question
- Does not engage with the relevant literature or demonstrate knowledge of the key issues
- Contains serious conceptual or factual errors or misunderstandings

**Assessment for re-sit students**

If you fail the module overall, you will have the option to re-sit the failed assessment components at the next available opportunity. Students who are required to re-sit will be informed of re-sit examination dates and/or resubmission dates for assignments following the Exam Board meeting around June 2021.

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