



Mahatma Gandhi University - Meghalaya

***RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
&
PROJECT (108)
MGU Intake 163 / 166***

DUSTY ALAHAKOON / JAYAMAL JAYAWEERA

Master Business Administration Programme

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Introduction



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Welcome to the Business Methodology & Project module, which requires you to plan and undertake a small research project. The module helps you to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required to produce independent research and in completing the project you will have demonstrated your ability to carry out a detailed task with minimal supervision.

The module presents you with an opportunity to research a topic area of direct relevance to your masters' and which is therefore of particular interest to you. Not only will this be a satisfying learning experience, but both the finished project and the skills you will develop along the way will be of interest and relevance to prospective employers.

This handbook has been produced to help you to undertake and complete the module so please read it carefully. It contains advice about producing a project outline and project, as well as detailing specific requirements relating to submission which you must follow. Although comprehensive, it is important that you do not rely solely upon information contained within the handbook - you must attend all lectures, and undertake additional recommended reading to develop all requisite knowledge and skills.

You should begin developing your research topic idea as early as possible after starting the module because, by doing so, you will gain a sense of satisfaction at having commenced the research process. Importantly however, you should understand that regardless of advice and support received from myself and other tutors, responsibility for the project is entirely your own.

In summary, undertaking your research project is challenging but also rewarding and I hope that you will enjoy undertaking this module as much as I enjoy teaching it.

Dusty Alahakoon

Lead Tutor –Business Research Methods

NEXT Campus.

1.1. Module Staffing

Research Methodology & Project is led by Dusty Alahakoon. You can also contact Jayamal Jayaweera (jj@next.lk) or Chamath Peiris (chamath@next.lk) if you need any assistance on this module.

I will deliver lectures but you will also be supported by other staff from within Next Campus, particularly during individual project supervision.

Contact with Tutors

Regulations require that you should contact staff using your personal email account.

It is essential that you check your e-mail on a regular basis as important information will be disseminated to you by this means.

1. Delivery Schedule & Structure

Date	Description
29/07/2017 (W 01)	Introductory Session 01 on Research Methodology – Mr. Jayamal Jayaweera
29/07/2017 (W 01)	Introductory Session 02 on Research Methodology – Mr. Jayamal Jayaweera
12/08/2017 (W 02)	Submission of Research Proposal (01/02 Page(s)) Above proposal should be completed with; • Research Title • Research Aims • Research Objectives • Brief Methodology
19/08/2017 (W 03)	Feedback Session on Research Proposal & Supervisor Allocation.
26/08/2017 (W 04)	Supervision Session 01 (01 Hour)
02/09/2017 (W 05)	Supervision Session 02 (01 Hour)
25/11/2017 (W 05 – W 16)	Submission of Research Project

2. Module Delivery Phases

Phase 1: Week 1 & 2

During week 1& 2 there will be two lectures which provide a rapid introduction to the module. These sessions are specifically designed to get you thinking about choosing your research topic very early in the process and to give you an overview of the composition of the final project so that you gain an appreciation of what you are seeking to achieve by the time you commence Phase 2 of the module.

Phase 2: Weeks 3 to 4

During the early part of this phase you are expected to have developed your research idea in your own time and you must submit this in the form of a Project Outline by **Saturday 12th August 2017**. A Project Outline template is provided for you in appendix A of this handbook and you must use it.

Phase 3: Weeks 5 to 16

Phase 3 comprises of supervision. Following submission of your Project Outline, you will be allocated a supervisor. During this time you will be focussing heavily upon undertaking your research project and in support of this you are entitled to meet with a tutor for advice and support. In total you are entitled to up to 6 hours of this support, **but it is your responsibility to request meetings with your supervisor when you feel you need their assistance. Supervisors or your centre are under no obligation to contact you in the first instance**

Careful planning of your time and work is crucial in this module, but particularly in phase 3 as there is much for you to do and your project submission deadline of **25th November 2017** will fast approach.

3. Overview of the Project

The project is a piece of work in which you demonstrate your ability to investigate a topical business/management issue or problem which is ***directly associated with your programme of study***. Within the project you collect, analyse and evaluate relevant information, draw supportable conclusions based on your findings and make appropriate recommendations.

As such your project could be:

A workplace or organisation-based project

If you have sufficient relevant access to an organisation, this is possibly an ideal basis for your project as it can be a readily available and valuable source of primary, live evidence. If you are not confident that you can negotiate such relevant access to an organisation, then you should probably not seek to pursue this option.

Other primary research project

Rather than focussing on an organisation/workplace, you may still wish to undertake a project which generates significant and valuable primary research. If you can identify access to the relevant area of your research and data sources, this could be a good option for you.

Secondary research project

In some subjects you will find a great deal of information on your topic area is already collected and published. This becomes secondary research for you – i.e. it can be relevant for your own needs but was initially published by others for other purposes. The research project types already identified above need to have secondary research in addition to primary research (ie research evidence that you yourself will generate).

Regardless of which style of project you undertake, your final work needs to demonstrate that you can:

- Plan and manage the implementation of your research
- Understand the principles/theory underpinning the issue or problem that is being investigated
- Identify how to investigate an issue in order to reach a reliable view
- Present data and other information in a clear and logical manner using quantitative and/or qualitative methods as appropriate
- Critically analyse, interpret and evaluate data and other information
- Develop concise and logical arguments
- Draw relevant and valid conclusions and make recommendations which are appropriate to the issue or problem

In pursuit of these objectives, your project **must** contain the following sections and content

- An abstract or brief summary
- An introductory section outlining the nature and context of the chosen issue or problem
- A literature review
- A research design (explaining how you have approached the task)
- A number of development sections (analysis of findings)
- A conclusion and recommendations
- A reflection on the research project process

This is explored in detail in section 7.2

Students who do not adhere to this structure severely undermine their ability to achieve a good mark for the module

4 Choosing a topic

4.1 Topic area expectations

Research Methodology & Project is a 2 credit module. It therefore forms a significant part of your Master and strongly influences your final masters' classification.

Those tasked with marking your project will take note of the extent to which your project topic area is aligned to your masters' programme. In other words, the focus of the project **must** reflect the subject area of your programme of study.

