

## Case Studies

### What are case studies?

Case Studies are exercises where the candidate faces a challenge to read and interpret data/information to discuss on a one-to-one basis, in a group or as a written exercise. In some cases, the assessor will tell you the situation rather than provide you with written content. The data/information can be a mixture of qualitative and quantitative and usually simulates real life scenarios typical for the role/organisation. Case study topics can vary, examples include deciding on a project to invest money in, planning a project, consider organisational change, entering new markets or designing a marketing campaign.

### How do case studies work?

The case study is provided to the candidate and can often be up to a few pages long and there is a time limit set to analyse the data/information. Timings to analyse the content can vary based on the amount of content but often are set to be challenging. The case study can include options of solutions and require you to pick one and justify your reasons to the group or assessor, or they can require you to generate a solution.

### When are case studies used in recruitment?

This is often used in the recruitment processes for graduate roles and placements and would typically be part of an Assessment Centre. Assessment Centres happen at the latter stages of the recruitment process. An Assessment Centre can consist of multi recruitment activities including interviews, group exercises, networking sessions, in tray/e-tray exercises.

### Example case study

You can access an example case study exercise on the Assessment Day website:

<https://www.assessmentday.co.uk/group-exercise.htm>

### What is typically being assessed?

There can be multiple skills/competencies which could be being assessed so it is important to analyse the person specification for the role and consider what is likely to be assessed. Case studies can often assess your commercial awareness, numerical, analytical, problem solving, decision making, working under pressure, creative, logical/abstract/strategic thinking skills. You could also be assessed on your fit to the company's values and behaviours. The resulting one-to-one discussion or group exercise could also test various other skills including teamwork, communication, interpersonal, leadership, resilience, planning and organisation skills.

### How to prepare for case studies

As mentioned, a good place to start is to consider what might be assessed by reviewing the person specification. Analysing the job description will help you to understand what types of real life situations might occur in the role and therefore what types of behaviours and skills the employers might be looking for in their assessments.

Sometimes case studies want you to use your own knowledge and understanding. In other cases, you may need to undertake the case study purely on the information they provide. In either situation it can be useful to develop your understanding of the sector by reading relevant

news stories and keeping abreast of the most recent developments. Reading relevant news stories such as those in the Financial Times, may also help to develop your ability to assimilate information. To develop your understanding of the organisation and sector you may find it useful to undertake a SWOT and PESTLE analysis, this can also be used in some case studies to formulate responses. You can also practise online examples (some of the links below will help with this), undertake numerical reasoning tests (if relevant) using the Careers Toolkit, debate topical issues of relevance with your peers and attend a Careers Network Mock Assessment Centre, where employers often bring case studies as part of group exercises.

## Resources for further support

Assessment Day - [www.assessmentday.co.uk/assessmentcentre/case-study-exercise.html](http://www.assessmentday.co.uk/assessmentcentre/case-study-exercise.html)

Prep Lounge - [www.preplounge.com/en/bootcamp.php/interview-first-aid/crack-the-case-interview/case-studies](http://www.preplounge.com/en/bootcamp.php/interview-first-aid/crack-the-case-interview/case-studies)

Job Test Pep - [www.jobtestprep.co.uk/assessment-centre-case-study?utm\\_source=wikijob&utm\\_medium=copy-link&utm\\_content=case-study&utm\\_campaign=jobtestprep](http://www.jobtestprep.co.uk/assessment-centre-case-study?utm_source=wikijob&utm_medium=copy-link&utm_content=case-study&utm_campaign=jobtestprep)

I got an offer – Mckinsey case interview blog - [igotanooffer.com/blogs/mckinsey-case-interview-blog/115672708-mckinsey-case-interview-preparation-the-only-post-youll-need-to-read](http://igotanooffer.com/blogs/mckinsey-case-interview-blog/115672708-mckinsey-case-interview-preparation-the-only-post-youll-need-to-read)

Mindtools – Resource with strategy information - [www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN\\_STR.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_STR.htm)

Financial Times - This is useful to look at what is happening in business, the companies link is useful to see what is happening in different sectors - [www.ft.com/](http://www.ft.com/)

Deloitte – Has an interactive tool where you can practise answering case studies scenarios, it demonstrates what makes a good answer- <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/careers/articles/join-deloitte-case-interview-prep-tool.html>