

Essex Business School

BE167-7-AU: Accounting and Finance for Managers

2022-2023

COURSEWORK (50%)

(2,500 WORDS, excluding list of references)

Teaching Staff

Dr. Chaminda Wijethilake (Module leader)

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All submissions must be presented in typescript (Word format), 12pt, 1.5 line spacing.

Deadline for submission to FASER: 16 December 2022, 10:00hrs (Week 11)

Note that late submissions will not be accepted unless full details of extenuating circumstances are provided. For details of extenuating circumstances please see Moodle. If you have any query about extension please contact the Student Services Advisors – email ebspgsce@essex.ac.uk

AIM:

This assessment aims to provide you with an opportunity to reflect on the concepts you have learnt during the course of *Accounting and Finance for Managers* lectures and seminars. It will assist you in developing your ability to apply concepts to practice in the light of your experience while qualifying for the master's degree.

You are required to write a report analysing the financial performance of a selected publicly listed company (*please refer to submission guidelines for the choice of the company*) for the latest THREE consecutive years, as a minimum. The report should include the following:

REQUIREMENTS:

- a) Provide an introduction with a background of the business in question (e.g. strategy, prospects, competitor analysis, SWOT analysis). (20 marks)
- b) Calculate at least three profitability ratios of your choice to support your analysis. Critically evaluate the profitability position of the company. (20 marks)
- c) Calculate at least three efficiency ratios of your choice to support your analysis. Critically evaluate how the resources of the business are managed. (20 marks)
- d) Calculate at least three investment ratios of your choice to support your analysis. Critically evaluate the investment position and potential opportunities of the company. (20 marks)
- e) “*Although ratios offer a quick and useful method of analysing the position and performance of a business, they suffer from problems and limitations*” (Atrill and McLaney, 2019, p. 234). Do you agree with this statement? Discuss with examples from the above analysis to support your argument. Briefly indicate the alternative approaches to overcome limitations of ratio analysis. (20 marks)

[TOTAL: 100 MARKS]

--END OF THE REQUIREMENTS--

Submission Guidelines:

This work should be presented as a report type – i.e. guiding the reader effortlessly through the arguments you present (e.g. introduction, development, final considerations – all that making use of subheadings, again, to guide the reader (shareholders, in this case). The purpose of the guideline offered below is to help you to organise your report (rather than to limit your creativity); and also, to provide you with a marking scheme. That is to say, you do not need to actually indicate the letters (a,b,c,...) when presenting the report. Consider that you are providing information to the shareholders to make financial decisions.

- Read updated literature on concepts, methods and tools for “Analysis and interpretation of financial statements”.
- You are expected to choose **one** company from the ones below in analysing financial statements:
 1. Clarkson PLC <https://www.clarksons.com/home/investors/>
 2. Marshalls PLC <https://www.marshalls.co.uk/investor>
 3. Spirent Communications PLC <https://corporate.spirent.com/investors>
 4. Morgan Sindall Group PLC <https://www.morgansindall.com/investors/reports-and-presentations>
 5. Hammerson PLC <https://www.hammerson.com/investor>
- Annual reports are available under the heading of ‘Investor Relations’.
- The financial information you need should refer to, at least, **THREE (03)** consecutive years of the company’s operation; to allow you to compare/analyse/comment on the business financial trend.
- ***An online copy of the most recent company’s financial statements (not a web link), which served the basis for the requirements below, should be submitted as part of this coursework.***
- **Clearly show the ratio calculations** and any assumptions made during the analysis.
- Word limits and assignment length: **2,500 words** (excluding list of references, tables/pictures and appendices). However, 10% above or below this word limit is accepted (E.g., Acceptable range: from 2250 to 2750 words).
- A ‘0’ (ZERO) mark will be awarded if you do not select a case organisation from the above list.
- The report must be typed with 12pt Arial or Times New Roman font, 1.5 spaced.
- University rules on plagiarism apply (please refer to postgraduate information on Moodle for further details). All materials used to prepare this coursework need to be accordingly referenced.

SEE MARKING SCHEME IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES

<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <p>On successful completion of the unit students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• demonstrate an understanding of the financial accounting framework - including the underlying concepts and principles of accounting and the effect of different methods on the measurement of asset and liabilities and the determination of accounting profit.• critically analyse a set of published accounts.• explain the use of different approaches to costing.• understand the operation of a budgetary control system and identify the major methods to measure performance.• develop a critical understanding of short and long-term decision-making principles and techniques, including the use of capital appraisal techniques.	<p>a, b, c, d, and e</p> <p>a, b, c, d, and e</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>
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Grade	Degree Classification		Indicative criteria for assessment of student work with non-quantitative components
	UG	PGT	
95	First Class (1)	Distinction	<p>A First Class (or Distinction) level answer is an excellent answer which demonstrates a systematic understanding of detailed, relevant knowledge. These pieces of work will display many of the following features:</p> <p>Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly written, well organised and signposted. • Coverage • Comprehensive coverage of issues in relation to question. • Thorough understanding of a relevant range of literature. • Analysis • Argument demonstrates depth of analysis, knowledge and understanding. • Evidence of reflection and own analysis of the literature together with an ability to see how lessons learned could be applied to other contexts/examples. • Critical evaluation of a wide range of material; may make reference to other relevant issues. • Very good use of supporting evidence and examples. • Clear conclusion.
90			
85			
80			
75			
72			
68	Upper Second Class (2.1)	Merit	<p>This is a very good answer, which demonstrates a good level of knowledge. These pieces of work will display several of the following features:</p> <p>Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly written, well organised in a logical manner and clearly signposted. <p>Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully completes task and displays clear understanding of the main issues. • Substantial coverage of relevant literature and knowledge of topic. <p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes and analyses issues in relation to the question. • Critical discussion and presentation of an argument. • Good use of supporting evidence. • Clear conclusion.
65			
62			

Grade	Degree Classification		Criteria
	UG	PGT	
58	Lower Second Class (2.2)	Pass	<p>This is a good answer which competently completes the task. It generally reproduces taught material but may display little evidence of independent reading. A 2:2 answer will display several of the following features:</p> <p>Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately written. • Maybe poorly structured without clear signposting. <p>Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes most tasks expected, but could be too simplistic. • Demonstrates some understanding of lecture material and basic reading. • Coverage of relevant literature but the sources are not always fully referenced. <p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarises the literature rather than critically engaging with it. • Descriptive and lacking analysis. • Some understanding but lack of critical thought. • Insufficient evidence of critical thinking.
55			
52			
48	Third Class (3)	Fail	<p>This is a weak answer which demonstrates some knowledge, but it tends to be superficial, incomplete or poorly understood. A third class answer will display several of the following features:</p> <p>Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maybe poorly written and badly structured. • Lacking introduction. <p>Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a limited range of reading. • Fails to address question or misses an important aspect of the question. Shows confusion but some basic knowledge and relevant discussion. • Shows knowledge of the major issues, but not strictly relevant to the question. <p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major gaps in analysis. • Demonstrates no widespread knowledge or analysis. • Limited understanding of relevant issues. • Limited discussion.
45			
42			
36	Fail		<p>This is a poor answer. A fail answer will display several of the following features:</p> <p>Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disorganised. • Poorly written. Random order of points. <p>Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to address question. • Reveals little or no evidence of familiarity with relevant literature. <p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misunderstands question. • Fails to give adequate answer to question. • Misunderstandings of concepts and major issues. • No argument. • Incoherent or incomplete. • Repetitive.
30			
24			
12			