

Resources for Teachers

LC Business

Business Alive Investigative Study 2027

Mark allocation - 200 marks

- ☐ **Introduction – 20 marks**
- ☐ **Investigation, Findings, Analysis and Evaluation – 100 marks**
- ☐ **Conclusion – 30 marks**
- ☐ **Overall Coherence – 50 marks**



Topic for the Business Alive Investigative Study



Complete a **Business Alive Investigative Study and Report** based on the following:

‘Digitalisation is a major driver of productivity growth through the improvement of process efficiency and the quality of products and services. The growing adoption of technologies is disrupting traditional roles and transforming the world of work.’

Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment Adapted from www.gov.ie

You are required to **investigate** how a **work practice** that uses **digital technology** is **impacting** either employers or employees. Support your investigation with appropriate primary and/or secondary data.

Digitalisation – is the **conversion** of data, documents, information, and physical or manual work processes into a **digital format**

Productivity growth – measured by an **increase** in output, **per unit** of input

Process efficiency – describes how **efficient workflows** in a business transform the input resources into **valuable outputs**, reducing waste and improving quality and reliability.

What is digitalisation? How does it trigger change and transform businesses

Processes and IT

Work practices

Knowledge
management

Time
management

Leadership &
work culture

What is digitalisation? What does it look like?



Cloud computing
Multi-channel
Online tools

Mobile commerce
Connectivity
Big data

Think about
your
experiences

Digitalisation

Communication

Networking

Information
Data

Technology

AI

Automation

Networking
Social media
E-commerce
Customer understanding
Personalisation using data
Customer experience
Accessibility
Location services



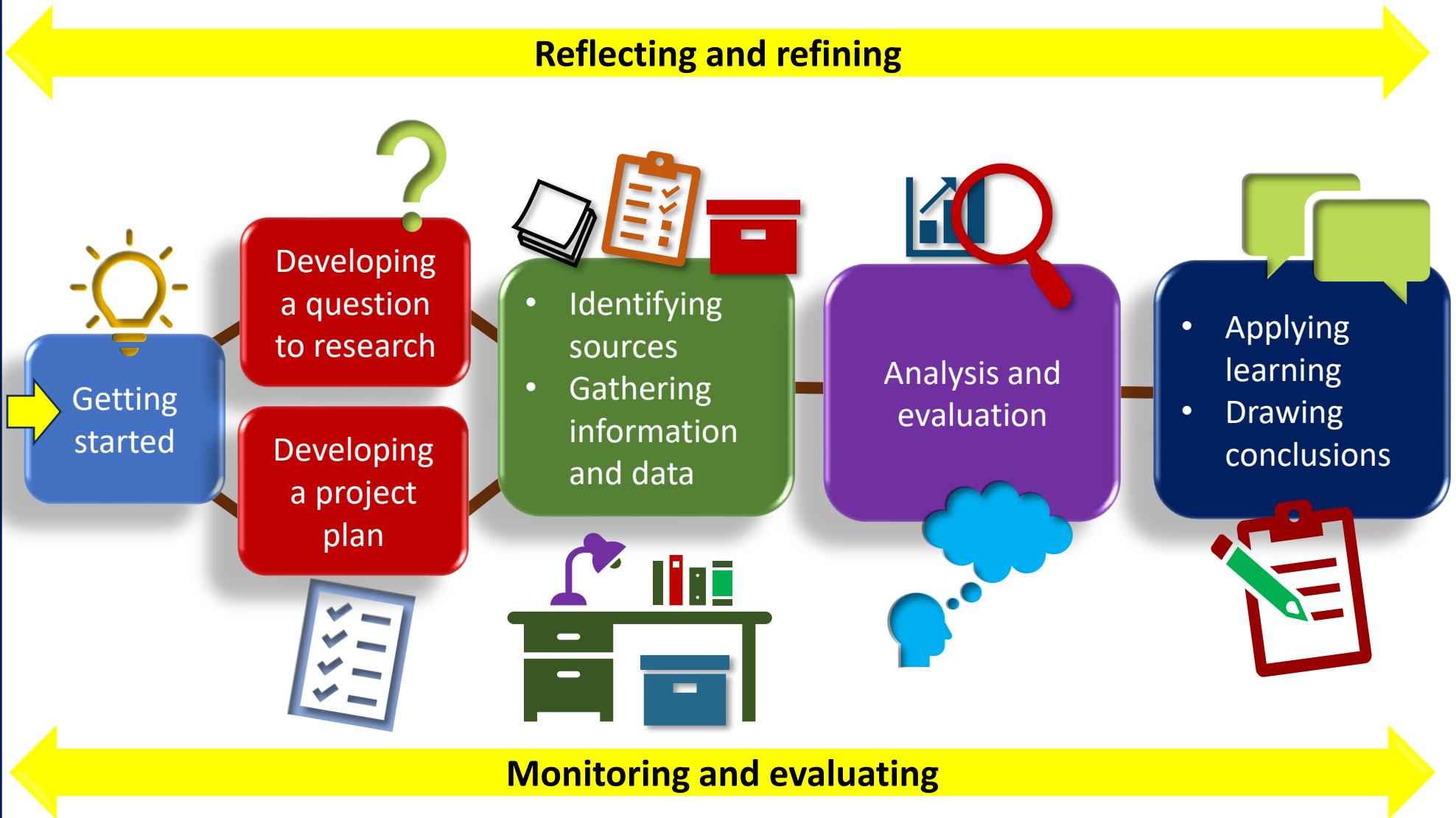
Empowered employees
Improving collaboration
New opportunities
Flexible working
Customer insights and analytics
Streamlining processes



