MCAST

Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology

MQF Level 4

BC4-A1-15

MCAST Advanced Diploma in Business Administration

Course Specification

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Course Description

This programme is designed for those wishing to find employment at a junior administration level within businesses and organisations. It provides a mixture of theory and a practical approach to real life situations in various aspects of administration within a business organisation. It also provides a sound basis of various business functions and specialisations through its different units. This course is based on practical principles and is designed so as to develop the necessary skills and entrepreneurial spirit to enable students to work as part of a team in the administration of a business entity. Throughout every module delivered, students are encouraged to think critically and creatively as well as to communicate effectively.

Programme Learning Outcomes

At the end of the programme the learner will be able to:

1. Understand the range of different businesses, their ownership and their goals.

2. Understand how businesses are organised to achieve their purposes and distinguish between the roles of supporting organisational activities and departments.

3. Understand different types of business information and be able to communicate and present this information effectively and use it critically and creatively.

4. Explain the impact on businesses of the economic, political and finance aspects.

Entry Requirements

MCAST Diploma in Business

or

4 SEC/O-Level/SSC&P (Level 3) passes Preferred: English Language, Mathematics

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Current Approved Programme Structure

Unit Code	Unit Title	ECVET
BCBST-406-1502	The Business Environment	6
BCOFF-406-1501	Office Administration Skills	6
BCBST-412-1503	Effective Business Communication	12
BCMRK-406-1502	Introduction to Marketing	6
BCMRK-406-1503	Marketing Research in Business	6
BCACC-406-1501	Business Accounting	6
BCBST-406-1504	Business, Markets and the Economy	6
BCHRM-406-1502	Recruitment & Selection in Business	6
BCACC-406-1502	Financial Accounting	6
BCOPS-406-1502	Logistics Operations	6
BCBST-406-1505	Supporting Business Activities	6
BCH&S-406-1510	Health & Safety in the Office Environment	6
BCBST-406-1506	Understanding Business Ethics	6
BCWBL-412-1501	Work Based Learning	12
CDKSK-406-1520	Malti	6
CDKSK-406-1602	Mathematics	6
CDKSK-406-1603	Entrepreneurship	6
BCCPY-406-1601	Contemporary Issues in Administration	6
Total ECVET		**120**

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Unit: BCBST-406-1502 The Business Environment

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This Unit will introduce students to the full spectrum of legal, financial, social and political considerations of any study of the environments within which a business operates. There are a number of core considerations that will be addressed which will allow the student an ability to make reasonable judgements and analysis of the economic environment within which businesses operate. Students will also be introduced to the areas of economic, social and political activity within which a business operates and taking account of these environmental factors will afford a foundational awareness of current business settings.

Importantly, through this unit students will understand how a business operates with its customers and suppliers and the factors which can influence the supply of its products and the cost of those products and services. There are many internal factors which affect the profitability and efficiency of a business and these too will be examined throughout the course of this Unit of study. Internal factors including an understanding of how businesses are organised to achieve their own strategic purposes will be discussed which will introduce issues for consideration such as organisational business structures which will allow the student to gain an appreciation of what is meant by the business purpose and intended Functional area

The Unit will contain a multi faceted approach to the environment taking account of the core commercial concerns that a modern, vibrant business entity requires including finance marketing; production; and especially customer service. Discussion will also be made of the customer themselves and the markets thinking of strategic planning and the manner in which a current business can react to economic conditions within the national political scene.

All business must operate within regulatory frameworks which have both internal and external affects. These too will be examined and students will become able to understand the frameworks that control the internal and external functions of a business in today's modern, global climate.

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Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Identify the range of different businesses and their ownership
2. Explain how businesses are organised to achieve their purposes
3. Assess the impact of the economic environment on businesses
4. Demonstrate how political, legal and social factors impact on businesses

MCAST

Unit: BCOFF-406-1501 Office Administration Skills

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This unit will give learners the opportunity to learn about the core activities that are required within administrative office environments, look at these activities objectively and evaluate their worth to an organisation. It is important to understand how an administrator plans and co-ordinates activities within an office. The unit will allow learners to realise the importance of people in carrying out activities effectively and logically within an office setting.

Following the evaluation of office activities, the learner will be given the opportunity to design an office system and procedure that will enhance the performance of the current office environment by improving communication and customer service.

They will learn about the importance of customer care and providing an excellent service to customers. They will understand the importance of building effective relationships with customers to ensure customer loyalty and make the customer feel appreciated and likely to use that company again.

