



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

FINAL EXAMINATION

Semester	:	JANUARY 2025 SEMESTER
Programme Name	:	BA (HONS) BUSINESS 3+0 IN COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH
Course Code & Name	:	MAL3034 OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
Duration	:	3 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

1. Please read the instructions given in the question paper **CAREFULLY**.
2. The question paper consists of TWO (2) sections.
3. Answer ALL questions in Section A and Section B.
4. Answers to the questions are to be written into the examination booklet.
5. Electronic dictionaries, lecture notes, files or any unauthorised materials except writing equipment are strictly prohibited.

This question paper must be submitted along with all used and/or unused rough papers and/ or graph papers (if any). Candidates are **NOT ALLOWED** to take any examination paper(s) used or unused out of the examination hall.

WARNING:

The Examination Board of Peninsula College Georgetown regards cheating as a very serious offence and will not hesitate to mete out the appropriate punitive actions according to the severity of the offence committed, and in accordance with the clauses stipulated in the Students' Handbook, up to and including expulsion from Peninsula College Georgetown.

(This booklet contains 3 printed pages including this page)

DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE ALLOWED TO DO SO

SECTION A

[60 marks]

Toyota's Commitment to Quality and Continuous Improvement

Toyota has long been recognized as a global leader in quality management and operational excellence. The company's Toyota Production System (TPS) emphasizes continuous improvement (Kaizen), waste reduction, and delivering high-quality products to customers. However, even industry leaders face challenges.

In the early 2010s, Toyota experienced a series of quality-related recalls due to unintended acceleration and faulty braking systems, affecting millions of vehicles worldwide. These issues raised concerns about Toyota's quality control processes and brand reputation. The company responded by restructuring its quality management system, increasing supplier oversight, and investing in advanced quality control technologies.

Toyota also emphasized customer feedback mechanisms, enabling the company to proactively address potential quality issues. Additionally, it strengthened its commitment to Six Sigma methodologies, data-driven decision-making, and employee training programs to ensure consistent quality across all production lines.

Despite these challenges, Toyota successfully regained customer trust through its strong quality-focused strategies. The company remains one of the best-selling automakers in the world, with its reputation for durability, reliability, and continuous improvement reinforcing its competitive advantage.

END OF CASE STUDY

Answer **ALL** questions on the separate sheet provided

1. a) Based on the case study, critically evaluate **THREE (3)** quality management strategies that Toyota implemented to address its quality challenges. Assess their effectiveness in sustaining Toyota's competitive advantage. (15 marks)

- b) Toyota is known for producing high-quality vehicles. Outline and justify **FIVE (5)** key dimensions of product quality that customers expect from Toyota. (15 marks)

- c) While Toyota has been successful in managing quality, implementing quality management practices comes with challenges. Analyze **THREE (3)** key challenges Toyota may face in maintaining quality excellence. How might these challenges impact its long-term operational sustainability and brand reputation? (15 marks)

- d) Toyota aims to reduce waste and optimize resources in its production processes. Evaluate the impact of sustainability initiatives on Toyota's manufacturing efficiency and product quality. Which sustainability strategy provides the greatest competitive advantage? Justify your answer. (15 marks)

Total: [60 marks]

SECTION B

Answer **ALL** questions on the separate sheet provided

[40 marks]

2. Process design plays a critical role in operations management by determining how products and services are produced efficiently. Analyze how different process design strategies influence operational efficiency, cost, and customer satisfaction. Compare two industries where contrasting process designs are used and assess their effectiveness. (10 marks)

3. Explain **TWO (2)** basic elements of the Just-In-Time (JIT) approach and how they contribute to waste reduction and improved productivity in an organization. (5 marks)

4. The supply chain involves multiple interconnected stages, ensuring that products move efficiently from suppliers to end customers.

Supply chain participants:

- Raw Material Supplier
- Manufacturer
- Wholesaler
- Retailer
- Customer

Assess the role and interdependence of the **FIVE (5)** key supply chain participants. Using real-world examples, evaluate how disruptions at any stage could lead to operational inefficiencies, increased costs, and potential customer dissatisfaction. (15 marks)

5. Imagine you are the operations manager of a multinational manufacturing company facing seasonal demand fluctuations. Develop a customized aggregate planning strategy that integrates multiple approaches to optimize costs, workforce stability, and production efficiency. Justify your approach with practical implementation steps and potential challenges. (10 marks)

Total: [40 marks]

- END OF QUESTIONS -