4.2 How do I develop the topic I have chosen?

To help define the boundaries of the project you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Why choose a particular topic?
In other words, ensure the topic is of relevance to you, your programme of study and/or anticipated future career as this will enthuse you to undertake and complete the work.
- What is your project aim and how will you achieve it?
*Identifying the project aim is vital as this will lead to determining your project objectives which shape the content of the overall project. The aim **must** be coherent and reasonable if you are to complete a good project.*
- What are the project objectives?
These are the practical steps you will undertake in the project in order to achieve the project aim. The objectives need to be achievable and collectively fulfil the project aim..
- Who will you need to involve?
The project is undertaken and completed by you alone, but there may be other people who can assist you, for example by providing access to an organisation and thereby the means of gaining primary research. Don't forget your supervisor is a source of support and advice.
- What are your timescales?
*The academic timeframe is the limiting factor - you must submit your completed project by **25th November 2017** and this deadline helps you to determine the nature and scope of your project as the work must be achievable within the timeframe.*
From a good practice perspective, you should certainly aim to have a complete draft of your project written up around 2 weeks before the project submission deadline. This, if you so wish, allows sufficient time for your supervisor to offer suitable guidance on the draft work and for you to make any amendments that you deem necessary. If you present draft work to your supervisor after this time, there can be no guarantee that meaningful feedback will be supplied to you.

- Will there be any cost involved?

It is unlikely that there will be any material personal financial cost to you in preparing the project, but you should also consider if your work has a time or cost implication for others that you seek support from as this could impact on their willingness to assist you

- What boundaries or limitations are there?

In deciding upon a topic area, aims and objectives, you need to consider factors such as availability and potential problems of access to data, the limited time frame in which you are operating, ethical implications and any other relevant factors.

When you have considered the questions above, you will gain a clearer picture of what you are seeking to achieve and that should help you to focus upon your topic, aims and objectives more clearly.

Beyond that you need to consider several principles of project planning for the management of your project; specifically:

- Outline a structured breakdown of the component parts of the project, including the sequence of activities and time dependencies. i.e. what steps must be completed before another starts
- Determine project specifications of the quality and quantity of outcome required for each activity. e.g. the standard or amount of data to be collected
- Identify measurable objectives or milestones
- Outline a network chart like a Gantt chart to show timing for each stage (see the example below)
- Identify any likely resource requirements such as costs for each activity such as photocopying, postage, phone bills etc.
- Complete a summary sheet that allows you to track progress of all project components.

An example of a Gantt chart appears overleaf (source: Bryman and Bell, 2011:pg 78)

	Week														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Identify research area															
Formulate research questions															
Formulate research strategy, research design, preliminary literature review, select methods															
Negotiate access															
Write / Submit research outline/proposal Presentation of Outline															
Literature review															
Data Collection															
Data analysis															
Write first draft															
Complete second draft															
Complete final draft															
Project due for submission															

Note that this chart has factored in time to have a complete draft written 1 month before the deadline for submission. The final month of the project would then ideally be dedicated to amending that draft in order to produce a well-honed final version by the deadline.

It is especially important to set a very clear aim and objectives at the outset. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that care taken in the early stages of the project, particularly when choosing a topic and setting an aim with supporting objectives, will play a large part in the ultimate direction and success of the project as a whole.

The project's aim should express what you seek to achieve and will be closely related to the project title. The objectives should describe how you will fulfil the project aim – they will be very precise and be expressed in 'one line' statements beginning with the word "to". Below is an example aim with supporting objectives :

'An examination of the use of monitoring data in implementing a Total Quality Management policy'.

The objectives that fit and support this aim are:

- To identify the nature of data which needs to be collected
- To describe which data is currently collected
- To identify current systems of analysis
- To identify barriers to interpretation and use of the data
- To make recommendations on changes to current practice

Note, the aim is stated succinctly and four to six supporting objectives is reasonably achievable within the available word count in most cases.

Projects can change in focus for a number of reasons - you must discuss this with your supervisor and not seek to make major changes to your topic without consultation.

5 Project Support

Although the project is an individual piece of work, you receive substantial support towards undertaking it from the staff at NEXT Campus. During phase 1 of delivery this comprises significant teaching support.

As you progress into phase 3 of the module, you will be undertaking the main body of the project work. It is during this time that the support you receive will become increasingly focussed to your own needs.

Specifically, the support in phase 3 is provided by your supervisor.

5.1 Supervision

You are afforded up to 6 hours of support with a supervisor who is allocated to you based upon the topic focus of your project.

The agenda for meetings with your supervisor is largely set by you in response to your needs and problems that you may come across as you undertake your work. It is your own responsibility to contact your supervisor when you feel that you need their support – they are not obliged to initiate contact with you as this should be a student-led activity.

The advice and guidance offered by your supervisor will tend to be more specific than that associated with the tutorial sessions or workshops, and will tend to be very particular to your own needs.

Through your contact with your supervisor, you will be able to hone your work and seek direct advice on issues pertinent to you such as reviewing your draft project submission.

Remember, this is your project, and it is **not** the role of the supervisor to proof-read your work or otherwise identify problems of grammar, spelling, referencing and other issues of presentation. However, if you desire any support such as this, you should use the library and The Learning Hub, including their websites

5.2 Allocation of Supervisors

Importantly, before you can be allocated a supervisor you must have submitted your Project Outline along. **Supervisor allocation will be done by 19th August 2017.**

Typically Jayamal Jayaweera will be your general supervisor and will pass your questions and work if necessary to other supervisors if specialized academic support is necessary.

Failure to submit by this deadline will result in a delay in allocating you a supervisor, which could in turn delay your being able to start the project work in earnest. Crucially, you must be aware that it is **not** possible to grant an extension for the deadline of your project on the basis of such a delay.