Working in a busy office environment can be stressful and learners will look at work related stress and how it is caused. They will learn about coping strategies and mechanisms to deal with work related stress. The learner will come to understand the importance of management support in cases of employee stress.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Describe the core activities within the administrative environment and evaluate current working practices
2. Design and evaluate an office system and procedure to improve communication and service to customers
3. Explain the importance of Customer Care within an administrative environment
4. Evaluate the causes of and coping strategies to deal with work related stress

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Unit: BCBST-412-1503 Effective Business Communication

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 12

Unit description

This Unit will provide learners with the opportunity to further develop and expand their linguistic knowledge and application of effective language skills in English, primarily orientated towards using these skills effectively in a business environment. Learners will be encouraged to read and appreciate a variety of texts to allow them to be effective and confident communicators in any given business environment, which could be but is not limited to business meetings with multiple parties, one-to-one meetings or conference calls and modes of communication akin to these.

The skills which learners will become adept in, although meant for a business environment, are not restricted to personal contact, but rather, also takes cognisance of communication formats including e-mails, business letters, internal company reports in addition to areas such as, but not limited to, participation in conversations and discussions. The knowledge and understanding of the English communication skills should be able to be applied for initial contact with other parties as well as continued dialogue and communication.

An appreciation of and ability to effectively use the Language Lab will help learners develop an appreciation of the necessary skills which would be advantageous to them in any manner of business related situations in which English is the language adopted. Learners will become adept in conveying clarity in communication, using the appropriate style, tone and format in a given business environment, whether in a verbal or written context. Communication in fluent written and spoken English is advantageous for learners and can enhance employability, which learners should be made aware of within the Unit.

The assessment of this Unit will encourage and promote important skills in written and oral/verbal communication as well as comprehensive analytical skills.

Finally, the range of skills learned will allow students to become confident and efficient communicators across a variety of business environments, with the Unit recognising that effectively communicating English in any business environment is not confined to a select number of formats.

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Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Communicate using appropriate style and means of communication
2. Communicate the appropriate style, tone and format in a business environment in both verbal and written contexts (including but not limited to e-mails, business letters and internal company reports)
3. Apply Business English at the appropriate level
4. Participate in conversations and discussions in English within a given business environment.

MCAST

Unit: BCMRK-406-1502 Introduction to Marketing

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This unit is designed to give students an understanding of marketing in organisations. It encompasses the key marketing functions of marketing research, segmenting and targeting customers and developing appropriate marketing mixes for customers.

Learners will gain understanding of the marketing concept and the role of marketing across a range of organisation types including the service and non-profit sectors. They will learn about the importance of marketing research in understanding customers and gain understanding of the principal marketing research methods and tools and when each is suitable. By the end of the unit learners will appreciate the role of segmentation and targeting and understand the marketing mix and its components. They will understand how marketing mix decisions are made to meet the organisation's objectives and to meet the needs of customers.

This unit combines theory with practical, relevant applications of marketing with examples sourced by both the lecturer and the student. Students will be expected to draw on their own research and their own exposure to and experience of marketing.

Learners will gain a firm grasp of marketing fundamentals and their analytical and problem-solving skills will be developed as they learn to make appropriate marketing decisions, applying the knowledge they have gained.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Explain the role of marketing in organisations.
2. Explain marketing research and the marketing planning process.
3. Explain how and why customer groups are targeted.
4. Assemble a coherent marketing mix.

MCAST

Unit: BCMRK-406-1503 Marketing Research in Business

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This unit provides a solid foundation for individuals wishing to learn the basic concepts of Marketing Research within Business. Planning gives companies a competitive advantage. It helps reduce the impact of external influences and increases efficiency. Marketing information can help an organization to plan. Marketing information can provide results which can be monitored so that objectives can be met or changed if needed. Good business decisions can only be made if an organisation has good marketing information. Therefore, good information is the basis of good business decisions. Market research is carried out to collect information on competitors, customers, markets and the general business environment. Information must be continually collected so that opportunities, threats and trends are identified.

