

EISA 2 - OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE: DESIGN THINKING INNOVATION LEAD

SAQA ID: 118788, **NQF Level:** 4

Total Marks: 150

Duration: 3 hours

Format: Written Assessment

Open Book: Yes

Candidate Instructions

- Answer **all five questions**.
- Read the scenario carefully and apply design thinking concepts.
- Support your answers with examples, reasoning, and stakeholder-based thinking.
- Write in clear, structured paragraphs or bullet points where appropriate.

Scenario

A municipality has partnered with a local development forum to improve access to community services in a township where residents struggle with long queues, poor communication, and limited feedback on service requests. The municipality wants a team to use design thinking to create a better service experience for residents, especially elderly people, youth, and people with limited digital access.

The team must investigate the problem in context, work with residents and staff, generate ideas, and communicate a practical solution that can be implemented with limited resources.

Question 1: Design Thinking Foundations [20 marks]

- 1.1 Explain the meaning of a user-centred approach in design thinking.
- 1.2 Describe three characteristics of design thinking that make it useful for innovation.
- 1.3 Explain the importance of empathy in innovation work.
- 1.4 Identify three design thinking tools or methods that can help generate ideas.

Marking Guideline 1

1.1 A user-centred approach means designing solutions around the needs, experiences, and context of the people who will use the service or product, rather than around assumptions.[3]

1.2 Any four: [TWO MARKS PER ONE] [8]

- It is iterative.
- It is collaborative.
- It is human-centred.
- It encourages experimentation.
- It focuses on real-world problems.
- It values feedback and learning.

1.3 Empathy helps innovators understand what people actually experience, what frustrates them, and what they need. It improves relevance and reduces the risk of designing the wrong solution.[3]

1.4 Any three: [2 MARKS EACH][6]

- Brainstorming.
- Mind mapping.
- Personas.
- Journey mapping.
- “How might we” statements.
- Idea ranking or dot voting.

Question 2: Team Leadership and Collaboration [30 marks]

2.1 Describe the responsibilities of an innovation lead when managing a diverse team [5]

2.2 Explain three strategies for making sure all team members contribute during a design thinking session.[8]

2.3 How would you deal with a team that is rushing to choose the first idea without testing alternatives?

2.4 Explain how a leader can build trust and psychological safety in an innovation team.

Marking Guideline 2

2.1 The innovation lead should coordinate tasks, guide the process, keep the team focused on the user problem, encourage participation, resolve conflicts, and support creative thinking.[5]

2.2 Any four: [TWO MARKS PER ONE] [8]

- Use round-robin participation.
- Break into small groups.
- Use anonymous idea submission.
- Set clear discussion rules.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Rotate facilitation roles.

2.3 The leader should slow the team down, remind them to compare options, use evidence and user feedback, and encourage testing before deciding. The aim is to avoid jumping to conclusions.[5]

2.4 Trust and safety can be built by listening respectfully, valuing all ideas, allowing mistakes, avoiding blame, setting clear expectations, and ensuring every member feels heard and respected.[12]

Question 3: Applying the Process to the Scenario [45 marks]

3.1 Apply the design thinking process to the municipality service challenge in the scenario.

3.2 Suggest one innovative service solution and explain how it improves the user experience.

3.3 Identify three stakeholder groups you would engage and explain why each is important.

3.4 Explain how you would test and improve the solution after the prototype stage.

Marking Guide 3

3.1 The candidate should show a logical process: [THREE MARKS PER ONE] [24]

- Empathise with residents and staff.
- Define the main service problem.
- Ideate possible solutions.
- Prototype the best option.
- Test and refine the concept.

3.2 Accept any reasonable solution, such as: [THREE MARKS PER ONE] [12]

- A queue booking and SMS notification system.
- A community service kiosk with a simple feedback mechanism.
- A resident service tracker with assisted access.
- The explanation must show how it reduces queues, improves communication, or helps vulnerable users.

3.3 Any three: [TWO MARKS PER ONE]

- Residents/community members: to understand lived experience.
- Municipal staff: to understand workflow and constraints.
- Community leaders or ward committees: to support engagement and trust.
- Elderly or vulnerable users: to ensure accessibility.
- ICT/support staff: to assess feasibility.

3.4 Testing and improvement should include collecting user feedback, reviewing what works and what fails, making adjustments, simplifying the solution, and retesting before full rollout.

Question 4: Applied Ethnographic Research [25 marks]

4.1 Define applied ethnographic research and state why it is important in this project.

4.2 Describe four research activities you would use to understand the community context.

4.3 Explain how observing people in their environment can improve the final solution.

Marking Guideline 4

4.1 Applied ethnographic research is the study of people in their real-life environment to understand routines, behaviours, needs, and challenges so that solutions are based on evidence from context. It is important because the municipality needs a practical solution rooted in actual user experience.[7]

4.2 Any four:[TWO MARKS PER ONE] [12]

- Observation at service points.
- Interviews with residents and staff.
- Focus groups with different user groups.
- Shadowing users through the service process.
- Journey mapping.
- Field note taking.
- Community walkabouts.

4.3 Observing people in their environment shows where delays, confusion, or barriers really happen. It helps the team see what people do, not just what they say, which leads to better problem definition and better solution design. [6]

Question 5: Communication and Presentation [30 marks]

5.1 Explain why communication must be adapted for different audiences.

5.2 Identify three ways to present the proposed solution to stakeholders.

5.3 Draft a short stakeholder pitch for the municipality's proposed service improvement idea.

5.4 Explain how you would present the same idea differently to residents and to municipal executives.

Marking Guideline 5

5.1 Different audiences need different levels of detail, language, and emphasis. Community members may need simple and practical explanations, while executives may need evidence, feasibility, cost, and expected impact. [5]

5.2 Any four: [TWO MARKS PER ONE] [8]

- Oral presentation.
- PowerPoint slides.
- Visual prototype.
- Infographic.
- Written concept note.
- Community demo or mock-up.

5.3 A good pitch should include: [TWO MARKS PER ONE] [12]

- The service problem.
- Who is affected.
- The proposed solution.
- Benefits to residents and staff.
- Why the solution is practical.
- What support is needed.

5.4 For residents: use simple, local language, examples, and a focus on convenience and fairness. For executives: use structured evidence, implementation steps, cost logic, and measurable outcomes. [5]

EISA 2 MARK ALLOCATION SUMMARY

- Question 1: 30
- Question 2: 30
- Question 3: 35
- Question 4: 25
- Question 5: 30

Total: 150 marks

Assessor Notes

- Credit should be given for practical, integrated answers.
- Responses should show clear understanding of the qualification outcomes.
- The candidate should demonstrate the ability to analyse a problem, work with stakeholders, communicate ideas, and apply design thinking in a realistic context.