

Formal report

For your assessment, you may need to write a formal business report which should be written in a format which meets certain standard business conventions. Ask your tutor or check with the Sample Assessment Material on the Pearson website to find out if any documents you need to produce in your assessment need to be created on a computer.

The purpose of the report

This should be short and to the point

Title and details of report

- Who the report is for
- Who wrote the report
- Date submitted
- The status of the report: is it for 'information' only or is it for 'discussion', or does a 'decision' have to be made?

What the report is about

Be concise and accurate; use an impersonal tone (avoid the first person such as 'In this report I will...')

Introduction

- Background
- A concise description of the content of the report, e.g. referencing the proposed merger between Bradbury plc and Bestle plc

How the work was carried out

The specific content must be wholly relevant to what is being asked for in the activity.

Analysis and management issues

- How the work behind the report was approached (summary of the research and analysis completed)
- Your analysis of the HR data relating to Bradbury plc and Bestle plc and the management information relating to the confectionery industry; identifying the management issues

What the findings were

Conclusions are rarely certain. Start your conclusions with 'It appears that...' or 'This suggests...' and use words such as 'may', 'might' or 'could'.

Conclusions and recommendations

- How your analysis of the data and management information links to your conclusions and recommendations regarding your proposed management actions

Sample response extract

Bradbury plc and Bestle plc are in talks to merge their operations to secure efficiencies and open up new markets. The newly merged company would develop new products for international markets to withstand the current market pressures brought about by falling UK sales.

The merger will result in significant management challenges in terms of workforce planning and motivation; for example, a reduction in the workforce and workplace re-location, which could impact upon productivity and labour turnover. The merger will need to be planned with management establishing a clear vision and rationale for it backed up by clear targets and milestones which will need to be communicated to the workforce.

Management will engage constructively with workforce representatives and will introduce a number of financial and non-financial measures to ease the transition to a new merged business.

This is a useful summary of the main points. It highlights the business case, identifies the main issues management will have to face and provides an overview of how this will be done by providing some examples of the actions which will need to be taken, using business terminology.

When writing the content of the report:

- 1 Look for patterns of information.
- 2 Inform the reader what the summary is about.
- 3 Use examples of positives, negatives and any outstanding issues.
- 4 Use words like 'next', 'before', 'after', 'to sum up', 'most important', 'for example', 'as a result'.

Now try this

Write the title and introduction sections of the report to the editor of *The Business Journal*.

Think of the issues that the editor would want addressed when considering the merger.