Chief Research Supervisor: Mr. Jayamal Jayaweera

E-Mail Address : ji@next.lk

If Mr Jayamal Jayaweera is unavailable, you can also contact Mr Chamath Peiris (Chamath@next.lk)

5.3 Problems

Whether in the guise of a lecture, seminar, workshop or supervision, the staff at NEXT Campus are here to help you and are keen to do so, but they will be best placed to help you only if you recognise and fulfil your own responsibilities too. These include:

- Take responsibility for your work and be proactive
- Organise yourself
- Know what you want to achieve in supervisory sessions
- Bring with you any necessary materials
- Keep appointments and meet deadlines for completing and submitting work

The key point here is that the project should be **your** work. Any attempts to shift responsibility for this towards supervisors will be strongly resisted.

Ultimately it is you who must decide upon what topic to examine, which methods to adopt, how to carry out the analysis and how to convey and interpret the results. Your supervisor may provide views and feedback upon all these issues, but you must judge how to balance your own views against advice received when undertaking your project.

6 Assessment Submission

As you have already read, for the purposes of this module you are required to submit **two** pieces of work:

1. The Project Outline

A one (01) / two (02) page(s) project proposal that will describe the rationale of a potential project, state aim and objectives, provide an outline review of key underpinning literature, an outline of the research/project strategy and secondary & primary data requirements, and outline anticipated milestones in the preparation of the project.

A paper copy of the project outline is to be submitted to the NEXT Campus Programme Office on or before **12th August 2017**. You must also submit an electronic copy.

A template for the Project Outline is provided in *Appendix A*.

You will also have to make an individual presentation that summarizes your project outline (this is worth 40% of your assessment mark)

After we have read your submission, a decision will be taken as to whether or not to approve that you commence work on your project. Failure to obtain this approval will require you to resubmit a suitably revised Project Outline.

2. The Project

One (01) bound copy along with a soft copy written on CD of your completed project are to be submitted to the NEXT Campus programme office **on or before 03:00pm, 25th November 2017**.

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You must achieve a minimum mark of 50% in the Project in order to pass the project phase.

6.1 Assessment Issues

The schedule outlines key dates for delivery and submission relating to the Research Methodology & Project module.

Project Outline Resubmission

If, after reading your Project Outline, your supervisor does not think that you are ready to progress to the Project, then you will need to make suitable amendments to your Project Outline before re-submitting on a date to be confirmed. You are advised not to commence work on your project until feedback on the Project Outline suggests that you can progress.

7 The Format of the Project

Remember that your project outline must be approved by your supervisor before you can begin work on your project.

In producing and presenting your project you must meet the following requirements:

7.1 Presentation of the Final Project

- It should be typed or word-processed, on A4 unlined paper, on one side only, using Arial font size 12
- There should be good margins all round. Remember to allow sufficient space on the left hand side for binding
- There should be double line spacing throughout, except where there are long quotations indented in the main text when single spacing is acceptable
- Pages should be numbered consecutively through the main text, including tables/charts/ diagrams which are not embodied in the text. Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page
- Any large charts or diagrams should be reduced to A4 size if possible, otherwise folded to A4 size with an allowance for binding
- The document should be bound using permanent binding (spiral binding is acceptable) to avoid any possibility of pages becoming loose and being misplaced. No allowance will be made for missing pages nor will any loose pages be accepted after the submission date. Failure to adopt permanent binding will adversely affect your mark for presentation

7.2 Project Contents

The project should be 8,000 – 10,000 words in length, excluding appendices. The submitted Project should comprise the following headings and content :

TITLE PAGE

The first page should be a title page containing:

- The name of the institution i.e. Mahatma Gandhi University
- The full title of the project
- The full name of the author
- The qualification for which the project is submitted
- The module title and level of study i.e. Level 7 Research Methodology & Project
- The month and year of submission

A template for the title page is included in the appendices to this document and also on Blackboard. You can adapt this for your work.

Please note that if the project contains confidential information and cannot be made publicly available then the first page should be a statement to this effect, with details of the period to which it applies and why, on headed paper (normally from the organisation requiring the embargo), and signed by the supervisor.

PROJECT CERTIFICATION

This confirms that the work in your project is original to you, has been undertaken by you and that you certify that all secondary material has been properly acknowledged by you and referenced in your project. A template for this appears in the appendices to this document.

ABSTRACT

Suggested approximate word count of 300 words. An overview of the project aim, research design and methods, findings, conclusions and recommendations. The summary can only reasonably be written after you have drafted all the main chapters.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An optional (unmarked) section in which you can give thanks those who have advised, supported or inspired you in your work to complete the project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS, LIST OF TABLES, LIST OF FIGURES

List in numerical order the headings of the chapters and sub-headings of the main body of the project with the numbers of the pages on which these chapters and sections begin. You must list all appendices providing details of reference number/letter, title and page number.

List separately, after the Table of Contents, any tables, figures, diagrams or other items used in the main body of the text. List in numerical order and give the title and page number upon which it appears.

The Table of Contents is easy to add at the end, but if you are having difficulty getting started you might want to do the contents page first using the standard chapter headings and add the page numbers later.

INTRODUCTION

Suggested approximate word count of 500 words. A summarised description of what is being studied (e.g. company, industry and/or theory – but do not simply ‘cut and paste’ from a company website!). Identify the audience, i.e. who the project will be useful to and why it will be useful to them. You should put your project into context, explaining why the project area is important. It will be helpful to identify in this chapter main themes or problems your project is investigating and state why this is an appropriate project for you to carry out. Avoid too much general background information, which may distract your reader from the main issues in the project but ensure that a full context has been given.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Suggested approximate word count of 100 words. Clearly stated and logically derived aim and objectives. It must be clear from your aim and objectives that the project is appropriate to your programme of study and that achievement of the objectives will satisfy the project aim.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Suggested approximate word count of 2,200 words. A discussion of definitions, themes, concepts and debate relevant to your study.

- Select and critically analyse published theory and research which is relevant to your topic. You must cite academic sources to support your discussion.
- Use headings and subheadings to structure your discussion.

This section explains how the literature shaped and influenced your study. You should discuss how you propose to deal with any conflicting issues raised by the literature.

RESEARCH DESIGN & INFORMATION SOURCES

Suggested approximate word count of 1,700 words. Explanation of, and rationale for, the research design, methods of data collection and analysis, and the range of information sources used. Cite academic references (e.g. textbooks and sources included on the reading list) to justify and enhance the validity of your choices.