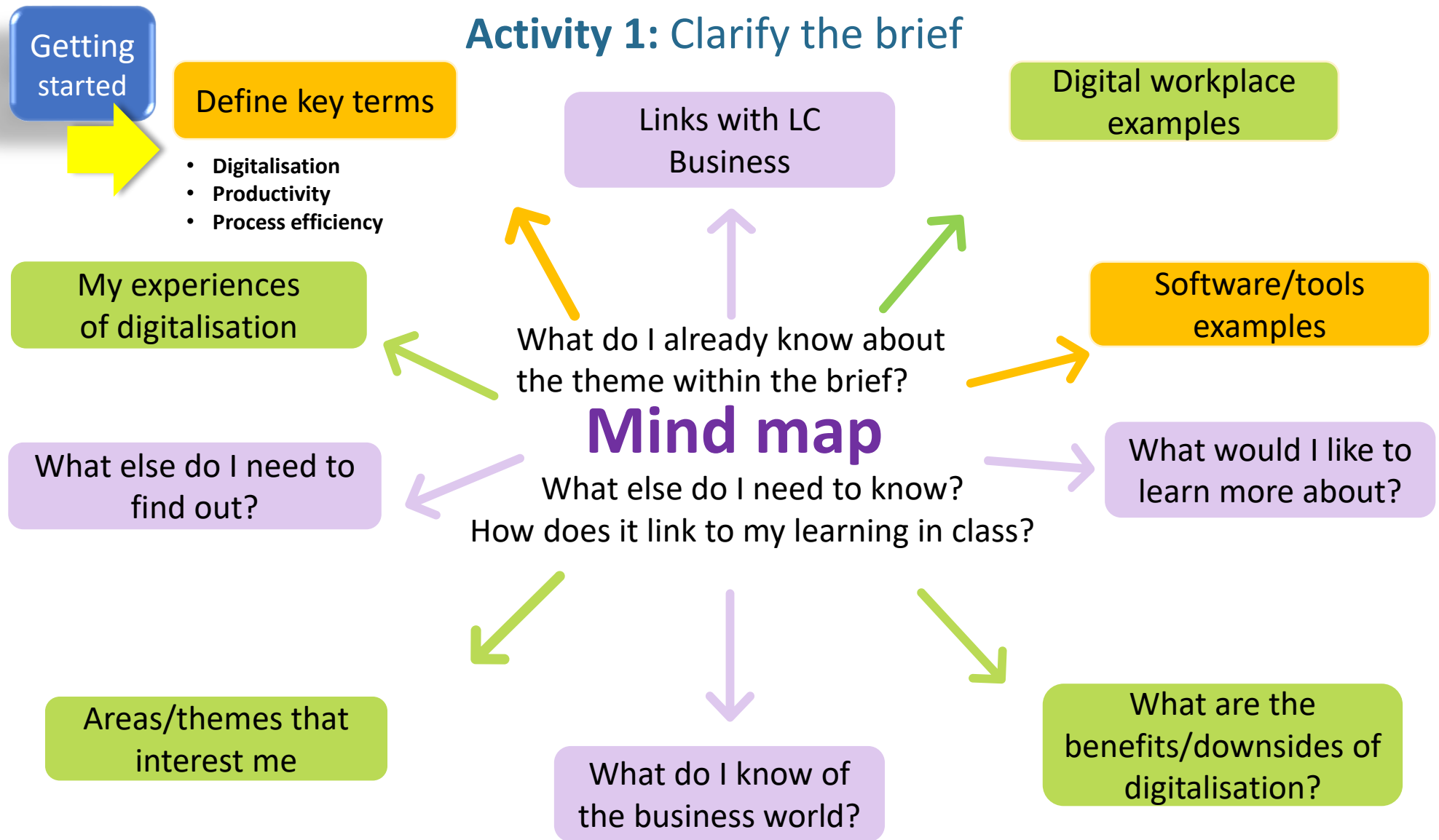
Virtual environments
Automating systems
Connected sensors and devices
Machine learning
Optimising operations
Transformed products



