

Business and Financial Plan Rubric Explained

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Introduction

Welcome to 21 Academy's "Business and Financial Plan Rubric Explained" document. This guide has been created to provide you with a clear understanding of the assessment criteria and expectations for your academic work, specifically focusing on elements such as cover page, appearance, report format, referencing, word count and creativity and innovation.

At 21 Academy, we value excellence and aim to support you in developing the skills necessary to produce work of the highest quality. This document serves as a comprehensive resource to assist you in meeting the requirements and demonstrating your proficiency in various aspects related to your academic project.

The primary objective of this document is to provide you with the necessary guidance to:

1. Cover Page and Appearance

- Understand the importance of a well-designed and professional cover page.
- Learn about the elements that should be included on a cover page, such as the title, author's name, date, and any other relevant information.
- Recognise the significance of an aesthetically pleasing and visually coherent appearance that aligns with the purpose and context of your work.

2. Report Format and Structure

- Familiarise yourself with the expectations for structuring and organising your reports.
- Learn about the importance of clear and concise sections, headings, and subheadings.
- Understand the significance of a logical flow of ideas and smooth transitions between different sections.
- Recognise the value of a coherent and cohesive writing style, ensuring clarity and readability throughout your work.

3. Referencing and Citation

- Learn about the appropriate referencing style to be used (e.g., Harvard referencing).
- Understand the importance of accurately citing and referencing external sources to acknowledge the contributions of others and avoid plagiarism.
- Learn how to create in-text citations and compile a comprehensive reference list.
- Recognise the significance of consistent and accurate referencing throughout your work.

4. Word Count Management

- Understand the significance of adhering to specified word count limits.
- Learn how to accurately calculate the word count, excluding elements such as the cover page, in-text citations, contents page, and appendices.
- Recognise the importance of concise and focused writing to effectively communicate your ideas within the given word limit.

5. Creativity and Innovation

- Appreciate the importance of creativity and innovation in academic and professional contexts.
- Understand how creativity and innovation contribute to problem-solving, idea generation, and driving positive change.
- Recognise the significance of incorporating creative and innovative elements in your work to demonstrate originality and uniqueness.

Please note that in addition to the elements covered in this document, your assessments will also consider the expected different sections in the business and financial plan. These sections have been thoroughly dealt with in the course's lectures, and it is crucial that you demonstrate your understanding of each section in your work.

This document aims to provide you with a comprehensive overview of the assessment criteria and expectations related to cover page design, appearance, report format, referencing, word count, and creativity and innovation. By following the guidelines

presented herein, you will have a solid foundation to produce work that meets the required standards and demonstrates your proficiency in these areas.

We encourage you to use this document as a reference throughout your academic journey, consulting it whenever you have questions or need clarification. By incorporating the principles outlined here into your work, you will enhance the overall quality and professionalism of your assignments and reports.

Please note that while this document offers valuable guidance, it is important to consult your specific course guidelines and instructions to ensure alignment with the expectations set by 21 Academy.

Wishing you success in your academic endeavours!

Cover Page

COVER PAGE IS EXCEPTIONALLY WELL-DESIGNED, VISUALLY STRIKING, PROFESSIONAL, AND INCLUDES ALL REQUIRED INFORMATION.

- 1. Visual Appeal:** The cover page should be visually appealing, capturing attention with an attractive design that stands out. It should utilise appropriate colours, fonts, and imagery that align with the overall theme or purpose of the document.
- 2. Clean and Organised Layout:** The cover page should have a clean and organised layout, ensuring that the information is presented in a clear and easily readable manner. It should avoid clutter and unnecessary elements, creating a balanced and professional look.
- 3. Professional Design Elements:** The design should reflect professionalism and convey a sense of credibility. This can be achieved through the use of professional typography, consistent alignment, and appropriate use of white space. The design elements should be chosen carefully to create a polished and sophisticated appearance.
- 4. Relevant Information:** The cover page should include all the necessary information that is required for the document. This typically includes the title or name of the document, the author (student's name and number), and the date of submission.
- 5. Branding:** The cover page should incorporate branding elements such as a company or organisation logo, tagline, or brand colours. This helps to establish a consistent visual identity and reinforces the document's connection to the larger brand.
- 6. Attention to Detail:** The cover page should demonstrate attention to detail by ensuring that all text is free from typos or grammatical errors. The layout should be consistent and align with the overall document style.

Appearance

THE DOCUMENT HAS OUTSTANDING FORMATTING, IS VISUALLY APPEALING, AND DEMONSTRATES A HIGH LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL.

1. Clear and Consistent Formatting: The report should have a clear and consistent formatting style throughout, using appropriate headings, subheadings, paragraphs, and bullet points. The formatting should be easy to read and follow, enhancing the overall organisation and structure of the content.

2. Professional Typography: The typography should be carefully chosen to ensure readability and professionalism. The font selection should be clean, legible, and appropriate for the content. Consistency in font styles and sizes should be maintained throughout the report. Refer to the font type and size being requested.