The unit is designed to help learners develop and learn how to search for information, identify and analyse relevant information to aid decision making. It provides leaners with a sound knowledge of the main types and sources of market research. This allows learners to apply knowledge within a marketing context. Advances in technology have improved the ability to collect and store information about the Business Environment. The biggest challenge is to ensure that from all the information available the right information to aid business decisions is selected. Learners will develop an understanding of the main research methods used to collect information and how to decide on the most appropriate method for specific organisational objectives the resources available. Learners will learn how data is analysed, interpreted and presented so that the research objectives are met. They will also have the opportunity to plan and carry out some simple market research activities and to interpret their findings.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Explain the importance and main methods of market research
2. Plan and Design market research
3. Conduct market research
4. Explain how to interpret and present market research findings

MCAST

Unit: BCACC-406-1501 Business Accounting

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

The unit is designed to ensure the student is provided with a basic appreciation of the preparation and use of accounting information within a business organisation.
The student will develop the skills to prepare management accounting information: cash flow budgets and break even calculations; and to prepare basic financial statements inclusive of the income statement and balance sheet. Additionally, the student will develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to use techniques for analysing a business' performance and financial position.

A core part of this unit will involve the student being introduced to and becoming aware of accounting terminology. Students will also realise the sources of organisational income and what expenditure is, to let them appreciate how profitability works and what it is. Moreover, the measurement of the financial performance of any organisation requires the student to have a solid grounding and understanding of a balance sheet and a profit and loss account, allowing them to properly analyse profit, liquidity and ultimately, the efficiency or otherwise of the organisation through the application of ratio analysis, which is an integral part of this unit.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Prepare a cash budget.
2. Calculate the breakeven point in volume and revenue for a single product.
3. Prepare the final accounts of a limited company for internal users.
4. Analyse the performance and financial position of a business.

MCAST

Unit: BCBST-406-1504 Business, Markets and the Economy

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This unit will give learners an insight into how organizations operate and input into a national economy, what their influences are on that economy and the influences on the organization. They will look at organizational goals and how they are met in order for an organization to remain successful and operate within a successful market.

Learners should consider the structure of an economy and explain how business markets operate and shape the behavior of business activity. They will learn about the elements that flow into a national economy and also those that flow out. They will also take into account the difficulties in measuring national economy.

The learner will look at different market types and in whose favor these markets operate. They will look at cases where the seller has become extremely dominant and what can be done to balance this. They will also look at cases where the seller is the main influence on the organization and how this affects that organization. They will analyze Government intervention to tip markets in favor of buyers or sellers.

Learners will look at how potential problems arise when markets are unregulated.
Learners will examine government activities and the operation of different types of business market, learners will analyse markets to explain how they work and how producers and consumers behave as supply and demand for goods and services interact to determine product price.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Explain the purpose of organizations and their goals
2. Explain the characteristics of a national economy
3. Explain the operation of market factors
4. Define and Understand how markets are regulated

MCAST

Unit: BCHRM-406-1502 Recruitment & Selection in Business

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This unit will give learners an insight into the recruitment, selection and induction processes that are used to employ new candidates in a company. They will learn how to employ the best candidate using recruitment activities in order to ensure they meet set criteria to find an ideal employee. They will look at different recruitment, selection, and induction techniques and decide which should be used in differing situations. They will look at these techniques objectively and be able to describe how they contribute to the successful employment of an ideal employee.

The learner will look at how a job vacancy becomes available, how to assess the key roles and responsibilities of the job role then compile the necessary documentation for the use of the company. They will understand where to source the best candidates depending on the role and be able to prepare the relevant advertisement for the vacancy. All of this must be done while taking into account current employment legislation.

After advertising the job role, the learner will learn about all stages of the selection process. They will decide on which method of selection to use in differing situations and be able to follow that selection process through till completion. The leaner must also be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the selection methods and be able to identify them.

They will come to understand the process of decision making that is required to decide on the best candidate for the role. They will learn how to notify candidates of the outcome of the process.

The learner will look at the process that is followed when the successful candidate begins employment and how they are welcomed and inducted into the company. They will be able to prepare the required paperwork for this employee welcome and induction.

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Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Develop the recruitment process to identify a new employee
2. Devise the selection process for a new employee
3. Decide on the best candidate for the role
4. Prepare a welcome and induction process for the new employee

MCAST

Unit: BCACC-406-1502 Financial Accounting

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This module will provide students with an introduction to financial accounting. The content of this module includes a good understanding of the basic principle of double entry and its application to basic business transactions. The early syllabus content enables students to familiarise themselves with the accounting equation. Students would be able to understand how to analyse basic business transactions and learn about assets, liabilities, owners' equity, revenues, and expenses.

'Financial Accounting' provides an understanding of the main statements used by businesses, namely, the Profit and Loss Account and the Balance Sheet. This includes a review of the main items found in the financial statements and a good knowledge as to their preparation and presentation.

