# DISCUSSION FORUM ASSIGNMENT

**Unit 16:** Operations and Project Management

**Unit code:** T/508/0528

**QCF level:** 5

**Credit value**: 15

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this unit is to develop students' understanding of contemporary operations theory as a function of a modern organisation. Students explore key benchmarks and processes which will enable effective critique of an operation function. Students will also consider the fundamentals of project management utilising the prescribed, but well established, project life cycle.

On successful completion of this unit students will have developed sufficient knowledge and understanding of operations and project management to make an effective and immediate contribution to the way in which an organisation conducts its business. Students will also be in a strong position to contribute to, as well as lead, small-scale projects.

Underpinning all aspects of the content for this unit will be the consideration of the strategic role of operations management and planning and control of resources, and project management theories and the project life cycle.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

*On successful completion of this unit a learner will be able to:*

1. Review and critique the effectiveness of operations management principles.
2. **Apply the concept of continuous improvement in an operational context.**
3. Apply the project life cycle (PLC) to a given context.
4. Review and critique the application of the PLC used in a given project

# ASSIGNMENT TWO

**LO 2: Apply the concept of continuous improvement in an operational context**

**LO 2. Course Content**

**Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the operations function:**

- Policies and processes including cost reduction and quality improvement.

- Continuous improvement as a philosophy and approach using the application of Lean principles within a cycle of continuous improvement.

- Operations as a cross-organisation activity and not simply an independent function.

- The significant impact that technology has had upon operational functions and information flows.

- Consideration of software systems Enterprise Resource Planning systems (ERP), Supply Chain Management (SCM), New-Product development (NPD) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

**Improving quality:**

- Reducing defects through Total Quality Management, the concept of Kaizen and process re-engineering.

## CASE STUDY, TASKS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR LO1:

In Teams of 6 carry out the following activities. Please refer to the course outline and resources provided.  Include at least six (6) references in your work.  Use Harvard Referencing Style through-out the work.

**P2** Prepare a continuous improvement plan based on the review and critique of operations management principles within an organisational context.

**M2** Analyse the effectiveness of a continuous improvement plan using appropriate theories, concepts and/or models

LO1 & 2
**D1** Apply appropriate theories, concepts and/or models to justify strategies of a continuous improvement plan for achieving improved efficiency.

# DISCUSSION FORUM AND TERM PAPER

## GROUP WORK: CARRY OUT THE FOLLOWING TASKS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DISCUSSION FORUM AND TERM PAPER SIMULTANEOUSLY

### CASE STUDY: Transitrail

Transitrail is a rail operating company located in one of the smaller countries to the East of Europe. It has been granted a 20 year lease that makes it responsible for the maintenance of the whole of the rail network in that country and the carriage of passengers and goods.

Transtrail's freight operation is a significant part of its business, with a minor service operating during the day as gaps in the passenger timetables allow and the bulk of the freight traffic being sent at night.

The goods arrive throughout the day at Transtrail's goods yards, preloaded into large metal shipping containers, which are lifted onto the next available empty wagon. It results in long lines of loaded wagons going to a variety of different destinations.

As the time for a goods train to leave for a certain destination approaches, the wagons are individually shuffled and shunted by a small engine into an out of sidings, until all the wagons going to the same destination are adjacent to each other and can be connected to a locomotive to form a train.

Transtrail identified this process as being inefficient and is proposing to make it more efficient and effective through cost reduction and quality improvement policies and processes.

### For Group Discussion AND Term Paper Requirements:

### P2. Prepare a continuous improvement plan based on the review and critique of operations management principles within Transrail  (1, 500 Words).

You are Operations Managers in Transrail. You will:

1) Critically Assess the risks or limitations of the current operations.

2) Present a reasoned and logical argument for: Operations as a cross-organisation activity and not simply an independent function in Transitrail.

3) Design and present a SPECIFIC plan (policies and processes) to improve operations in Transrail - reduce costs and defects, and increase quality and communication.  Include models such as:

      I.    Business Process Re-engineering;
    II.    Kaizen
    III.   Total Quality Management

## INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT FOR DISTINCTION GRADE: 1250 – 1,500 WORDS

M2: Analyse the effectiveness of the continuous improvement plan using appropriate theories, concepts and/or models (1, 000 Words).

