

# Skills and learning statement

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OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY Skills and Learning Statement for Topic 8: An analysis and evaluation of the business and financial performance of an organization over a three years period Being a Research and Analysis Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of: BSc (Hons) in Applied Accounting Oxford Brookes University By: Name: Tao De ACCA Registration Number: 2171332 Submission Date: 24th May 2012 Words Count: 1881

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In the first meeting, I came up with an idea of writing topic 8, and my mentor supported my idea. He gave me suggestions that potential problems that I may come up with, e. g. ratio explanation; and suggest me to review F7 (Financial Reporting) first to quickly pick up knowledge that I might forgotten, e. g. ratio analysis. After deciding the topic, I gave my mentor a list of companies that I want to analyze. The companies I selected are mainly operating in real estate industry, e. g. Frasers Centrepoint Trust, CapitaLand Commercial Trust and Suntec Real Estate Trust.

Mr. Chan suggested that I need to choose a company that can make comparison, which means they have to have same year ending, similar

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operating area and both in form of trust. Only in this way, the ratios that have been calculated are meaningful and can be compared between two companies. From the first meeting, I learnt that a good targeted company and a good comparable company selection is critical for a report. And also after the first meeting, I went through all the financial ratios, which helped me refresh my memory of what I have learnt during the F7 study.

**Second Meeting** In the second meeting, I had finished main parts (financial analysis and business analysis) in my RAP project. After reviewed those analysis, my mentor pointed out that my explanation of ratios are not sufficient, and he shows me with examples as what is a sufficient explanation of ratio. He also suggests that I should have a segmental analysis regarding to Suntec REIT' revenue. Besides these, he thought I needed to improve my references, which can make the analysis more convincing and have academicsupport.

The second meeting is very meaningful indeed. It helps me improved my research report and taught me to think “ deep”. For example, further explanation of ratios according to case helps my financial analysis much more meaningful. And it also helps me to know how to apply what I learnt in F7 study. **Third Meeting** The third meeting is relatively smooth; and my mentor's main focus is on the format and presentation of my RAP projects. He pointed out certain wrong format of my references and inappropriate presentations, e. g. paper size, font size and line spacing.

When the analysis report is about to finish, I was asked to prepare a presentation to my mentor and other students. After the presentation my mentor thought that I should improve my tone of speech to make it more

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convincing and encouraged me by saying that the RAP project is well prepared and he is very satisfied with my work. The third meeting with my mentor helps me to finalize my research report by adjusting things like font size and reference list. It let me know how to produce a standard and formal report, which will definitely be useful in future.

And from presentation session, I learnt how to give an effective presentation to present my works. Extent to Which Research Questions Have Been Answered The objective that I set is to analyze the operation of Suntec REIT from financial and business perspective and try to help potential investors form a decision over the company. I believe after the research has been finished I have met the objective that I set and answered all the research questions. Though the research process is tedious, I managed myself to meet the objective answer the questions that I have set.

Financial Analysis Firstly, I collect relevant information, e. g. 3 consecutive years of Annual Report of Suntec REIT and CCT REIT. Then transfer the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Comprehensive Income in the Annual Report into excel format. After the transfer, I used excel to compute basic ratios, e. g. net profit margin, current ratio and gearing; and form another tab to put these ratios in organized form (table). For explanation purposes, charts and tables were made based on those ratios and absolute numbers, e. . profit and revenue; and again being put into separate tab in the excel, ready to be used in the writing process. After the primary data being transformed into easily explainable table and charts, the financial analysis process begins. The financial analysis proceeds in the order of segmental analysis, profitability, liquidity, leverage and investment ratios.

Under each heading, the relevant ratios are compared between two companies, underlying meaning of the ratio are explained and the reason for adverse/favorable are explained.

For certain ratios, the potential impact is also discussed. Business Analysis At the start of this part, the business model to be used was quickly decided. At that time, I thought PESTEL analysis and SWOT analysis would be appropriate for the analysis, as PESTEL analysis gives an external picture of the business environment and SWOT analysis can provide general view of the business operation. However, during the business analysis, I found SWOT and PESTEL have certain parts are overlapping, and this gives me a serious lesson of careful picking business analysis model.