Main Stages of Activity for your Study

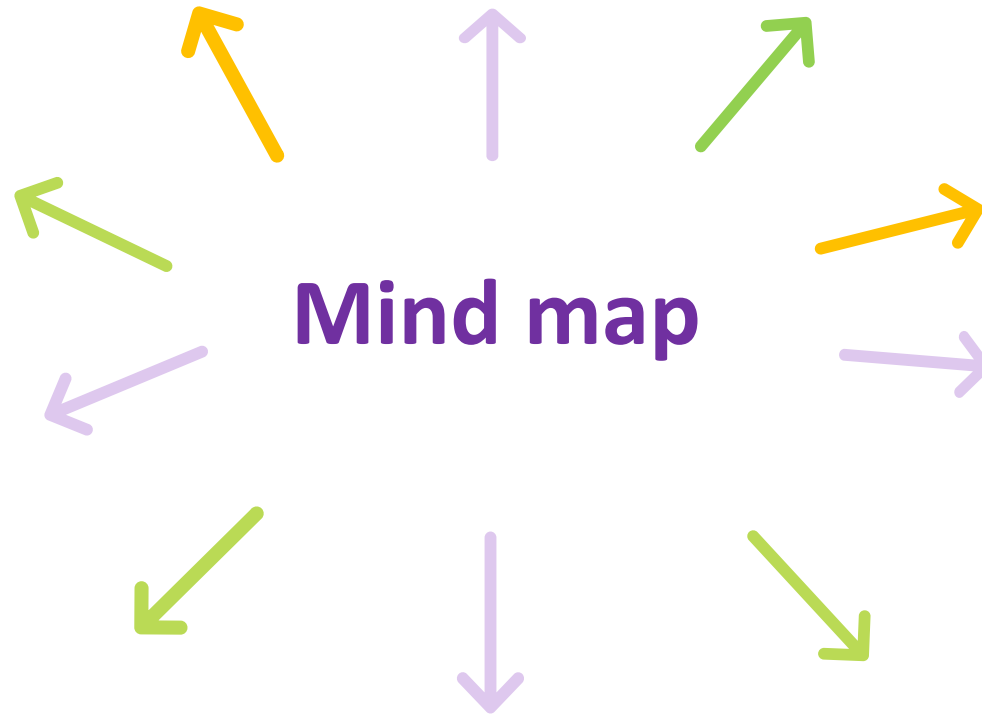


Activity 1: Clarify the brief



Create a **mind map** or **list** to help you clarify the theme of the brief

Activity 1: Clarify the brief



Introduction

Introduction (20 marks)

Approx. 200 words

- ❑ **State your research question** – use a question to state your area of research this will help give your structure and a focus. Keep your focus on a distinct area. A narrow range is better.
- ❑ **Explain the rationale for choosing this question** - highlight why this specific area was chosen. Make it a bit personal.
- ❑ **Reflect on how you engaged with your project plan** – explain what you wanted to **find out, achieve and measure**.

Title: The impact of digital ordering tools and payment systems on a small business.

Question

How did introducing a digitalised online ordering system, with time slots for takeaway pick-ups, increase revenue and footfall for **Crispy Spuds**, a street food van business?

Rationale

I chose this area to study because digitalisation.....

Reflection on the project plan

Aim: In this study I want to explore the relationship between consumer behaviour and engagement with a digitalised online sales portal. By examining buying trends and revenue over time, my research will provide insights into.....

Objectives:

- I plan to **measure and evaluate** their revenue over the last three quarters.
- I plan to **assess the sales of products on offer from their online menu**.
- **I will analyse** their social media output and customer feedback.

Example 1

Introduction

Introduction (20 marks)

Approx. 200 words

- ❑ **State your research question** – use a question to state your area of research this will help give your structure and a focus. Keep your focus on a distinct area. A narrow range is better.
- ❑ **Explain the rationale for choosing this question** - highlight why this specific area was chosen. Make it a bit personal.
- ❑ **Reflect on how you engaged with your project plan** – explain what you want to **find out, achieve** and **measure**. Reflect as you go along.

Title: The impact of remote working tools on employee productivity

Question

How has the use of remote working technologies (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Slack) impacted employee productivity in (your chosen business organisation/industry)?

Rationale

Digitalisation has transformed how businesses operate, particularly since COVID-19. Remote working technologies are now widely used across many industries. This project investigates.....

Aims and objectives of the project plan (for ongoing reflection)

Aim: To investigate the impact of remote working technologies on employee productivity.

Objectives:

- To identify the main remote working tools used by employees
- To measure perceived changes in productivity since adopting these tools
- To assess advantages and disadvantages of remote working for employees and employers
- To analyse employee attitudes towards remote work
- To draw conclusions and make recommendations based on findings.

Example 2

Activity 2: Developing a question

Developing a question to research



My theme:

Background research needed?



Gaps in my knowledge?

Main issues or problems I may encounter?