1. Analyse the benefits and challenges for transrail from implementing the SPECIFIC plans (policies and processes for cost reduction and quality improvement) that you proposed in **P2**.

2. Explain the significant impacts of technology on its operational functions and information flows using any TWO (2) of the following software systems: (1) Enterprise Resource Planning systems (ERP), (2) Supply Chain Management (SCM), (3) New-Product development (NPD) and (4) Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

D1: Apply appropriate theories, concepts and/or models to justify strategies of a continuous improvement plan for achieving improved efficiency.

# FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

## TEAM MEMBER PARTICIPATION AND REQUIREMENTS

This assignment is part of the mid-semester term paper for LO2.  ALL members of the Discussion Forum Group **MUST** attend and participate in ALL four required group meetings, in identifying the resources to support the answers, organizing and submitting the drafts of the assignment, and compiling, editing and submitting one 4,500 - 5,000 words report.  Alongside the report submit a separate document with the group meeting attendance record and a detailed summary of the processes and roles adapted to complete this assignment.

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT LO2 ASSIGNMENT:  June 23**

## RESOURCES

The following Reading Assignments are for lead discussion at the group meetings and to assist with carrying out the assignments:

❖ **Business Process Reengineering**
LINK:  https://www.slideshare.net/arnoldindia/business-process-reengineering-complete

❖ **Kaizen**
**LINK:** https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newSTR_97.htm

❖ **Total Quality Management**
LINKS: https://www.isixsigma.com/methodology/total-quality-management-tqm/introduction-and-implementation-total-quality-management-tqm/

# IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

1. Double space your work

2. Use the font style: Arial

3. Use the font size: 11

4. Paginate your work

5. Ensure a professional layout

6. Ensure that the submitted work is neat and error free.

7. Use a Front Page

8. Include Table Of Contents

9. Include Reference Page

# SCORING THE DISCUSSION FORUM

**To Pass the <u>Discussion Forum</u>** you must:

   i)  Participate in no less than 8 of the 12 weekly peer group meetings on the semester.
   ii)  Submit ALL required group work timely and at required standard.
   iii)  Answer the questions in sufficient length and breadth to demonstrate:
   1) grasp of the subject content
   2) ability to apply the knowledge to the context provided;
   3) ability to think critically and identify risks, limitations and challenges in the contents and contexts provided;
   4) ability to engage and cooperate in a team; and
   5) ability to meet deadlines by completing the assignments and posting them to the group on or before the published deadlines.

You will **fail the discussion forum** and unit if you*:*
   i)  Fail to post the required number of times (8 of 12).
   ii)  Fail to demonstrate reasonable breadth of knowledge in the content area.
   iii)  Fail to properly cite your sources. Plagiarism is not tolerated under any circumstances.
   iv)  Fail to present original work. Do not duplicate from your peers' work posted in the group.
   v)  Fail to consistently engage or participate in the required team-work and group dialogue.
   vi)  Fail to post your assignment by the published weekly deadlines.

❖ If you fail the Forum for the unit, you automatically fail that course unit.

# SCORING THE TERMPAPER

**Students' work must meet the following requirements (alongside those identified in the Discussion Forum):**
1.  Carry Out the command verbs e.g. in AC 1.1:  To **Evaluate** which means: "Provide evidence from a wide range of sources which both agree with and contradict an argument."
2.  Provide evidence of adequate research based on accuracy and depth of content shared.
3.  Discuss the topics and perspectives related to your research findings and Course Content.
4.  Demonstrate acceptable level of proficiency in writing and/or speech for college-level: Diction, Expressions, Grammar, Spelling, Usage and Sentence Structures.
5.  Use Harvard Referencing Style Through-out the work.
6.  Cite at least Six (6) Valid Sources in the tasks e.g. AC 1.1. AND 1.2.
7.  Have no Plagiarism infringements. Submit a Plagiarism Report with all assignment showing no higher than 11%. A Referred Grade is awarded if it exceeds or is not included.
8.  Meeting Professional Standards for a structured Presentation.
9.  Include a Reference Page.

❖ Students work are Awarded: **PASS** Grade | **MERIT** Grade | **DISTINCTION** Grade based on the above criteria.  **FAIL GRADE** is awarded only when students fail to submit, participate or complete the required assignments.

