**CHECKLIST– UNDERSTANDING THE ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT (STRATEGIC THINKING AND DECISION MAKING)**

| SUGGESTED WORD COUNT RANGE: 7,000-8,400* | |
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| **Learning outcome, section 1:** Be able to analyse how an organisation is affected by the macro-environment | |
| **Assessment criteria (AC)** | **How to pass notes** |
| AC 1.1<br>Analyse your own organisation using PESTLE. | ☐ Include a section for each of the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors. (And ethical if using STEEPLE.)<br>☐ Aim to focus on between 3-5 factors which are the most significant for your organisation.<br>☐ Discuss what is currently affecting your organisation **and** what could potentially affect it in three to five years' time within each section.<br>☐ Make clear how the factors you discuss in each section have affected, are affecting, or could affect your strategic planning.<br>☐ Finish this answer with a summary paragraph. As you will have many factors to consider is it useful to conclude which of them are the most significant opportunities and/or threats. What challenges present? What are the risks, and how would you rank these in terms of priority for your organisation? |
| AC 1.2<br>Evaluate the strengths and limitations of using PESTLE as a strategic diagnostic tool. | ☐ Describe the benefits/strengths of PESTLE/STEEPLE.<br>☐ Describe the limitations/weaknesses of PESTLE/STEEPLE.<br>☐ Use this information to reach a conclusion as to how useful PESTLE/STEEPLE is as a strategic diagnostic tool.<br>☐ Make recommendations about how it might be improved. This may include reference to its use alongside other diagnostic tools such as SWOT or Porter's Five Forces.<br>☐ Summarise your views of the use of the tool. |
| **Learning outcome, section 2:** Understand the impact of economic and political factors on the organisation | |
| *Additional Information:*<br><br>*With the final three questions 2.1- 3.1, people often forget to set out the criteria that they're basing their assessments on. The easiest way to do this is to look at the impact on various areas of your business. This could include the staff, customers, local community, suppliers, shareholders, etc. You might even be more specific and look* | |

*at different departments within the organisation. It doesn't have to be the same criteria for all 3 questions.*

*• Let's take the Economic Factor as an example. The criteria could be annual profit, share price (if relevant), annual wage bill, etc. The writer would then then need to explain what the impact is on these criteria.*

*• The easiest way of starting these answers is something as simple as 'In this answer I will be assessing the impact that Brexit has had on the organisation. In order to assess that impact, I will be looking at the effect it has had on the following criteria…'*

*• You need to be specific, for each factor focus on the practical, every-day implications on your chosen criteria.*

*• A strong conclusion is also key on these 3 answers – the assessment must lead to a clear judgement on just how much of an impact the particular factor has had.*

| Assessment criteria (AC) | How to pass notes |
|---|---|
| AC 2.1<br>Assess the impact on the organisation of one economic factor from the PESTLE analysis. | ☐ State the economic factor you'll be assessing at the start of your answer clearly.<br>☐ State the criteria you'll be using to make your assessment explicitly. Criteria may be generic or specific to your industry/organisation.<br>☐ Outline in depth the effect(s) that your economic factor has had on each of your criteria. Use objective evidence to support your discussion.<br>☐ Bring all this information together to reach a solid judgement/conclusion about the overall impact of your economic factor on your organisation. |
| AC 2.2<br>Assess the impact on the organisation of one political factor from the PESTLE analysis. | ☐ State the political factor you'll be assessing at the start of your answer clearly.<br>☐ State the criteria you'll be using to make your assessment explicitly. Criteria may be generic or specific to your industry/organisation.<br>☐ Outline in depth the effect(s) that your political factor has had on each of your criteria. Use objective evidence to support your discussion.<br>☐ Bring all this information together to reach a solid judgement/conclusion about the overall impact of your political factor on your organisation. |
| **Learning outcome, section 3:** Understand the legal environment within which the organisation operates | |
| Assessment criteria (AC) | How to pass notes |

| AC 3.1 Assess the impact on the organisation of one legal factor from the PESTLE analysis. | ☐ State the legal factor you'll be assessing at the start of your answer clearly. <br> ☐ State the criteria you'll be using to make your assessment explicitly. Criteria may be generic or specific to your industry/organisation. <br> ☐ Outline in depth the effect(s) that your legal factor has had on each of your criteria. Use objective evidence to support your discussion. <br> ☐ Bring all this information together to reach a solid judgement/conclusion about the overall impact of your legal factor on your organisation. |
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| Verb guide <br> The verbs below are used in questions and will guide you on the level of detail required in your answer. | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assess | Evaluate | Implement | Analyse | Review |
| Make a judgement based on a set criterion supported by objective evidence. | This extends further than assessment; conclusions need to be made with key evidence to support judgements and suggestions on how areas can be improved, e.g. recommendations. | Describe actions you will take to improve existing behaviour. | Critique existing practices within a given context. | Make a judgement of current practices in line with relevant theory, supported by examples and recommendations. |

**\*Assignment word count**

Your assignment should be between 7,000-8,400 words. You may go over this amount and reach a maximum total of 10,080 words.

**Please note:**
•	If your assignment is longer than 10,080 words you will be requested to shorten it.
•	If your word count is significantly below 7,000 words it is unlikely that you have included enough detailed information to pass.

The word count guidelines aim to ensure focus and clarity in your writing and help you judge how much detail you need to include.