3. Visual Elements: The report should include well-designed visual elements such as charts, graphs, tables, and illustrations that enhance the understanding of the information presented. These visual elements should be visually appealing, accurately labelled, and effectively integrated into the overall layout.

4. Consistent Styling: The report should demonstrate consistency in styling elements such as headings, subheadings, paragraphs, and captions. Consistent use of fonts, font sizes, indentation, spacing, and alignment contributes to the overall professional look and feel of the document.

5. Attention to Detail: The report should be free from grammatical errors, typos, and inconsistencies. Proofreading and editing should be conducted to ensure that the text is accurate, coherent, and well-presented. Attention to detail should extend to factors like proper grammar, punctuation, and formatting.

6. Consistent and Clear Structure: The report should have a logical and well-structured organisation, with clear sections, subsections, and headings. This helps readers navigate through the report and locate specific information easily.

7. Appropriate Use of Colours and Graphics: The use of colours and graphics should be thoughtful and purposeful. Colours should be used to enhance readability and emphasise important information, while graphics should be relevant, visually appealing, and contribute to the overall professionalism of the report.

Report Format

THE REPORT HAS AN EXCEPTIONAL STRUCTURE, IS EXCEPTIONALLY WELL-ORGANISED, AND EFFECTIVELY PRESENTS INFORMATION WITH CLEAR, CONCISE, AND COHERENT SECTIONS, HEADINGS, AND SUBHEADINGS.

1. Clear and Logical Sections: The report should be divided into clear and logical sections that follow a logical progression. Each section should focus on a specific aspect of the report's topic or subject matter, allowing for easy comprehension and navigation.

2. Well-Defined Headings and Subheadings: The report should use headings and subheadings that clearly and accurately describe the content of each section. These headings should be informative and enable readers to quickly understand the purpose and scope of the information presented within each section.

4. Effective Use of Paragraphs and Bulleted Lists: The report should use paragraphs and bulleted lists appropriately to present information in a clear and concise manner. Paragraphs should be used to develop and elaborate on ideas, while bulleted lists can be used to present concise and easily digestible information or key points.

5. Logical Flow and Transitions: The report should have a logical flow from one section to another, with smooth transitions between ideas and concepts. This ensures that readers can follow the progression of the report easily and understand the connections between different sections.

6. Coherent and Cohesive Writing: The report should demonstrate coherence and cohesiveness in its writing style. Ideas and concepts should be presented in a clear and understandable manner, with smooth transitions between sentences and paragraphs. The report should have a consistent tone and voice, maintaining a professional and informative approach.

7. Appropriate Use of Visuals: Visual elements such as charts, graphs, and tables should be used strategically to enhance the presentation of information. These visuals should be relevant, clearly labelled, and effectively integrated into the report's structure. They should supplement and clarify the information rather than overwhelming or distracting the reader.

8. Effective Use of Appendices: If necessary, the report may include appendices to provide additional information, data, or supporting materials that are not included in the main body of the report. The appendices should be appropriately referenced within the report and clearly labelled for easy reference.

9. Easy-to-Navigate Table of Contents: The report should include a table of contents that accurately reflects the structure and organisation of the report. This allows readers to quickly locate specific sections or information they may be interested in.

Referencing

EXCEPTIONAL USE OF HARVARD REFERENCING STYLE, DEMONSTRATING PRECISE AND CONSISTENT REFERENCING THROUGHOUT THE DOCUMENT.

1. **Correct In-Text Citations:** The document should include in-text citations that accurately and appropriately reference the sources used. In-text citations should follow the Harvard referencing style guidelines, which typically include the author's last name and the year of publication, e.g., (Smith, 2019). The citations should be placed at the appropriate points within the document to indicate the source of the information or idea being referenced.

2. **Accurate Reference List:** The document should include a reference list at the end that provides detailed and accurate information about each source cited in the text. The reference list should be organised alphabetically by the author's last name and should include all the necessary elements such as author names, publication dates, titles, and other relevant details based on the specific requirements of the Harvard referencing style.

3. **Consistent Formatting:** The referencing throughout the document should follow a consistent formatting style based on the Harvard referencing guidelines. This includes consistent formatting of in-text citations (e.g., parentheses or brackets) and the reference list (e.g., hanging indent, consistent punctuation, and capitalisation).

4. **Proper Attribution:** The referencing should appropriately attribute ideas, concepts, quotes, or paraphrased information to their original sources. This ensures that credit is given to the authors or creators of the referenced work, promoting academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism.

5. **Precise Source Identification:** The referencing should provide sufficient information to precisely identify the sources being cited. This includes providing the author's full name (if available), the complete title of the work, the publication year, and other relevant publication details such as the publisher and the page numbers of the cited information.