❖ **IMPORTANT!**
   Here is a direct link to the definition of the <u>Command Verbs</u> used in these tasks: LINK: http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/149928-command-verb-definitions.pdf

# DEADLINES AND RESTRICTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

**EARLY DEADLINES**
Students are expected to submit coursework on or before the deadline published in the assignment.  All dates given are early deadlines.

**LATE SUBMISSION WITH LATE FEES**
There is a further extension of no later than three weeks from the published deadline for the submission of late work.  Contact Student Services if you are unsure of the late deadline.

**LATE FEE IS $12.00**
Late Fee of $12.00 is applied per assignment eg. $12 for the late term-paper; and $12 for the late Discussion Forum.

No Assignment is acceptable after the late deadline under ANY Circumstances (excluding extenuating circumstances).  Thereafter the student will be awarded a FAIL GRADE for the assignment.

# EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Students are encouraged to submit/sit assessments at the prescribed time, yet accommodations are made in extenuating circumstances as follow:

1. **Medical Reasons.**  If the students fail to submit course-work on time due to medical conditions verified by a doctor's certificate, the work is treated same as referred in terms of revised deadlines, grading restrictions and referred fees.  It is important that students seeking exemption for medical reasons advise Student Services before the deadline expires.

2. **The death of an immediate family in the household.**  Evidence must be provided of the relationship and death.

3. **Jury Duty.**  Evidence must be provided of the request, and also the service started or completed.

# RESIT PRIVILIGE

1. For students to qualify for Resit they MUST ATTEMPT ALL assessments in the unit and earn at least a Referred Grade.

2. A student who has taken ill during an examination or assignment submission dateline may also qualify for Resit after proper written evidence is collected and assessed by the Faculty and submitted to the Head of Faculty for approval.

3. Resit fees apply in all circumstances under which new assessments are approved or extensions granted beyond the late deadlines.

# RESIT APPROVAL AND FEE

All evidences must be collected by the Faculty and produced to Student Services no later than 5 days after the examination/deadline expires.  The outcome is communicated directly to the student by email. If approved, the Resit Fee of $45.00 (**per** assignment) is paid by the student and receipt emailed to Student Services. The supplementary dateline will be communicated to the student by email.

# REFERRED / RESIT GRADE

Students earn a Referred Grade if the submitted assignment fail to achieve the criteria for PASS.

- ❖ Hospitality Students must earn a PASS GRADE on all Assessment Criteria (AC) on the term-paper to pass the course.
- ❖ Business and Aviation Students must earn a PASS Grade on all Assessment Criteria with P e.g. P1, P2 etc. to pass the course.

# FAILING THE COURSE

1. Students who did not sit an examination and did not withdraw formally will receive a Failing grade.

2. Students who differed for financial reasons or illness will earn an IC – Incomplete Grade. Incomplete Grades then are changed to Fail Grades at end of the semester.

3. Students who fail the discussion forum but pass the term-paper or vice versa. You must earn a Referred OR Pass Grade on both the Forum and Term-Paper to avoid retaking the course unit.

4. If you fail the course you must retake the class when it is offered next. The cost per course unit is listed on the Tuition Page of the website.

# THESE COMMON CIRCUMSTANCES DO NOT QUALIFY AS EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

## LOSS OF DATA

Please back-up your work consistently on independent media. Computer malfunctioning or errors are common but not acceptable reasons for special considerations. Special considerations are granted only for extenuating circumstances discussed above and no other factor.

## JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Working Students are advised to take 2-3 courses per semester. Four courses as recommended to complete the program on the published deadline. However, if taking full-time coursework will hinder you from meeting your required course-work deadlines or meeting quality standards, it is best that you take three courses and extend your tenure by one semester.

Job responsibilities are not acceptable reasons for special considerations because we have only one standard for everyone in the institution. Special considerations are granted only for extenuating circumstances discussed above and no other factor.

# STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

To develop and maintain a collegiate environment to sustain Higher Education, students are encouraged to participate at end of each semester in the Online Satisfaction Survey. Your input will help us to improve our programs and personnel. A degree today is like citizenship and good College education is a platform for you to: develop the required competencies for a degree, social skills, but also to enjoy learning. So, tell us want to do to make your college experience better. Be respectful, and be honest. The Form is accessible here: http://www.studyaimusa.org/student-feedback-form.html