



ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (A2)

General Certificate of Education

GCE Applied ICT

Assessment A2 Unit 7

assessing

Investigating Systems

Pre-release Case Study

CAROL'S CATERING COMPANY

Carol Doran is a terrific cook. When she left school, she trained as a chef at Catering College and then worked in various restaurants and hotels before she got married to her husband David, a car salesman, ten years ago. People often asked her to help them out at parties or to bake a cake for a special occasion. As her reputation spread she decided to take on private work outside her normal working hours for which she got paid.

Before long Carol was taking on so much extra work that it was becoming increasingly difficult to continue both her current full time job at Haven Hotel and maintain all the private contracts that she was asked to fulfil. In fact the demands of having three small children, twin boys and a little girl and keeping both jobs going was just too much. Carol and her husband realised that changes had to be made.

After much discussion and advice they decided to launch their own Business, 'Carol's Catering Company'. They decided that the range of services they would provide would include:

- **Specialist Cakes** (Birthdays, Anniversaries, Weddings, Christening, Retirement)
- **Sandwiches and Snacks** (mostly for lunch events)
- **Parties** (Dinner Parties, Engagements, Birthdays, Office Parties)
- **Private Function Catering** (Buffets, Business Events, Meetings, Concerts, Funerals)
- **Equipment Rental** (Cutlery, Glasses, Dishes, Dinner Services)
- **Waitress Service** (Staff from the company would actually serve at an event as well as clear up afterwards)

David would help run the administrative side of the business while Carol would concentrate on the cooking. They managed to get some financial assistance to start the company and converted their kitchen to comply with Health and Safety standards and all the regulations associated with food production. The business quickly established an excellent reputation and Carol found herself working harder than ever. She soon employed eight other members of staff, including three assistant cooks, two 'silver service' waitresses, two kitchen staff, and a driver. Sometimes an event required even more help, so Carol had three or four extra staff whom she would call upon to help out part time.

Carol would be the first to say that she didn't have much of an idea about running a business. In fact if the truth were told she was terrible at keeping the paperwork in order. However she was always telling people that she never forgot a recipe and would never write down the ingredients for her own special dishes. It was equally true that David wasn't just that good at paperwork either, he was excellent at telling people what services they provided but he had a habit of putting everything to one side and saying that he would see to it later.

Carol keeps a large notebook beside the telephone in the hall of their home to write down orders. Their home telephone is also their business number. When a customer rings, Carol tries to write down brief details about their requirements and also the date they require the particular service in order to make a preliminary booking. Sometimes, particularly when she is really busy, she writes down a name and telephone number on a yellow 'post it' and tells the customer that she will get back to them. Sometimes the 'post it' sticker gets lost and the customer with it!

In the evening, Carol tries to find time to go through the notebook and write the details into a large diary. This lets her see if there are any multiple bookings that she will not be able to manage. When this is done, Carol either rings the customer and say she can't take on the job or she sends the customer out an order form to complete and return. These order forms are very basic and should really give much more information. A sample order form, Document 1 is attached.

When the order forms are returned, she places them in date order in a box in the kitchen. As the date approaches (determined by how far down the box she gets), Carol checks her stock of ingredients to make sure everything that she needs is available. If not, Carol writes out a list of items to be ordered the next day.

Carol places a daily vegetable order with a local vegetable shop and a weekly grocery order with the local supermarket as well as daily orders when the need arises. These items are delivered accompanied by a delivery note. The vegetable shop and the supermarket also send monthly invoices for payment. She knows herself that things are getting to be a bit haphazard. She is so busy that sometimes she has no idea what she has in stock and either orders too much or too little. On quite a few occasions recently she has lost a lot of fresh food that would not keep, because of over ordering. Even worse, she found herself so short of the right products twice in the last month that she had to change a menu she had agreed with a customer. Carol realises that this is not good for business. Carol pays for these orders on a monthly basis when an invoice is sent in from the vegetable shop and from the supermarket.

When Carol completes an order, for example a party, she tries to get an invoice sent out to the customer as soon as possible. She keeps a copy of the invoices when she remembers so that she can check the payments properly when they come in and because her accountant says that he needs them to balance the books. A sample invoice, Document 2 is attached.

