

# Problem Solving

## **Section 2: Planning your Project**

**[HIGHER]**

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## Introduction to the section

This section is the second of a series of self study packs that are intended to guide you through the skills required to complete Problem Solving at Higher.

The whole series is composed of the following sections:

- *Section One:* Analysing the problem
- *Section Two:* Planning and carrying out your project
- *Section Three:* Evaluating your work.

The sections should be worked through in consecutive order.

You are encouraged to integrate your work in Problem Solving with other study areas where feasible. However, you must discuss this with your subject tutors before you begin any work.

### Assessment explained

This second section covers the second outcome.

#### **Problem Solving at Higher, Outcome 2:**

You will need to

- develop a plan – by deciding the various steps or stages needed to carry out the approach you have developed, and by identifying the resources you need for each stage of the plan
- carry out the task – by obtaining the resources you need and then carrying out each stage of the plan until you have completed the task.

## Aims and objectives of this section

This section will help you to:

- understand the importance of planning
- understand the principles of developing a plan.

By the end of this section, you should be able to:

- develop your own plan for the successful completion of the task
- carry out the task according to your plan.

## Symbols used in the pack



This symbol denotes a numbered Self Assessed Activity – a short exercise that you are encouraged to do for yourself. Comment and feedback for all the Activities can be found on the page after the Activity, but you should try to do the Activity before reading this. Your responses don't need to be shown to your tutor.



This denotes a Tutor Assessed Activity. These are different from Self Assessed Activities because there is no comment given after them (the tools for answering Assessment Tasks are included in the section however) and you should show this work to your tutor. Your tutor will mark this work and give you feedback.



This symbol denotes a Tutor Checkpoint and alerts you to the fact that it is now time to meet your tutor to discuss your progress. (There is further explanation of this on the page on Attendance/tutor contact requirements in the Student Introductory Guide.)

## Tutor support

Although you may be studying Problem Solving at Higher as a flexible learning student, this does not mean that you have no support. Please do not hesitate to contact your tutor about any problems you are having, or to seek clarification on any points.

## **Planning the task**

Planning can be considered to be an investment in efficiency and success. Planning is the process by which you work out what you want to achieve, and then think through the who, what, when, where, why and how of achieving that goal in the most effective way possible.

By planning well you can ensure that you concentrate only on those tasks that will move you towards your goal in the most effective way, without being distracted by less important tasks.

### **Identifying key activities**

The first stage in the process is to identify the key actions that need to be performed in order to achieve the aim of the plan. If these actions are complex, reduce them down to a number of smaller key actions.

Example: (For building a PowerPoint presentation of local tourist attractions)

- Visit tourist information centre
- Library research
- Internet research
- Build presentation on PowerPoint
- Write questionnaire
- Ask people what they think of presentation.

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Now list your own key activities. You must have at least four.

Your key activities:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Add more key activities if required.)

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**Prioritising activities**

Once you have done the above, prioritise the activities in order of importance so that you do not waste time on low priority tasks.

Prioritise your activities now:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Completing the task

What you have to do:

Complete the following plan using the example on pages 8 and 9 to help you.

- Decide
  - what activities need to be carried out
  - what action needs to be taken
  - in what order
  - by whom, and
  - when.
- You must make sure that your plan has at least four stages.
- You must make sure that at least two of the resources that you will be working with are unfamiliar to you. You must state these clearly.



- You should include a Tutor Checkpoint somewhere in your plan.
- An example has been provided for you overleaf. The task attempted in the example is the same one as in the mini project – an investigation into the effectiveness of a health promotion campaign.

## Example

Stage/Week	Activity	Resources	Result
Stage One – week 3	Prepare Plan Decide on time schedule	Diary Information gathered so far	Prepared plan and had time to start research
Stage Two – weeks 4–5	Research background information on campaign  Research information on organisation of campaign	Articles on TV, Journals*, Articles in Newspaper, CD ROM*, Internet*  As above. Telephone numbers for appropriate organisations	Research took longer than predicted. Had to take some work home  HEBS to send information to me – but may be too late for submission
Stage Three – weeks 6–8	Draw up questionnaire Print, distribute and collate information	Computer Access to class	Completed survey
Stage Four – week 9	Pull together all resources and write up report	Computer and access to all information gathered	Writing up project took longer than predicted – worked late in the library to get it finished
Stage Five – week 10	Complete Assessments and book meeting with tutor	Study guide, all resources gathered and report	Successfully completed project and arranged to see tutor

(\*Unfamiliar resources)

**T<sub>9</sub>** Example plan

Stage/Week	Activity	Resources	Result

## The log book

### Planning – recording personal contributions to the task

Whether you are working alone or in a group, you must keep a record of what your individual contribution to the problem solving activity has been. A blank diary sheet has been provided for you. You may negotiate other ways of providing this evidence with your tutor – perhaps by using e-mail for example.

What you have to do:

- agree your recording documents with your tutor (an example which you could use or adapt is provided)
- maintain the record as appropriate – it is likely that you will keep a weekly record
- entries should be brief but frequent and you must ensure that you are meeting all the requirements of your plan.

# Student Log Book

**Core Skill: Problem Solving**

**Higher**

Student Name:

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Tutor Name:

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Date:

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**Task record**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you encountered any problems? If yes, give details. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How have you addressed these problems? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How far have you achieved your goals? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_