- Research design
- Primary and/or Secondary data collection sources, populations, samples.
- Methods you used to collect the data
- Methods you used to analyse this data
- Project management and control:
 - Resources and associated costs (if any)
 - Possible limitations (e.g. access, ethical issues, time constraints)
 - Measures taken to ensure that your project is completed to time and quality

You will have proposed an approach as part of your project outline so you should be able to draft this chapter at an early stage as this serves to outline your research plan. You should critically reflect on the methodology you have used and include a discussion of why you have chosen the particular approach and techniques. You must include a discussion here of how you will deal with issues of a confidential or ethical nature.

This chapter is a key chapter for the assessors because it explains the methods you have chosen and, in particular, why you have chosen them. Your reasoning should be justified and supported by relevant reading from research texts.

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Suggested approximate word count of 2,200 words. This section should analyse the findings of your research. The exact structure is not prescribed and should be appropriate to context/‘fit for purpose’. The issue to keep in mind is that there should be a logical ‘flow’ that makes your project easy to read and understand.

Results should be presented with a full discussion and interpretation. It is insufficient just to say what your findings are - you need to analyse what they mean within your work context and **fully** interpret them. Where you are presenting a lot of numerical data it is important to include a visual representation (e.g. graph) of major results.

Even if your findings are of a qualitative nature you should consider breaking up the text and perhaps emphasising a major point by use of a diagram (e.g. a flow-diagram to illustrate a change or implementation process). You may not refer much to the research literature at this point, but may draw on some subject based reading to support or interpret your findings.

CONCLUSIONS

Suggested approximate word count of 700 words. A summary of key findings ***providing an explanation of their significance***

- Logically derived from the foregoing analysis
- Understanding of the significance of the foregoing analysis

Remember that your conclusions must be *clearly* drawn from your findings. Address the aim and objectives you set earlier in the project. A common mistake is to include entirely new material in the conclusion. This is not appropriate.

The conclusions should arise logically from what has gone before. This may not be the longest chapter but it should be clear, succinct and encapsulate the important issues and findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggested approximate word count of 800 words. Recommendations for action must be included. These should be expressed in a clear and practical manner. These should be directed to your audience/stakeholders (organisations, managers, researchers) and address issues such as strategy, management decisions, and further research.

REFLECTION

Suggested approximate word count of 500 words. A personal reflection on the research project process and on the limitations of the foregoing analysis (how might these limitations affect your results?)

- Did the process of undertaking the project deviate in any way from the proposal? If so, why?
- What did you learn from the process of this research project?
- What are the limitations of the research and how might these limitations have affected the results?
- What might you do differently if conducting future research and/or if you were to do the research again?

In order to write this section effectively it is recommended that you maintain a project Log Book throughout the duration of your project.

APPENDICES

The Appendices should contain supporting documentation, such as detailed results or tables of statistics that support the analysis, but which are too detailed to be contained in the main text. It is important that they complement the main text.

Note that the word count applies to your project chapters not the appendices. You can therefore use the Appendix Section to support and evidence the depth, as well as the breadth of your learning and activity throughout the course of your project. However, you should **not** include large amounts of additional information in the appendices as they are used to illustrate the discussion, not to compensate for a limited word allowance.

Clearly sectioning and labelling the contents of your Appendix enables you to illustrate and support the material that you refer to in the text of your project in the previous chapters. Contents of the Appendix Section might include, for example a copy of the questionnaire used in a survey or supporting data for quoted results.

Each Appendix should be on a separate page, designated in sequence as Appendix A, Appendix B etc., listed in the Table of Contents and referenced within the main text. Remember to provide references for sources of material used in the appendices where appropriate.

When choosing what to include in the appendices consider the following criteria:

- Timely: recent and current
- Appropriate: illustrates the points you are making
- Relevant: clearly linked to the project
- Ethical: you have permission to use it and no-one is compromised by its inclusion
- Authentic: real, rather than invented to illustrate the purpose
- Annotated: the reason for inclusion is explained
- Confidentially protected: protect names of your organisation or individuals and gain their permission to use the example

The purpose of the Appendices are to provide evidence to illustrate your project process and are not there to compensate for a limited word number.

REFERENCE LIST

Here you must list all the sources you have referred to or quoted in the text. Use the Harvard format. Failure to include a source referred to in your work risks being classed as plagiarism, which is a serious academic disciplinary issue. The reference list must be one list in alphabetical order by the author's surname (Harvard format).

Please note:

In addition to marks for the quality of content your project will also be marked on the basis of referencing, bibliography, structure and quality of presentation:

- Adherence to specified criteria for presentation
- Evidence of an appropriate structure
- Correct spelling and grammar and appropriate narrative style
- Evidence of proof-reading to eliminate typographical and other errors
- Correct referencing (Harvard style)

The above points relating to referencing etc. within any written work that you submit are the responsibility of the student to do correctly. Although your supervisor should be able to offer guidance they shall not undertake detailed proof reading or extensive edits of work other than to offer generic advice (e.g. pointing out frequent or glaring errors). Resources to help with issue of presentation, structure and referencing are indicated in the module guide and on blackboard, and students are advised to also make use of the wealth of help and information available via the university library and The Learning Hub service.

Remember also that you cannot progress to your project until your Project Outline and Ethics Form have first been approved.

8 Marking Criteria

The criteria for awarding marks for the project outline and project are as follows:

8.1 Project Outline

The purpose of the project outline is to demonstrate the viability of your proposed project and it must be submitted with an ethics release form.

The project outline is marked summatively and your project outline must be of a sufficient standard to enable you to progress to your project. You will be provided with feedback on your outline, e.g. strengths, weaknesses and any necessary considerations/changes.

A project outline template and ethics release form appear in the appendices to this handbook.

8.2 Project

The project (to be submitted ***on or before 03:00pm on the 25th November 2017*** is marked out of 200 and this represents your final mark for the module.

An outline of the structure and content of the project is provided above in Section 7.2. In summary, your work will be marked on the basis of how effectively it fulfils the below criteria. The university generic marking criteria is provided in the appendices to this handbook.