- Digitalisation
- Productivity
- Process efficiency



Theme	Ideas for a question	Notes: research needed, gaps, issues

Developing
a question
to research

Activity 3: Developing a question using **SMART** objectives

My
theme:

Background
research
needed?

Gaps in my
knowledge?

Main issues
or problems
I may
encounter?

Are my
objectives
SMART?

SMART	Refine your research question	Notes – reflect, consider
Specific	<p>Is my question linked to the theme in the brief? Why and how is it linked? (research might be useful here) Is my question clear and focused? Does the question state exactly what I want to answer? Is there anything I could change to make it clearer?</p>	
Measurable	<p>Can I find enough information to respond to my question from a range of different sources? Should I use primary and/or secondary sources? Will I be able to access the information I need? If not, should I rethink my question?</p>	
Achievable	<p>Where will I find the information, I need? What sources might I use and how will I access these sources? Are there sufficient sources of information or data available?</p>	
Relevant	<p>Is my question helping me to develop my understanding of the theme within the brief? Is it linked to what I am learning in my Business class or to business in the world around me?</p>	
Timebound	<p>Having considered these questions: Can I use my research question to make a project plan for my investigation? Will I be able to carry out the plan in the time allocated? If not, do I need to reconsider or narrow my question?</p>	

Developing
a project
plan

Activity 4: Developing a project plan



Ongoing monitoring and evaluating

Checking progress, identifying what is going well and the areas for improvement.

What are my
objectives?

Purpose
Aims
Links to question
Relevance to
business
Stages of work

What is my
role?

Current knowledge
Skills needed
Competencies to
develop
Organising
Recording
Monitoring
Evaluating

What
resources are
needed?

Sources needed
Accessibility
Relevance
Perspectives range

What is my
time
schedule?

Time frame
Main stages
Time allocation
Prepare a plan
Tracking progress

What are the
possible risks?

Challenges/
going wrong
Risks to progress/
completion
Overcoming problems
Identifying what's
working well

Activity 4: Developing a project plan



Questions to consider

Notes – reflect, consider

Objectives



What is the **purpose** of my research?
 What am I **aiming** to find out?
 How is this **linked to my research question**?
 How is this **relevant for business** locally, nationally or internationally?
 Why is it of **interest** to me?
 What are **my goals** for each stage of my work?

Role



What have I **learned previously** that might help me?
 What will I **need to do**?
 What **skills** will I need in doing this study?
 What **competencies** might I develop in doing this study?
 How will I **organise** my work and keep records?
 How will I **monitor and evaluate** my progress?



Resources



What **resources** will I need to access to answer my research question?
 When will I need **access**? How will I access these resources?
 Are these **resources suitable for the question** I have developed?
 Will they give me a **range of perspectives**?

Time schedule



What is the **time frame** for my study?
 What are the **main stages** involved in the study?
 What will I **need to do** and **when**?
 Have I **prepared a plan** to make best use of my time?
 Have I **allowed enough time** to **complete each stage** of the work?
 How and when will I **track my progress**?

Risks



Have I considered what **might go wrong or challenges I might encounter**?
 How might these risks impact on the progress or completion of my study?
 How might I overcome these?
 How will I identify what is working well?