Because of the pressure of work, this may take up to three weeks. By the time the customer gets around to paying it may be another three weeks. When a payment comes in from a customer, Carol tries to make sure that the original order, the invoice and the payment all match up. This is a very time consuming activity and means going through the notebook, the orders, the invoice copies and the payments. When she finally gets this sorted out, she will send the customer a receipt. A sample receipt Document 3 is attached. Sometimes Carol also has to send out reminders and this is really difficult to track. A sample reminder Document 4 is attached.

With the increase in customers and the range of services provided growing all the time, Carol is having difficulty in keeping track of all her customers. She used to know everyone individually but now when someone rings up and says 'Hi Carol, remember the party you did for me last year.....', she frequently makes a mistake with the customer name or event. She has no record of her customers or what they ordered. She hasn't even got a real picture of what the most popular service is. Indeed, she has particular difficulty with her equipment rental service because she does not have a proper list of every item or who has borrowed them. David has worked very hard at establishing business contacts that use the catering service frequently. His background in Sales has really helped him develop good marketing strategies. Carol has now decided to rent a business unit on the outskirts of the City. This unit will be

fully equipped to the highest standard and will have proper parking facilities so that the two vans can be loaded and unloaded easily. Carol has also placed an advertisement in the local press for two secretarial support staff.

Although she is very excited about the continued development of the business, Carol and David know that they can no longer sustain the administrative burden. As the business has grown, the paperwork has got totally out of control.

They have agreed that they need urgent specialist help and have sought the advice of a computer consultancy firm with a view to installing a computer system to manage the administrative aspects of the business.

CAROL'S CATERING COMPANY
ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____ Tel: _____

Date service required: _____

Please complete the details below giving as much detail as possible in the space provided.:

Service required	Description
Specialist Cakes Please tell us if it is a birthday, wedding or other special event cake. Please tell us what shape and size.	
Sandwiches and Snacks Please tell us the type of event and the number of people attending. Tell us if you want some hot snacks as well	
Parties Please tell us the type of party and the number of people attending. Tell us what kind of party food you want	
Private Function Catering Please tell us the type of function and the number of people attending. Tell us what kind of food you want	
Equipment Rental Please tell us the type of equipment and the number of each item you want	
Waitress Service Please tell us the type of function and the number of people attending. Tell us what kind of service you want.	

DOCUMENT 1

CAROL'S CATERING COMPANY

INVOICE

To: Mrs. S. O'Neill
42 Woodside Road,
Bangor
Co.Down

Service provided: **Buffet Lunch**
Equipment Hire
Waitress Service

No. of People: **50**

Date service provided : **2nd January 2005**

1st February 2004

ITEM	Price per person £	No.	Total £
Sandwiches (variety)	6.50	50	325
Sausage Rolls			
Sausages			
Vol au vents (variety)			
Mini Quiche			
Bacon Rolls			
Garlic bread			
Crumbed Chicken pieces			
Cheesecake (variety)			
Eclairs / Meringues			
Gateau (variety)			
Red Wine	2.00	50	100
White Wine			
Soft Drinks			
Tea			
Coffee			
Plates	1.50	50	75
Glasses			
Cups			
Saucers			
Serving dishes			
Cutlery			
Waitress (2) for 3 hours at £4.20			25.20
We would be grateful for prompt payment.	Sub total		525.20
	VAT@17.50%		91.91
	Total		617.11

DOCUMENT 2
CAROL'S CATERING COMPANY
RECEIPT

To: Mrs. S. O'Neill
42 Woodside Road,
Bangor
Co.Down

Service provided: **Buffet Lunch**
 Equipment Hire
 Waitress Service

No. of People:50

Date service provided : 2nd January 2005

Service cost	£
Sub total	525.20
VAT@17.50%	91.91
Total	617.11

Received with thanks 27th February 2005

Carol Doran

DOCUMENT 3
CAROL'S CATERING COMPANY

REMINDER

To: Mrs. S. O'Neill
42 Woodside Road,
Bangor
Co. Down

Service provided: Buffet Lunch
Equipment Hire
Waitress Service

No. of People: 50

Date service provided : 2nd January 2005

14th March 2004

Dear Mrs. O'Neill,

Re: Services provided 2nd January 2004 at cost £617.11

I am writing to you to advise you that we have sent you an invoice for payment for the above service on 1st February 2004. Unfortunately, we have still not received payment for the amount shown. I would be most grateful if you could settle this account within the next seven days.

If you have any queries regarding the invoice you have received, please contact me at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Carol Doran

DOCUMENT 4

Exemplar Paper