Introduction

- Background to the project
- Justification for doing the project and discussion of importance/need
- Identification of audience/stakeholders

Aim, objectives and project identification

- Clearly stated and logically derived aim and objectives (and clearly articulated research question[s] if appropriate)
- Clear statement of the nature of the chosen issue or problem

Research strategy and information sources

- Explanation of and rationale for research strategy
- Justification of methods adopted for both the collection and analysis of data
- Range and appropriateness of information sources used including 'academic' sources and other appropriate sources such as policy documents, company literature, market/industry reports, etc.
- Use of academic references to enhance validity
- Discussion of any limitations of the research strategy

Understanding of the principles and theory underpinning the chosen issue or problem

- Ability to select appropriate principles or theory
- Ability to apply principles or theory to the chosen issue or problem
- Understanding of principles or theory at an appropriate level

Analysis and evaluation of the chosen issue or problem

- Evidence of scholarship in the analysis and evaluation
- Appropriateness of methods of analysis chosen
- Ability to apply methods of analysis in an appropriate way
- Logical and coherent development of analysis
- Evidence of analysis and interpretation of data, not just presentation of data.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Logically derived from the foregoing analysis
- Understanding of the significance of the foregoing analysis
- Reflection on the limitations of the foregoing analysis

Reflection

- Critical discussion of the limitations of the foregoing analysis (how might these limitations affect your results?)
- Critical discussion of the research process and learning experience.

Referencing, bibliography, structure and quality of presentation

- Adherence to specified criteria for presentation
- Evidence of an appropriate structure
- Correct spelling and grammar and appropriate narrative style
- Evidence of proof-reading to eliminate typographical and other errors
- Correct referencing both in the text and in the reference list

Your project is marked by an independent marker and then moderated by another member of MGU academic staff. A sample of projects is also marked by an external examiner. Indicative feedback will be available within standard University regulations and formal marks released after the Award Boards. (Date to be announced later)

If your project fails, you will receive feedback and guidance on resubmission. Resubmission will generally be at the same time as other referred submissions.

9 Referencing – The MGU Handy Referencing Guide

Why do I Reference?

All sources that you have used in your work, whether directly quoted or referred to, must be referenced. It is correct academic practice to recognise the contributions of others in this way and it reduces the risk of plagiarism.

When do I reference?

References must be given in the text of your piece of work whenever you use external evidence and information, such as:

- Direct quotes from a book or journal article
- Using someone's ideas
- An author is mentioned in the piece of work
- Figures, graphs or other data are used

The system of referencing that the School adopts is the Harvard system, because it is the quickest, easiest and most user-friendly system available. The Harvard system consists of **two** simple elements:

1. A very short reference in text
2. A full reference in a separate list at the end of the piece of work. This reference list should be in alphabetical order according to the surname of the author. It should read as one entire list (journals, books, chapters, newspapers, websites etc).

This guide is only intended as a brief guide and does not include all the details of the system. For more information on referencing please see the following book:

Pears, R. and Shields, G. (2010) *Cite them right*. 8th edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. (808.02 PEA on the Library shelves and available electronically via the Catalogue)

Books

1. **In Text:** references in text include **two** or **three** pieces of information, depending on the situation. If you are:

- a) Citing an author's idea but **not** including a direct quote then you require two pieces of information

- Author's name
- Date of publication

E.g. Dennis and Macaulay (2007) argue that....

b) If you are citing a direct quote or part of a direct quote then you require three pieces of information

- Author's name
- Date of publication
- Page numbers

This information should be presented at the end of a sentence or directly after a quote and should be in brackets. For example:

- (Smith, 2003. p. 16) (one author)
- (Dennis and Macaulay, 2007. p. 47) (two or three authors)
- (Bellman *et al*, 1994. pp. 46-48) (more than three authors)

Remember to use quotation marks and if the quote is more than three lines you should indent the quote and present in single line spacing without quotation marks. For example:

Market orientation is a philosophy that is concerned with identifying the needs and wants of customers and tailoring products and services to satisfy these demands, whilst remaining firmly focused on the competition. In order to achieve this philosophy, there is a need to develop and exploit a culture of improvisation within the organisation, which involves all functions. Creative thinking and dialogue between individuals and functions will enable the organisation to innovate, remain proactive and adapt to the dynamic needs of the customer. An organisation incorporating improvisation in their marketing activities will develop long-term relationships with the customer base and enjoy enhanced performance, in all respects. (Dennis and Macaulay, 2007, p. 12)

2. **In Reference List:** references in the list include the three pieces of information above but also include additional information:

- Title of book - all titles must be in italics
- Edition (if not the 1st)
- Place of publication
- Name of publisher

For example:

Cottrell, S. (2008) *The study skills handbook*. 3rd edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

In-text citation (Cottrell, 2008. p. 32)

Books with two or three authors

Babiak, P. and Hare, R. (2007) *Snakes in suits: when psychopaths go to work*. New York: HarperCollins.

In-text citation (Babiak and Hare, 2007. p. 22)

Books with more than three authors

Needham, D., Dransfield, D., Coles, M., Harris, R. and Rawlinson, M. (1999) *Business for higher awards*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Heinemann.

In-text citation (Needham *et al*, 1999. p. 55)

Books with one or more editor(s) – Follow the format for books with Authors but include the abbreviation (ed.) or (eds.) after their surname in the reference list.

Walton, P., Haller, A. and Raffournier, B. (eds.) (2003) *International accounting*. 2nd edn. London: Thomson.

In-text citation (Walton, Haller and Raffournier, 2003. p. 74)

Chapters/sections of edited books

Author(s) of chapter (Year) 'Title of chapter', in Author(s)/Editor(s) of book, (ed(s).) *Title of book*. Edition. Place of publication: Publisher, Pages. (use pp.)

Nieborg, D.B. (2007) 'Games and advertisement: beyond banners and billboards', in Van Der Graff, S. (ed.) *Information communication technologies and emerging business strategies*. New York: Idea Group, pp. 97-117.

In-text citation (Nieborg, 2007. p. 99)

Electronic books (e-books)

Authors(s) (Year) Book title. Name of e-book collection [Online]. Available at: URL (Accessed: date).