Monitoring Evaluating



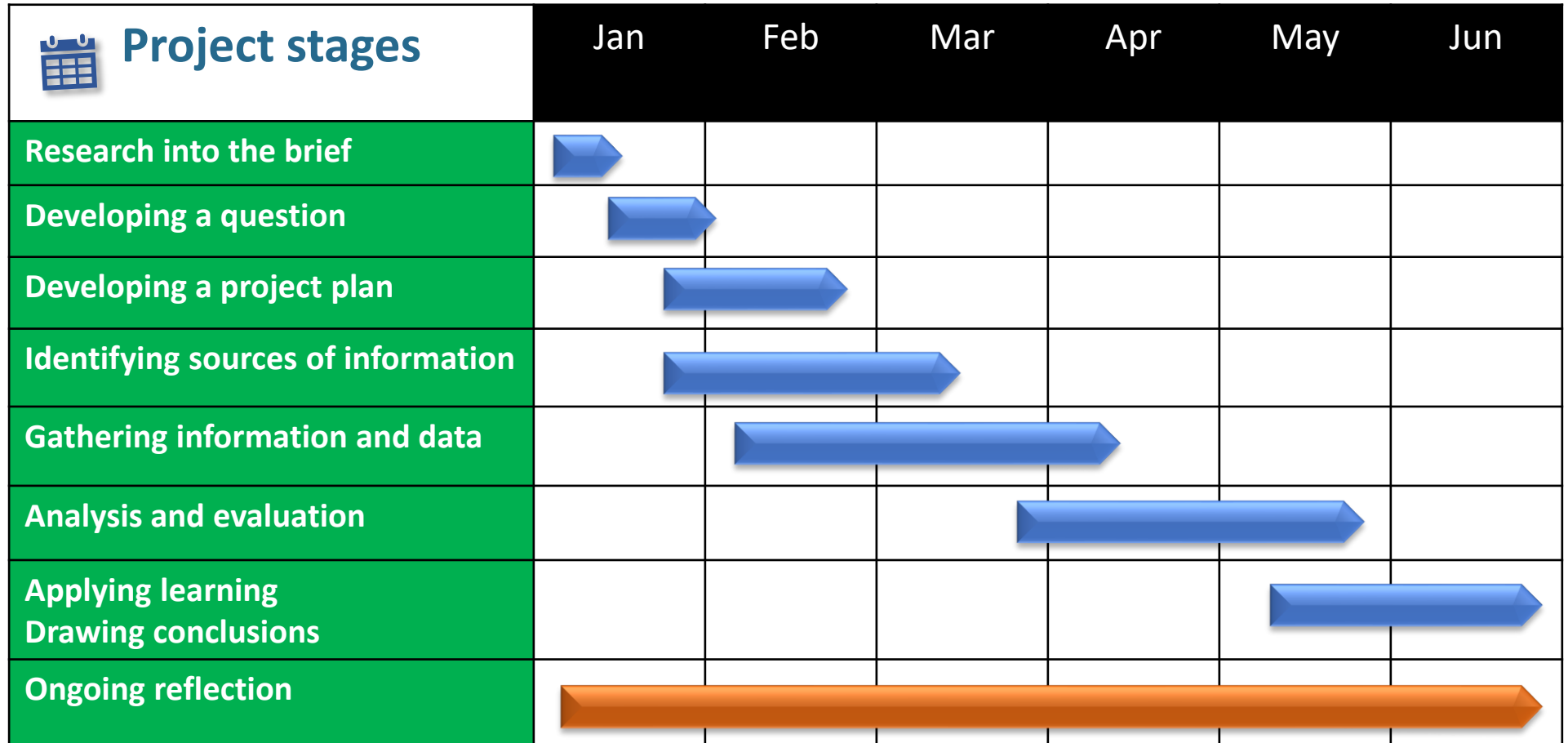
What is **working well**? How do I know?
 What **could be better**? How do I know/ What might I do to improve?
 How am I **progressing in line with my goals and timelines**?
 Do I need to **reconsider** my question?
 Do I need to **access additional sources** of information?
 What are the **limitations of my investigative study**?

Activity 5: My project plan		Time
Title		
Question		
Rationale		
Aims		
Objectives SMART		
Resources needed		



Project time management

Gantt charts are a useful way of planning your project



How long do you think each stage of your project will take?

There will be overlaps and changes as you progress. Evaluate your time management.

Progress check - ongoing monitoring and evaluating

Date:

Questions to consider



Notes: thoughts, reflection

Objectives



Are my **aims and purpose** still clear?
Have I **linked my research and findings to the question**?
Do I need to **reconsider** my question?

Role



What have I **learned previously** that is helping me?
What **skills** have I improved doing this study?
What **competencies** have I developed doing this study?
Is my work well-organised and have I kept **records**?

Resources



What **resources** have I **accessed so far**?
Are these **resources suitable for my question**?
Have these resources given me a **range of perspectives**?
Do I need to **access additional sources** of information?

Time schedule



Have I **prepared a plan** to make **best use of my time**?
Have I **allowed enough time to complete each stage**?
How am I **progressing in line with my goals and timelines**?

Risks



Have there been any **challenges/things gone wrong**?
Have these **challenges risked the progress** of my study?
How have I overcome these?

Monitoring Evaluating



What is **working well**? How do I know?
What **could be better**? How do I know?
What might I do to improve?
What are the **limitations of my investigative study**?
What are my **next steps**?

Investigation and Findings

Investigation and Findings, Analysis and Evaluation (100 marks)

Approx. 400 words

- ❑ **Explain the purpose and relevance of the different research methods and sources used appropriate to your research question** – consider **primary and secondary research** methods. Sources of information and data need to be **relevant and reliable**, minimum of 2 one must be **quantitative**.
- ❑ **Present your research findings in appropriate formats** – data should be **clear and easy to read**, particularly when using figures. All tables, graphs, images, curves must be **clearly labelled, numbered and referenced** correctly. Remember there should be **quality over quantity**.
- ❑ **Consider a variety of perspectives** - form and support **balanced arguments** and **judgments**. Include **business concepts** when presenting your data.

Research Methods – relevant and reliable

Primary

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Surveys
- Observation

Field



Desk



Secondary

- Gov. reports
- Business articles
- Company policies
- Company reports
- Academic studies
- Reference using **Harvard method**

Referencing Secondary Findings

Reference your research using the Harvard method



Rules when listing

- **Alphabetical Order:** Reference lists must be sorted alphabetically by author surname.
- **Same Author/Year:** Add a letter to the year to distinguish them: (Smith, 2024a), (Smith, 2024b).
- **No Author:** Use the title or organisation name instead.