And to mitigate the problem, I try to more specifically differentiate the overlapping parts, e. g. PESTEL more focus on specific external factors while Opportunities and Threats are more general view of the environment that the company facing. Same as financial analysis, business analysis begins with information collection. During this period, I visited websites that relate to the real estate industry, e. g. Singapore REITs (<http://sreit.reitdata.com>), went to school library and review previous text books.

During I reading the information, I took down the relevant information may useful as preparation for the business analysis. The writing process of the business analysis is mainly relying on the information being gathered. The information is written under the relevant headings of the models. Besides with this, the potential impacts are discussed. The two analysis can help potential investors to have a general view of Suntec REIT's operation both

from the internal financial analysis and analysis based from business analysis model.

And this can help them to make their decisions over the company. Therefore I confidently believe that I met the objective that I met. Demonstration of Interpersonal and Communication Skills During Project Work I believe that interpersonal and communication skills have been showed throughout the course of my RAP. Oral skills were required when I met up with my mentor and when making my presentation to my mentor and other students. And my writing communication skill is demonstrated through my writing of my research report.

Effective communication is significantly important in have a productive interaction between my mentor and me. Every meeting with my mentor must be effective. As such, I will spend time to form my questions on the issues that I wanted to ask and diligently write down whatever suggestions that Mr. chan gave me during our meetings. As far as I can, I will play an active role in the oral discussion about the issues that I prepared before the meeting. Open-ended questions were asked when I needed more elaboration on certain issues.

And I will also ask close-ended questions when I need a confirmation on specific issues. Besides face-to-face meeting, I discussed with my mentor through emails, text messages, Skype and MSN between meetings. In order to avoid misinterpretations, I tried to make sure that every message was well thought and organized before transmission. Writing research report requires me to have good written communication skills. This includes proper grammar

and appropriate vocabulary. Except for that, I must be able to do good summaries.

During the meetings and other methods of communication with my mentor, I have realized that conveying my message in a specific manner is crucial. I must not be too 'wordy' and always should present my points in an organized manner and try to progress into details. In the presentation of my research report, I found encouraging audience participation is an important aspect in the presentation. I have used my body language to emphasize important points. Besides that, I have also made regular eye contacts with the audience so that they can remain interested in my speech.

Except for that, I also need to be sure that I am perfectly competent to take any questions during the Q&A after the presentation. And in order to do so, I predicted any areas that the audience may question about and prepare my answer for it, so that I won't be brain go bland and come up with meaningless answers. Benefits Of Undertaking The RAP In Accountancy Studies and/or Current Employment Role The RAP is a completely new adventure for me and gives me significant challenge to finish such a big project, which takes almost 4 months. And I believe I benefit a lot during the project.

In the project I reviewed the knowledge that I have learnt, e. g. F7, F9 and P3; and applied them in the chosen companies, i. e. Suntec REIT and CCT REIT. This experience helps me to have further understanding of the knowledge I have learnt, e. g. actual meaning of those ratios instead of their computation and the application of PESTEL instead of theoretical concepts. Besides that, I also find certain areas that I need to enhance on. In the <https://assignbuster.com/skills-and-learning-statement/>

business analysis, I used an overlapping business model being introduced to analyze the chosen company.

This shows my weak understanding over that area. Immediately after the project, I read up relevant material in P3 so that to enhance my better understanding over the subject and to apply it more proficiently in the future. After the project, I also find more about myself. I find my advantages, e. g. organizing random and complex information. These advantages can help me recognize which area I am good at and take advantage of in the future. And at the same time I also find some short comes that I need to avoid or improve in the future e. g. ack of time control and weak at prioritizing tasks. And these can help me to know what need to be pre-considered to avoid same issue happen again. Besides these, the journey of completing the project can somehow help me to promote mycareerin the future. • In the research report, it taught me how to form an official report with convincing tone and objective facts. And this experience may let me to form formal report in the future work place. • From the presentation part, I learnt how to give a great presentation to fellow mates and pass information effectively.

In the future, I can know how to give a much greater presentation based on the OBU project experience. • The application of those ratios into real cases builds my confidence in using them to analyze financial performance of companies in practice. All these experiences can help me to better prepare for my future career and increase my opportunity to “ shine” in the work place. In conclusion, I have to testify here that RAP provides me an



experience that will definitely contribute to my further ACCA study and future employment.