Crowther, D. and Aras, G. (2010) *Handbook of corporate governance and social responsibility*. [Online]. Available at: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/teesside> (Accessed: 08 November 2011).

In-text citation (Crowther and Aras, 2010. p. 45)

Journal Articles

In Text: references are the same as references to books. The **Reference List** is a little bit different, however, and must include the following information:

- Authors name
- Date of publication
- Title of article
- Title of Journal
- Journal volume number
- Journal Issue number
- Page numbers for the entire article

For example:

Michaelson, C. (2001) 'Is business ethics philosophy or sophism?', *Business Ethics: a European Review*, 10(4), pp. 331-339.

In-text citation (Michaelson, 2001. p. 338)

The actual title of the article is not in italics, but in single quotation marks. The title of the journal is in italics.

Secondary Sources

Your text books will all include hundreds of references to other authors and sometimes you will need to refer to these without actually reading the original work. This is not a problem. All you need to do is to include a “cited in” reference as an **In Text** reference. For example:

In-text citation (Dennis, 2004, cited in Brassington and Pettit, 2006. p. 17)

In the **Reference List** you can only provide full details of the work you have actually read e.g. Brassington and Pettit.

Websites

We must at this stage offer a word of warning. Far too many students use many internet sources to research and complete their work. You must be **very careful** about using such sources as they are usually not academically suitable. Wikipedia, for example, is **NOT** an academic source even though it might be useful and interesting. Many of the so-called online Business Tutorials are not credible and should not be used. Simple advice: read books and academic journal articles instead of websites.

Some websites are useful, of course, for example government departments, business websites, etc.

Include in the reference:

Author/Organisation (Year site was published or last updated) *Title of internet site*. Available at: URL (Accessed: date).

Repak, N. (2005) *Time management*. Available at: http://www.gradresources.org/articles/time_management.shtml (Accessed: 08 November 2011).

In-text citation (Repak, 2005)

Web pages with no author

Include in the reference:

Title of internet site (Year site was published or last updated) Available at: URL (Accessed: date).

Viral marketing (2011) Available at: <http://www.mansoorsiddique.com/affiliate-marketing/seo/viral-marketing/> (Accessed: 08 November 2011).

In-text citation (Viral marketing, 2011)

Note, if a website has no author or organisation you should ask yourself whether or not it is of suitable quality to include in your piece of work.

A Reference to a Newspaper (online)

You may often want to use newspapers as a source of information, especially for up to date discussions on current events.

With No Author

Often newspaper articles do not have an author and therefore need a specific reference when you use a quote.

David Cameron said there was “a big question mark” over the single currency

In-text citation (*The Guardian*, 2011)

And in the **Reference List** at the end of your work:

The Guardian (2011) ‘Prepare for the worst, warns prime minister’ 12 November [Online]. Available at: http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=UKNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=13AFDB0D6AF0D7F8&p_docnum=3&p_queryname=8 (Accessed: 14 November 2011)

With an Author

In-text citation (Smith, 2011)

And in the **Reference List** at the end of your work:

Smith, L. (2011) ‘Cable ‘sorry’ for unsafe disposal of documents’ *The Independent*, 5 November [Online]. Available at: http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=UKNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=13AD3C695FAAFAB8&p_docnum=2&p_queryname=10 (Accessed: 14 November 2011)

A Reference to a Newspaper (online)

If you have read the article in a print version of the newspaper, miss out the URL (website address) and put in the page number in the reference e.g.

Smith, L. (2011) ‘Cable ‘sorry’ for unsafe disposal of documents’ *The Independent*, 5 November, p. 4.

Reports

1. Mintel

Mintel (2011) ‘Breakfast cereals UK’ *Mintel Oxygen* [Online]. Available at: <http://academic.mintel.com> (Accessed: 14 November 2011)

In-text citation (Mintel, 2011)

2. Company reports

Next PLC (2011) *Annual report* [Online]. Available at:
http://ir2.flife.de/data/next/igb_html/index.php?bericht_id=1000005&index=&lang=ENG
(Accessed: 14 November 2011)

In-text citation (Next PLC, 2011)

Referencing other formats of information

To check how to reference and cite other formats of information in the Harvard style use the book 'Cite them right' by Pears and Shields. Copies are available from the Library (shelved at 808.02/PEA).

Pears, R. and Shields, G. (2010) *Cite them right*. 8th edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

What is the difference between a list of references and a bibliography?

For most of your assignments, you will just need to do a list of references. This is what we have just been discussing and is a list of all the items you have quoted or paraphrased from in the assignment.

If you have also been asked to provide a bibliography then this is a list of everything you have read in preparation for the assignment, whether you have quoted from it or not.

A final word

Whether we like it or not, referencing has to be completed in all academic work. If you follow the steps outlined in this document you should have no problems with referencing in your future work. Failure to reference correctly will result in a loss of marks, so think on!

10 University Policies

10.1 Plagiarism

The project is an important part of your Level 7 work and that one of its key characteristics is that it is 'student driven' – it is intended to be a piece of work which demonstrates **your** ideas. **You** are responsible for developing the objectives and the research design, collecting data or other information, analysing it, reaching conclusions and making recommendations.

It should therefore come as no surprise that any indication that your work has in fact been plagiarised – that you are trying to pass someone else's work off as your own – is treated extremely seriously.

You should therefore be meticulous about acknowledging the source of all work that you have used. The University's Procedure on Plagiarism can be found on the MGU Intranet under Assessments & Examinations.

10.2 Research Ethics

When planning a piece of research various elements need to be considered. One of the most important considerations should be to determine if the project is ethically acceptable. This is especially true where the research involves people where issues of *privacy, consent, confidentiality and avoidance of harm to those subjects* need to be addressed, although issues such as confidentiality can be equally important to an organisation, especially in a commercial environment.

To help researchers address the issue of ethics, Mahatma Gandhi University has produced a policy and set of procedures that apply to all research activity being undertaken by staff and students of the University. This policy and the associated procedures therefore apply to all undergraduate students who are researching for the purposes of completing a project.

10.2.1 Research Ethics Release Form

The ethics release form **must** be submitted with your project outline. No supervisor will be available to you after this date unless this Research Ethics Release Form has been submitted. An ethics release form is provided for you in the appendices to this document.