*Harvard
method*

Examples

Book: Surname, Initial. (Year) **Title of book.** Place: Publisher.

Article: Surname, Initial. (Year) **'Title of article',** Journal Name, Volume(Issue), pp. pages.

Website: Author/Organisation (Year) **Title of page** [online]. Available at: URL (Accessed: Day Month Year).



Plagiarism is a serious offence and occurs when work other than the student's own is used **without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work.**


Referencing Secondary Findings - examples



Examples of in-text Citations and references for different types of sources

Source type	In-text citations (in the document text)	References (a list at the end of the project)
Book	(p. 57, McLeskey, 2013)	McLeskey, J. (2013) Inclusion: effective practice for all students? 2nd edition
Articles Newspaper/Mag	(Hearne, J., 30/08/2024)	Hearne, J. (30/08/2024) 'How bad driving habits cost Irish motorists hundreds every year', Irish Examiner
Online text or image	(thelatinlibrary.com/101/RhetoricalDevices)	Latin Library, Principal Rhetorical and Literary Devices, (date written not available), http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/101/RhetoricalDevices.pdf , Date accessed: 17/6/25
Online audio	(Ep. 10, rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22093250)	Philip Boucher Hayes, RTE, Hot Mess – Megawatts and Megabytes, Podcast, date created: 30/5/24, https://www.rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22093250-ep-10-megawatts-and-megabytes/ , Date accessed: 10/11/25
Online video	(3:20 to 5:45, youtu.be/yCv4iyPqZKQ)	ApintTurtle, Zig & Zag – Christmas crises, Film, date created 20/12/2008, http://youtu.be/yCv4iyPqZKQ , 12/12/14, from 3 minutes 20 seconds to 5 minutes 45 seconds.
AI tools sharable URL	(chat.openai.com/share/f45a1e23-2217-4443-a244-d56ab26ae940)	OpenAI (2023) ChatGPT (Oct. 20 version) [Large language model], accessed 20 October 2025. https://chat.openai.com/share/f45a1e23-2217-4443-a244-d56ab26ae940
AI tools without sharable URL	(OpenAI (2023) ChatGPT, 20/10/2023)	OpenAI (2023) ChatGPT (Oct. 20 version) [Large language model], accessed 20 October 2025. Prompt used and text generated.

Activity 6: Managing research and information from sources

Date	Source (add reference)	 Key information found	Notes: thoughts and reflection

Presenting Research Findings - Data

Investigation and Findings, Analysis and Evaluation (100 marks)

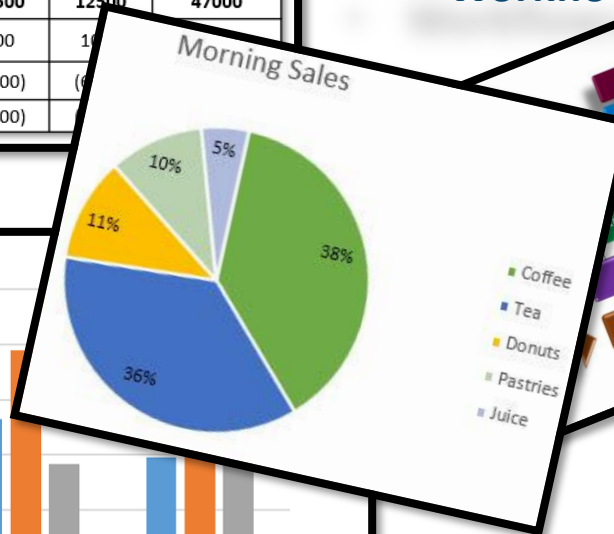
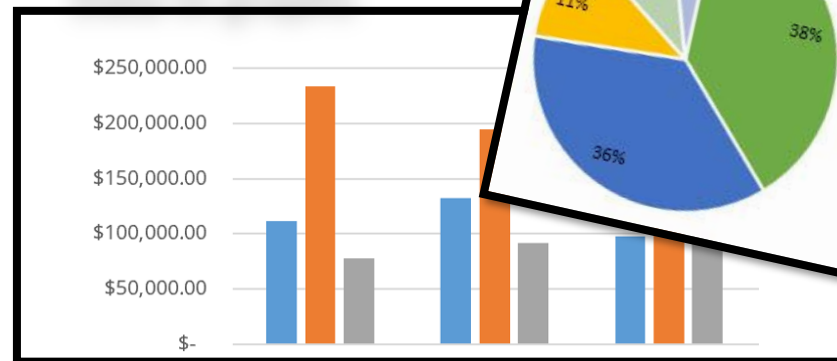
Approx. 400 words

- ❑ **Present your research findings in appropriate formats** – data should be clear and easy to read, particularly when using figures. All tables, graphs, images, curves must be clearly labelled, numbered and referenced correctly. Remember there should be **quality over quantity**.