The syllabus also incorporates a good working knowledge of the end-of-year adjustments including, depreciation, bad debts, accruals and prepayments and their proper accounting treatment in the financial statements. A core area of this module deals with the preparation and presentation of financial statements, namely, published financial statements of a limited company i.e. a statement of comprehensive income and the statement of financial position. The syllabus should also provide the learners with the main tools that are needed to interpret properly the financial accounts of an organisation. FSOs need to make sound business decisions based on these accounts.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Distinguish between Financial and Cost and Management Accounting and the main users of accounting information.
2. Explain and apply the principle of double entry system to different business transactions.
3. Distinguish between items of revenue and capital nature.
4. Account properly for accruals and prepayments at the start and end of an accounting period.

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Unit: BCOPS-406-1502 Logistics Operations

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

Logistics Operations and application are a fundamental requirement for todays Supply Chain Professional and are at the heart of the Logistics Industry. Moving products by road, rail, sea and air are a core requirement for the Logistics organisation and professional and this unit will focus on key details within those areas.

This unit has been designed to give learners an overview of how logistics Operations are incorporated to the positive management of the supply chain. Students are required to determine the part taken by the organisation in delivering logistics Operations to meet business needs, as well as the significance of the supply chain organisation in delivering ultimate value.

This unit is principally for students who seek a career in Logistics Operations and aspire to senior level management posts which have a strong emphasis of supply chain activity

This unit would also be suitable for people in a variety of occupations in retail, not-for-profit services, public sector and production businesses. This area of study is also relevant for learners who are working within a variety of wider supply chain roles such a distribution, tores, inventory control and procurement to deliver an appreciation of logistics operations.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Recognise the competitive advantages that are achieved by logistics operations.
2. Define the function of the business to ensure that the logistics operations are ready to deliver the needs of the customer.
3. Clarify how the management of key logistics costs deliver relevant stakeholder value.
4. Detail the logistics operations that ensure value is added to products

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Unit: BCBST-406-1505 Supporting Business Activities

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

As business organisations increasingly compete in dynamic global environments it is recognised that there is a need to continually adapt to take advantage of emerging opportunities. During this Unit, Learners will develop an understanding of the significance of organisational structure and culture to support organisational responsiveness and competitiveness.

Different functional areas within an organisational structure will be explored and Learners will develop the knowledge and understanding of the role of administrative services in supporting business organisations. Learners will also have an opportunity to evaluate their contribution and role within the organisation's administrative functions and to the organisation as a whole. Having acquired this knowledge, Learners will then be provided with the opportunity to effectively design and implement an administrative procedure underpinning the effective and efficient operation of a business organisation.

During delivery of this Unit Learners will also develop an understanding of the importance of Administrative Services, which form the basis of business operations, and how these are vital to effective customer service. This will be further developed through the knowledge and skills required to understand the benefits of using e-technologies to carry out administrative tasks.

Throughout the Unit Learners will be provided with an opportunity to demonstrate and build upon organisational and personal planning techniques and skills.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Explain the administrative services required to support organizational business activities
2. Examine the impact of organisational structures on business activities and organisational culture and awareness
3. Contribute to quality improvement through review of administrative services
4. Plan and organise work practices to support business activities

MCAST

Unit: BCH&S-406-1510 Health & Safety in the Office Environment

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This unit provides learners with the essential Health and Safety knowledge and skills to demonstrate best practice within an office environment. The unit provides learners with an awareness of the relevant legislation that will underpin all activities undertaken within a typical office environment and those activities students would expect to take part in. This unit is about maintaining a healthy and safe working environment within the office across the range of typical duties undertaken within that place on a daily basis and includes being aware of and having the ability to use safe procedures when working with others and office equipment.

The student will become aware that all employees are responsible for the maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment and that they have a legal duty to reasonably ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of their fellow employees and visitors are maintained. Students will also understand the legal obligations owed by visitors to places of employment to ensure that when visiting they ensure that their own actions do not create any health and safety risks, they do not ignore hazards with significant risk in the workplace and that they take sensible action to put things right where a hazard is identified.

There are many potential hazards within any office environment. These can occur naturally through the presence of necessary machinery or equipment and their required power supplies of electricity. This unit is designed to ensure that those that work within an office aware of the potential dangers, likely hazards and where to source safety information, appropriate regulations and apply them to the workplace and the people who operate within it.

This unit is about identifying the hazards and risks that are associated within an office environment. Typically these will focus on the working environment, the equipment that is used and the materials and substances that are commonly found within those environments.