Your ethics release form submission will be assessed for its suitability. If there are any queries regarding your project and any ethical implications which may occur, then it will be passed to the Chair of the School Research Ethics Sub-Committee for consideration. Changes may be required before your research is deemed to be ethically acceptable and can commence. Any project without ethical approval (either through non-submission of the pro forma or an unacceptable ethical approach) will not be accepted for submission.

The ethics release form demonstrates your research intentions. Its approval is a recognition that the University has found your proposed research to be ethically acceptable. However once the research is underway the responsibility for fulfilling the research objectives in an ethical manner becomes yours. Supervisors are not responsible for monitoring your research activity. However advice and guidance of an ethical nature can of course be discussed, like any other issue, as part of the broader Advisory process.

10.2.2 Changing your research

If you decide to change your research significantly from your project outline, it is also your responsibility to ensure that an additional Research Ethics Release Form is completed to reflect the new research. This will be assessed as before. If you are at all unsure, make sure you discuss the issue with your supervisor.

10.3 Assessment Regulations

The project is a 40 credit module and the Business Research Methods module is 20 credits for the purposes of Master classification

Your project will be assessed by an independent marker who will agree the mark with your supervisor. In exceptional circumstances where the final mark cannot be agreed the project will be marked blind (anonymously) by a third person. Projects are also checked by an external examiner to ensure consistency and fairness.

The project will be assessed on the basis of the criteria appearing in the Marking Criteria section of this handbook.

10.3.1 Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances

The normal regulations for application for and granting of extensions and mitigating circumstances apply to the project. If you require an extension of time to submit the project, contact your programme leader as early as possible to discuss the situation.

Any submissions received after the deadline date and time, which have no supporting extension documentation, will receive a maximum mark of 40% (up to one week late) or zero (more than one week late) unless an application for mitigating circumstances is received.

The normal procedures for extensions and mitigating circumstances will be followed. You are reminded that computer problems such as disk failure are not acceptable reasons for late submission. Always back up your material on the hard drive, and if possible, transfer material to the University servers. Nor is late submission due to delays experienced in printing or binding acceptable. Such possibilities should be anticipated and allowed for in your time plan.

11 Project Results

Project results and feedback will be available to you after the Award Board in July.

11.1 Project Copies

One (01) hard copy of your project should be submitted.

11.2 Project Re-sits

If your project fails you will receive a detailed feedback sheet, which will provide guidance on resubmission. A copy of your project will be required to be resubmitted in August at the same time as other re-sit work. The feedback and resubmission instructions will be available on the VLE.

If this should result in a further fail, it may be possible for you to make a further attempt at the project by re-taking the complete module (subject to the decision of the Award Board). This would require you to enrol again the following academic year.

12 Reading List

- The **recommended text** is:

Bryman A and Bell E (2011) *Business Research Methods*, 3rd Ed. (Oxford: OUP)

Other **general texts** include:

1. Bell, J. (2010) *Doing Your Research Project*, 5th Ed. (Maidenhead: Open University Press)
2. Blumberg, B et al (2005) *Business Research Methods* (London: McGraw Hill)
3. Collis J and Hussey, R (2003) *Business Research* (London: Palgrave MacMillian)
4. Denscombe, M. (2010) "The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research projects", fourth edition, (Open University Press)
5. Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., and Jackson, P.R. (2008), "Management Research", (3rd edition), (London : Sage Publications)
6. Flick, U. (2011) "Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project", (London : Sage Publications)
7. Ghauri, P and Gronhaug K (2005) 3rd ed *Research Methods in Business Studies – A practical guide* (London: Prentice Hall)
8. Gray, D.A (2009) *Doing Research in the Real World* (London : Sage)
9. Hair, J F Jr et al (2003) *Essentials of Business Research Methods* (NY: Wiley)
10. Jankowicz D., (2000) 3rd Ed *Business Research Projects* (Chapman and Hal)
11. Leedy, P D and Ormrod, J E (2005) 8th ed *Practical Research – Planning and design* (London: Pearson)
12. Maylor H and Blackmon K (2005) *Researching Business and Management* (London: Palgrave Macmillan)
13. Robson C, (2002) *Real World Research*, (London: Blackwell)
14. Sekaran, U. And Bougie, R. (2009) *Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach*, 5th Edition (Chichester: Wiley)
15. Zikmund W. G., (2000) *Business Research Methods*, 6th edition, (Texas: The Dryden Press)

Texts specifically for **quantitative methods** include:

1. Bryman, A (2005) *Quantitative Data Analysis with SPSS: a guide for social scientists* (London: Routledge)
2. Czaja R and Blair J (2003) *Designing Surveys: A guide to decisions and procedures*, 2nd ed, (London: Sage)
3. Einspruch, EL (2005) *An Introductory Guide to SPSS 2nd Ed.*(London: Sage)
4. Fink A, (1995) *How to Analyze Survey Data*, (London: Sage)
5. Morris, C (2003) 6th Ed *Quantitative Approaches in Business Studies* (London: Prentice Hall)
6. Oppenheim A N, (1992) *Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude Measurement* (Open University Pinter London)
7. Salkind, N.J. (2009) *Statistics for people who (think they) hate statistics*, 4th Ed. (London: Sage)

Texts specifically for **qualitative methods** include:

1. Cassel C and Symon G, (1996) *Qualitative Methods in Organisational Research*, (London : Sage)
2. Flick, U (2009). *An introduction to Qualitative Research* (London: Sage)
3. Keats, Daphne M, (2000) *Interviewing: a practical guide for students and professionals*, (Open University Press)
4. Krueger and Hutchins, *Group Interviews: Focus on Good Design*
5. Marshall C & Rossman G B, (2006) *Designing Qualitative Research*, 4th ed (London: Sage)
6. Maykut P. and Morehouse R., (1994) *Beginning Qualitative Research - A Philosophical and Practical Guide* (London: Falmer Press)
7. Thorpe, R. And Holt, R. (2008) (eds) 'The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Management Research' (London : Sage)
8. Yin, R. (2009) *Case Study Research: design and methods* (London: Sage)
9. Yin R, (2003) *Applications of Case Study Research*, 2nd ed, (London: Sage)