Data in tables

Cashflow forecast for 4 th quarter of 2026				
	Oct €	Nov €	Dec €	Total
Total receipts (money in)	14500	11000	13500	39000
Total payments (money out)	24000	10500	12500	47000
Net cash (in – out)	(9500)	500	1000	(8000)
Opening cash (start money)	3000	(6500)	(6000)	(9500)
Closing cash (money left)	(6500)	(6000)	(5000)	(17500)

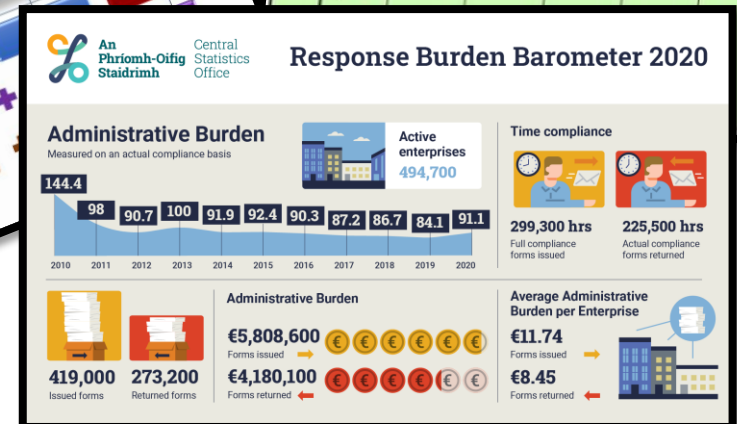
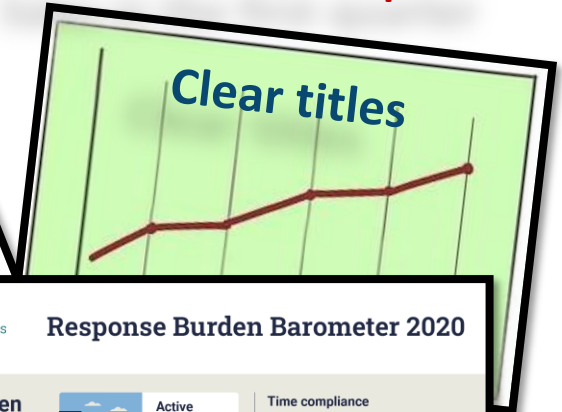
Data in graphs



- Tables
- Charts
- Infographics
- Workflows

Clear labels and numbering

Figure 1: Sales in the first quarter



Reference where the data came from e.g., figures from the CSO

Analysis and Evaluation

Investigation and Findings, **Analysis and Evaluation** (100 marks)

Approx. 600 words

- ☐ **Analyse your research findings** - reflect on your findings and results. What are the trends and patterns? Identify key findings related to digitalisation and productivity.
- ☐ **Evaluate your research findings** – answer the research question, identify limitations of the study, make recommendations for employees or the employer.
- ☐ **Demonstrate originality and critical thinking throughout your analysis and evaluation** – from your research, how would you **encourage others** to change their thinking

Analysis of Research findings

From this research, I gained new insights into....

The trends clearly point to.....

There is a pattern in the way....

Productivity increased when....

My opinion has also changed about....

This project made me realise how.....

I realise now that....

I would encourage others to think about.....

Example



Conclusions

Conclusion (20 marks)

Approx. 600 words

- ☐ **Present conclusions justified by the analysis and evaluation** – how has this project improved your understanding of digitalisation in business? What are your recommendations?
- ☐ **Outline how your planning contributed to the successful completion of the study** – how did your planning help you successfully complete your project. What challenges were encountered?
- ☐ **Discuss how your perspective evolved as a result of the study** - what did you learn from the findings? How has your opinion changed over the course of the project?
- ☐ **Consider how your findings connect to the real world of business** – make sure business concepts and theory are included.

The Conclusion

It is clear from the data that digitalisation.....

My planning meant

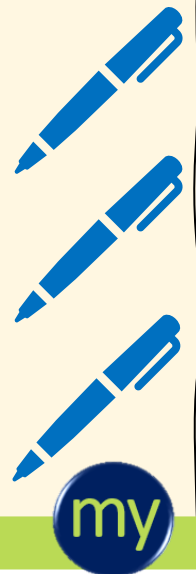
The limitations of my project....

In my judgment,

I recommend moving forward.....

From an business perspective.....