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Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Explain the legal framework which governs Health and Safety at Work
2. Explain the key features of the Health and Safety at Work Act
3. Explain how the Health and Safety at Work Act is implemented in the workplace

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Unit: BCBST-406-1506 Understanding Business Ethics

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

Understanding Business Ethics is an entirely knowledge-based unit which seeks to ensure that students have an understanding of the principles of ethical working, of what is meant by behaviour which is considered as ethical when working with customers whether internally or externally, and when and how to take appropriate action following any suspected breaches of ethical codes. Moreover, the ethical responsibility of the accounting and finance profession in ensuring sustainability is met is covered in this unit.

This Unit allows the student to realise the importance of ethics and sustainability in business organisations, and why professionals must act in an ethical manner, whether within or outwith the workplace. Learners will be able to understand and appreciate the values and importance of:

- Working within the ethical code applicable to accounting and finance professionals
- Ensuring the public have confidence in accounting practices
- Protecting their own and their employers' reputation and integrity
- Upholding principles of sustainability.

The Unit will further allow learners to develop an understanding of the importance of ethics and sustainability in the modern organisation. This involves first of all recognising the principles on which good behaviour at work is based and understanding what is meant by ethical behaviour. Learners should know when to take action on suspicions or knowledge of unethical behaviour. In addition, the learner must appreciate how. Also, they should be aware of the importance of upholding the principles of sustainability in the workplace. This understanding protects the professional reputation and integrity of both the student and their organisation, and can enhance the public's level of confidence in accounting practices and accounting functions.

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Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Explain the fundamental principles of ethical behaviour including objectivity, integrity, professional and technical competence and due care, confidentiality and professional behaviour.
2. Explain ethical behaviour required and expected when working with clients.
3. Explain the importance of taking action following suspected breaches of ethical codes and any implications of breaches.
4. Explain the ethical responsibility of the accountancy professional in promoting sustainability.

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Unit: BCWBL-412-1501 Work Based Learning

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 12

Unit description

In this unit learners will be given a business-relevant project that can be designed in conjunction with business partners, or if this is not possible, then by the programme delivery team. Links with the business community would therefore be particularly useful to learners undertaking this unit and all parties should be encouraged to develop these to facilitate this.

In business the successful undertaking of tasks may often depend on the application of knowledge and skills in more than one subject area. It may be necessary to combine the knowledge and skills of several subjects and integrate them with the ability to analyse and evaluate.

This unit aims to give learners the opportunity to build skills and competences in planning and carrying out a project which involves critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues which are within the common understanding of their subject discipline.

Learners are encouraged to integrate the knowledge and skills developed throughout the whole programme. The project will provide experience in carrying out a realistic work-related project by planning and organising work, carrying it through to completion and reporting findings.

Learners will also reflect on their progress on the unit to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for the future.

Undertaking this project will also give learners the opportunity to develop skills for employment in an administrative role.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Prepare a project proposal in response to a specific remit
2. Outline how the project will be carried out including timelines
3. Execute the project to meet the specifications given
4. Evaluate the project in terms of efficiency and effectiveness

MCAST

Unit: BCCPY-406-1601 Contemporary Issues in Business Administration

Unit level (MQF): 4

Credits : 6

Unit description

This unit aims to provide the learner with a practical and contemporary perspective of the different areas the programme of studies focusses upon. It is one way how to keep the programme of studies dynamically at par with the ongoing changes which are synonymous with such a programme of studies. The unit aims at continuing to bridge the gap between theory and practice as well as provide the student with the access to the latest developments as they occur within the industry one is nurturing a career in…. and this is done through the direct involvement of key players in industry.

The approach adopted for this unit will be different to the usual lecture approach. Instead it will comprise of a number of guest speakers from different areas of industry who will tackle different aspects of the focus area of studies. Attendance to these talks and seminars will be of paramount importance for this unit. The speaker will provide their own and their organisation's experience in relation to particular management areas and issue.

The unit is spread throughout the programme of study, in a manner as to include all the different events (seminars, thematic talks, conferences, on site vests etc) hence integrating them into one module for which students will have the opportunity to submit two distinct take home assignments.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit learners should be able to:

1. Prepare oneself to the importance of Continuous Professional Development.
2. Garner Knowledge, Understanding and Analysis of different contemporary issues in the specific area of studies.
3. Reflect upon the information obtained from the different events (seminars / talks / on-site visits) and relate it to the respective theories and models.
4. Nurture a disposition towards identifying a specialist area which one may opt to focus on, when embarking on a career in this area of studies.

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