QHO443 – Network Applications

Assessment 1 (AE1): Personal Learning Record (PLR)

Component	Details
Assessment Title	Assessment 1 (AE1): Personal Learning Record (PLR)
Module Code	QHO443 – Network Applications
Weighting	60%
Word Limit	2,500 words
Submission Date	16 January 2026, before 4:00 PM
Submission Mode	Online via SOL

1. Assessment Overview

The Personal Learning Record (PLR) is an individual assessment worth 60% of the module. It requires you to demonstrate both your practical and theoretical understanding of Network Applications through weekly laboratory tasks.

You are required to complete three labs in total, each based on the case studies provided on SOL. These case studies are designed to reflect real-world business challenges faced by organisations in managing and securing their network systems. Your role is to apply practical and analytical skills to develop suitable solutions for each scenario.

You will complete:
One Windows lab
Two Linux labs

Your PLR should be presented as a professional report that records your lab activities, explains your findings, and reflects on how each task meets the requirements of the given case study.

2. Purpose of the PLR

The PLR allows you to apply network configuration and management techniques in both Windows and Linux environments. It helps you demonstrate your understanding of system architecture, system failures, and appropriate responses to meet business needs. You will also reflect on how your practical work supports the objectives of each case study while developing your ability to communicate technical findings in a clear and structured academic format.

Through this assessment, you will combine practical skills with analytical reasoning to show how networking solutions can be applied effectively in real-world organisational contexts.

3. Structure of the PLR

Each of your three lab reports must include six clearly labelled sections. These sections directly reflect the official assessment criteria outlined in the module brief.

3.1 Introduction (10%)

Begin each lab with a clear and focused introduction. Explain the purpose of the lab, what it aims to achieve, and how it relates to the specific case study provided. Describe the network problem or organisational need addressed in the case study and the expected outcomes of the lab. Mention the tools, platforms, and technologies used, such as Windows Server utilities or Linux configuration commands.

Your introduction should demonstrate understanding of both the technical objectives and their relevance to the business scenario presented in the case study.

3.2 Quality of Screenshots (10%)

Include at least two screenshots per lab that clearly represent the key steps of your practical work. Screenshots should be of high quality, legible, and directly related to the objectives of the lab. Each image must include a figure number and a short caption describing what it shows.

Example: Figure 1: Configuring a network interface on Linux.

Screenshots must be original, taken during your own work, and positioned logically within your explanation. They should help to visually support your written discussion.

3.3 Achieving for Case Study (20%)

In this section, you must explain how the lab contributes to solving the problems outlined in the case study. Summarise the scenario briefly and discuss how your practical actions align with the company's goals or challenges.

Describe how your configuration or setup helps the organisation meet its technical and business objectives. This could include improving network performance, strengthening security, or ensuring system reliability.

Example: The case study organisation required a secure method for remote system administration. By enabling SSH key-based authentication on Linux, the lab successfully met this requirement, ensuring encrypted and verified access for authorised users.

This section should demonstrate your ability to connect technical actions with real-world benefits for the organisation.

3.4 Explanation of Screenshots (30%)

This is the most detailed part of your PLR. For each screenshot, provide a clear and technical explanation of what is happening, why you performed that step, and what outcome it achieves. Go beyond description by analysing how each action contributes to the lab's purpose and supports the case study.

Explain configurations, commands, or processes using correct technical terminology. Your writing should show understanding of the tools used and the reasoning behind each decision.

Example: Figure 2 shows the configuration of a static IP address for the web server. This ensures consistent connectivity within the network and allows other systems in the company's environment to communicate reliably with the server, which is crucial for business continuity.

This section should form the main body of each lab report and reflect your technical accuracy and analytical depth.

3.5 Summary of Further Work (20%)

Conclude each lab with a short summary that reflects on what you achieved, how the objectives were met, and what challenges you faced. Mention how you overcame any difficulties and what improvements or additional work could enhance the outcome.

Example: The DHCP service was successfully deployed and tested. Further work could include implementing DHCP redundancy and integrating IP address management tools to ensure long-term scalability.

This section shows your ability to evaluate your work critically and to consider future developments or enhancements.

3.6 References (10%)

Provide a reference list at the end of each lab using the Harvard Solent referencing style. All external materials, including textbooks, Microsoft documentation, Linux guides, or online tutorials, must be cited in-text and included in the reference list.

Example (in-text): According to Cisco (2023), proper subnetting ensures optimal network performance and reduces broadcast traffic.

Example (reference list): Cisco (2023) Network Fundamentals. Available at: https://www.cisco.com (Accessed: 10 January 2026).

Accurate referencing demonstrates academic honesty and gives credibility to your technical work.

4. General Guidance

You must complete three labs in total: one Windows lab and two Linux labs. Each lab must relate directly to the case study provided on SOL. All written content should be your own work, clearly structured, and professionally presented. Screenshots must be original and integrated naturally into the report.

Ensure that your PLR is well-organised, with clear headings and consistent formatting throughout. Use concise, formal language suitable for an academic report.

Save the entire PLR as a single Word or PDF file using the format StudentID_QHO443_PLR. Submit it to SOL before the deadline. Late submissions will be subject to university penalties.

5. Marking Breakdown

Assessment Criterion	Marks (%)
Introduction	10
Quality of Screenshots	10
Achieving for Case Study	20
Explanation of Screenshots	30
Summary of Further Work	20
References	10
Total	**100**

6. Key Reminder from the Assessment Brief

The PLR contributes 60% of the total module grade. You must show understanding, not just completion of practical work. Marks are awarded for clarity, accuracy, relevance, critical analysis, and proper referencing.

Your work must directly address the case studies provided on SOL. These case studies are designed to test your ability to apply theoretical concepts to real business challenges. Each section of your report contributes directly to your final grade as shown in the marking table above.

7. What NOT to Do in Your PLR for the Labs

Common Mistake	Explanation / Why to Avoid It
Copying text or screenshots	Using material from other students or online sources is plagiarism and will lead to academic penalties.
Poor-quality or irrelevant screenshots	Screenshots must be clear, original, and directly related to the task being discussed.

Missing captions or figure numbers	Every screenshot should include a figure number and short caption for clarity.
Listing steps without explanation	You must explain *why* each step was performed and how it links to the case study.
Ignoring the case study context	Each lab must clearly show how your work solves the problem in the case study.
Failing to reference sources	All materials used must be properly cited using Harvard Solent style.
Using informal or casual language	Write in formal, professional English appropriate for an academic report.
Submitting incomplete or unrelated work	Only include tested, relevant, and complete lab