6. Consistent and Accurate Citation Style: The referencing should adhere to the specific guidelines of the Harvard referencing style consistently throughout the document. This includes consistent use of punctuation, abbreviations, and formatting conventions such as italics or quotation marks for different types of sources (e.g., books, articles, websites).

7. Proper Handling of Multiple Authors: When referencing sources with multiple authors, the document should accurately include all the necessary authors' names or use the appropriate abbreviation (e.g., et al.) according to the Harvard referencing style guidelines. The order of the authors' names should also be consistent with the original source.

8. Correct Referencing of Different Source Types: The document should demonstrate precise and consistent referencing of various source types, including books, journal articles, websites, reports, or any other relevant sources used. Each source type may have specific referencing requirements, and the document should accurately follow those guidelines.

9. Attention to Detail: The referencing should demonstrate attention to detail, ensuring that all citations and references are free from errors, omissions, or inconsistencies. Proper punctuation, capitalisation, and italicisation should be used as required by the Harvard referencing style guidelines.

10. Cross-Verification: The document should be cross-checked to ensure that all in-text citations have corresponding entries in the reference list, and vice versa. This helps to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the referencing.

Word Count

WORD COUNT IS EXACTLY ON TARGET, MEETING THE SPECIFIED LIMIT OF 7,000 WORDS. (+/- 5%)

1. Meeting Specified Limit: The word count of the document has been carefully managed to align with the specified limit of 7,000 words. This demonstrates adherence to the instructions or guidelines provided by the institution or project requirements.

2. Tolerance of +/- 5%: The specified limit allows for a slight margin of flexibility, with a tolerance of +/- 5%. This means that the word count can range from 6,650 to 7,350 words while still being considered within the acceptable range.

3. Exclusion of Cover Page: The word count does not include the cover page. The cover page typically contains information such as the title, author's name, date, and any other relevant details but is not considered part of the actual text.

4. Exclusion of In-text Citations: In-text citations, which provide references to sources within the text, are not included in the word count. In-text citations are necessary for giving credit to the original sources but are not considered part of the word count as they primarily serve as citations and not original content.

5. Exclusion of Contents Page: The word count does not include the contents page, which outlines the structure and organisation of the document. The contents page is considered a navigational aid rather than part of the main content of the business and financial plan.

6. Exclusion of Appendices: Appendices, if included in the document, are not counted in the word count. Appendices often contain supplementary information, supporting data, or additional materials that are relevant but not considered as part of the core text.

7. Focus on Business and Financial Plan Text: The word count solely encompasses the text that makes up the business and financial plan. This includes the

main content, such as the introduction, analysis, strategies, financial projections, recommendations, and any other sections directly related to the plan.

9. Importance of Word Limit Compliance: Adhering to the specified word limit demonstrates the ability to effectively communicate key information within a given space, promoting concise and focused writing that addresses the requirements of the project or assignment.

10. Proofreading and Editing: To ensure the accuracy of the word count and the exclusion of specific elements, the document should undergo careful proofreading and editing. This process helps identify any potential discrepancies or errors and allows for the final word count to be verified.

Creativity and Innovation

THE PRODUCT OR SERVICE DEMONSTRATES EXCEPTIONAL CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION, WITH HIGHLY ORIGINAL AND GROUNDBREAKING ELEMENTS.

1. **Unique Concept:** The product or service showcases a concept that is distinct and one-of-a-kind. It brings a fresh perspective or introduces a novel idea that sets it apart from existing offerings in the market.

2. **Creative Problem-Solving:** The development of the product or service involves creative problem-solving techniques. It addresses challenges or gaps in the market in a creative and inventive way, offering a solution that is both imaginative and effective.

3. **Unconventional Features:** The product or service incorporates unconventional features or functionalities that haven't been seen before. These unique elements differentiate it from competitors and capture the attention of consumers or users.

4. **Cutting-Edge Technology:** The product or service leverages cutting-edge technology or utilises advanced methodologies to deliver a distinctive and superior experience. It demonstrates the ability to push boundaries and stay ahead of the curve in terms of technological advancements.

5. **Disruptive Innovation:** The product or service introduces disruptive innovation, shaking up the industry or market it belongs to. It challenges established norms, traditional practices, or existing products/services, creating a significant impact and potentially changing the landscape.

6. **Novel Design and Aesthetics:** The product or service showcases a visually striking and innovative design. Its aesthetics go beyond the conventional, incorporating new materials, shapes, colours, or interfaces that capture attention and evoke a sense of uniqueness.

7. **Forward-Thinking Features:** The product or service includes forward-thinking features that anticipate and cater to emerging trends or future needs. It demonstrates

a keen understanding of evolving customer preferences and provides innovative solutions that meet those evolving demands.

8. Breakthrough Performance: The product or service delivers breakthrough performance that exceeds expectations or sets new industry standards. It achieves exceptional results, efficiency, effectiveness, or user satisfaction that revolutionises the way things are done.



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