Example



Project Timeline for Students - 6 Months

Month	Activities	Methods/considerations	Output	✓
1. Project preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select project topic and research question Identify organisation or industry to be studied Create project plan and timeline 	Review Business Alive learning outcomes Define key terms: digitalisation, productivity, remote working etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Final research question ➤ Project plan (approved) ➤ Initial background research. 	
2. Secondary research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research existing studies Review government publications (e.g. gov.ie) Analyse business articles and reports Identify benefits and challenges discussed in sources 	Resources Required Gov. websites – reports e.g., Dept of Enterprise Business journals and newspapers Academic articles – business and HR Company websites – policies and reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Secondary research summary ➤ List of referenced sources. ➤ All resources referenced using Harvard method 	
3. Primary research design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide on applicable primary research methods e.g., Design employee questionnaire Prepare interview questions Pilot survey with a small group Make improvements based on feedback 	Resources Required Survey tool (Google Forms or Microsoft Forms) Spreadsheet software (Excel) Time for research and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Final questionnaire design ➤ Final interview guide ➤ Ethical considerations addressed (anonymity, consent) 	
4. Primary data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute surveys to employees Conduct interviews if applicable Collect and organise responses Ensure data is reliable and unbiased 	Ethical Considerations Participation is voluntary Responses are anonymous Data is used for educational purposes only No personal or sensitive information collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Completed survey responses ➤ Interview notes or transcripts ➤ Ethical considerations included. 	
5. Data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise data into tables and charts Analyse trends and patterns Compare findings with secondary research Identify key findings e.g., productivity and wellbeing 	Possible Limitations Small sample size Limited access to organisations Subjective responses from employees Time constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Data tables and graphs ➤ Written analysis of results. 	
6. Evaluation and report completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate findings: Answer the research question Identify limitations of the study Make recommendations for employers/employees Reflection (To Be Completed at Project End) What skills were developed during the project? What challenges were encountered? How could the project be improved? Has your understanding of digitalisation improved? 	Expected Outcomes Greater understanding of how digital tools affect productivity Identification of best practices Practical recommendations for businesses Strong links to Business Alive course content Proofread and finalise report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Completed investigative study report ➤ Conclusion and recommendations made. ➤ Reflection on project. 	

Descriptors of Quality for the Business Alive Investigative Study

	Students demonstrating a high level of achievement	Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement	Students demonstrating a low level of achievement
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate effective engagement with planning throughout their study and clearly reflect on and evaluate the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the effective completion of the study. develop a clear and probing research question that is underpinned by the relevance or importance of business locally, nationally and/or internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate engagement with planning throughout their study and reflect on the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the completion of the study. develop a clear research question that is underpinned by the relevance or importance of business locally, nationally and/or internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate limited engagement with planning throughout their study and present limited reflections on the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the completion of the study. develop some form of research question.
Investigating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and evaluate the potential value of a wide range of appropriate sources related to the research question created based on the brief. complete an in-depth analysis and evaluation of data and information from a range of reliable sources justifying the choice of sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and evaluate the potential value of a range of appropriate sources related to the research question created based on the brief. analyse and evaluate data and information from a range of reliable sources justifying the choice of sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify a limited range of sources related to the research question created based on the brief. present limited analysis and evaluation of data and information from a range of sources.

Descriptors of Quality for the Business Alive Investigative Study

	Students demonstrating a high level of achievement	Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement	Students demonstrating a low level of achievement
Investigating (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present conclusions justified by the analysis and evaluation of the data and information, related to the research question developed. clearly identify limitations in the investigative study across the design of the research question, the research gathered and/or analysis conducted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present conclusions related to the research question developed. identify some limitations in the study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present limited conclusions demonstrating engagement with the topic. do not identify limitations in the study.
Applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business and business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. clearly and appropriately relate the findings of the investigation to the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate some capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business, business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. relate the findings of the investigation to the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate limited capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business, business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. make limited links between the findings of the investigation and the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification.
Communicating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present clear and appropriate data and information and analysis using a range of relevant graphics as appropriate. use coherent and consistent language throughout the report with clearly acknowledged appropriate supporting references and reflections on the study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present adequate data and information and analysis; using relevant graphics as appropriate. use moderately coherent and consistent language throughout the report with some acknowledged supporting references and reflections on the research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present limited data and information and analysis, limited or no use of graphics. present a report where the language used demonstrates limited coherence and consistency with limited supporting references and reflections.

Table 3: Descriptors of Quality: Business Alive Investigative Study

Resources for LC Business and Economics

<https://www.myleavingcert.ie/>

Myleavingcert is a series of flexible, high quality on-line resources, aimed at helping **business and economics** students improve their grades and fill in knowledge gaps.

New LC Business coming soon!

What is included?

- ✓ **Key facts** in each topic to help students check knowledge and identify gaps
- ✓ **Important definitions** highlighted in every section
- ✓ **Detailed revision notes** organised by topic
- ✓ **Original diagrams** aimed to clarify topics and promote understanding
- ✓ **Audio files** to make revision more flexible
- ✓ **Quizzes** provided at the end of each topic aimed at improving retention
- ✓ All available **exam questions** included by topic, helping to focus the study.

Benefits for students and teachers

Students **have all the information** they need in one place for revision.

Teachers get updated **resources, teaching materials and ideas for lessons** and homework. We are always adding new materials to make the job easier.



 [myleavingcert.ie](https://www.myleavingcert.ie)

www.myleavingcert.ie

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