Module 1 Exercise: Personal Financial Management

Use the template `Personal financial management exercise.xlsx` to plan your monthly income and expenses. The items in the template are suggestions. Feel free to edit, delete, or add categories that reflect your own personal situation.

The difference between your total income and total expenses will show whether you have a surplus or a deficit. Please use your best estimates to fill in the figures. If needed, you may refer to bank statements, pay stubs, or credit card bills to make your estimates more accurate.

Remember: developing a clear picture of your revenue sources and spending patterns is the first step in effective financial management. When developing a budget, having detailed and accurate information is critical.

Privacy Note: You do not need to submit your completed budget. Keep your detailed numbers private.

What to submit: A 1-2 page document that responds to the following questions.

1. After completing your monthly budget, do you end with a deficit or a surplus?
2. What are your financial goals based on this budget?
   (Examples: avoid deficit, save more money, prioritize certain activities, generate more income, reduce debt, etc.)
3. Experiment with a generative AI tool (ChatGPT, Claude, or another):
   - Remove or round any figures you would rather not share, then paste your budget into the tool.
   - Tell the tool your goals (from Question 2) and ask it to give you practical suggestions.
   - You can tailor your prompts. For example:
     - "I want to finance a used car over four years — can you help me adjust the budget to make this more feasible?"
     - "I want to gradually pay off my $xxx student debt — what changes should I make?"
   - You can also have multiple interactions by giving the tool new information. For example:
     - "I expect my income to grow by 10% after I graduate. Can you adjust the plan?"
4. Reflection: Did the tool's suggestions make sense to you, and why or why not? What did building the budget yourself show you that the tool's feedback did not — or the other way around?

AI-use disclosure: At the end of your document, note which tool you used and one suggestion it gave you that you decided to follow or not, and why.