Student skills books

1. Campbell, D & M (1995) *The Student's Guide to Doing Research on the Internet*, (Addison Wesley)
2. Gash, S (1989) *Effective Literature Searching for Students* (Gower)
3. McMillan, K. And Meyers, J. (2007), *How to Write Dissertations and Project Reports* (London: Pearson)
4. McMillan, K. And Meyers, J. (2007), *How to Write Essays and Assignments* (London: Pearson)
5. McMillan, K. And Meyers, J. (2006), *The Smarter Student* (London: Pearson)
6. Mounsey, C (2002) *Essays and Dissertations* (Oxford: OUP)
7. Northedge, A. (2005) *The Good Study Guide* (Milton Keynes:The Open University)
8. White, B (2000) *Dissertation Skills for Business and Management Students* Cassell

Critical thinking books

1. Brown, D (2007) *Tricks of the Mind* (London: Channel 4 Books)
2. Goldacre, B (2009) *Bad Science* (London: Harper Perennial)
3. Sutherland, S. (2007) *Irrationality*, 2nd ed, (London: Pinter and Martin Ltd)
4. Wheen, F. (2004) *How Mumbo Jumbo Conquered the World* (London: Harper Perennial)

Appendix A: Project Outline

Student Number:

Surname/Family Name:

First Name:

Programme of Study:

Which of the following academic areas best describes your project topic? (please tick)

- Accounting
- E-Business
- Economics
- Enterprise/Entrepreneurialism
- Human Resources
- Leadership
- Marketing
- Organisational Behaviour
- Strategy
- Other (please give details):

Working title of Project:

This should be brief and to the point, encapsulating the essence of the proposed research. It must be appropriate to your programme of study and link with the project aim stated below.

Project Aim:

This must be appropriate to your programme of study and should be clear and concise.

Objectives:

These should be specific and are the steps to be taken in order to meet your aim. For a project of this type there will usually be between 4 and 6 objectives. They should each begin with the word 'to'.

Rationale:

This should be a brief explanation as to what your project will be about and who the intended audience are. You should include:

- A summarised description of what is being studied (e.g. the organisation, industry, theory, problem)
- A summarised explanation of who this project might be useful to, and why it will be useful to them.

Outline Review of Literature:

This section should provide a preliminary exploration of the literature that currently underpins your area of research. You will need to cite and explain articles and other academic publications that have informed the area of research so far and articulate how these sources can be linked to your project.

Methods:

State briefly how the objectives will be fulfilled e.g.

- Journals, books, company reports
- Interviews, questionnaires, sample size etc.

Appendix B: RESEARCH ETHICS RELEASE FORM

RESEARCH ETHICS RELEASE FORM ETHREL (2012) - CONFIDENTIAL <i>Before completing this form, read <u>Section 1.2</u> of 'Policy Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics'</i> <i>You must answer every question. Incomplete forms will be rejected</i> <i>This form is to be used <u>ONLY</u> for projects of <u>low ethical risk</u> OR by <u>staff</u> who have already <u>received ethics training</u> who are certifying their own research as ethically sound.</i>	Please return form to: Secretary Research Ethics Committee School of BUSINESS						
<i>Does your project involve any physical interventions/methods on human participants? YES / NO (delete as appropriate).</i> <i>If <u>YES</u>, do not use this form, apply for ethical Approval using the EthApp form</i>							
<i>Name of project supervisor/Director of Studies:</i>							
<i>Names of researcher(s)/student(s) working on this project:</i>							
<i>Project title:</i>							
<i>Discipline or area of research:</i>							
<i>Kind of ethical Release applied for:</i>							
<i>Low risk project:</i>	<i>Staff self-certification:</i>						
<i>Please tick type of Researcher:</i> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Taught Postgraduate</td> <td style="width: 15%;">PG Research Student</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Staff - Studying for higher Master</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Staff - other research</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Final Year Undergrad. Student</td> <td style="width: 15%;"></td> </tr> </table>		Taught Postgraduate	PG Research Student	Staff - Studying for higher Master	Staff - other research	Final Year Undergrad. Student	
Taught Postgraduate	PG Research Student	Staff - Studying for higher Master	Staff - other research	Final Year Undergrad. Student			
<i>Expected duration of project from: to:</i> <i>Note: projects can be audited at any point during the length of the project following ethical Clearance</i>							
<i>1) Will this project recruit human participants for data collection? THE SCHOOL WILL NOT APPROVE ANY STUDY <u>BY STUDENTS</u> WHICH PROPOSES TO RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18.</i> <i>YES / NO (delete as appropriate). If <u>NO</u>, go to question 3</i>							
<i>2a) Does this project involve asking human participants questions as part of a survey, or involvement in focus groups or case studies? YES / NO (delete as appropriate).</i> <i>If <u>YES</u>, give details about the topic of the questions that will be asked:</i> 							
<i>2b) Does the project involve collecting samples or non-verbal data from human participants?</i> <i>YES / NO (delete as appropriate). If <u>YES</u>, give details of what will be collected and how:</i> 							

3a) Does this project involve the analysis of secondary data collected from a previous study? YES / NO (delete as appropriate)

If YES, has the data been anonymised? YES/NO (delete as appropriate)

If NO, how will you ensure that your work will comply with the Data Protection Act?

4) Give a brief description of the aims and design of your proposed research:

I have read the University's guidelines on ethics related to research, and to the best of my knowledge and ability confirm that the ethical considerations overleaf have been assessed. I am aware of and understand University's Policy and Procedures for Research Ethics and Health & Safety. I understand that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the School's Research Ethics Sub-Committee (SREC) and/or the University Research Ethics sub-Committee (UREC) and audited at any time.

(Please complete the following as appropriate)

Please Tick

• I certify that the research project conforms to the University's six Principles for Research Ethics

• I confirm that I have attended (or am exempt from) required research ethics training in my School; or, if my School does not require training, that I have attended other appropriate research ethics training

If it is found that an applicant has not attended training then this Release application will be invalid and an application required on EthAppV8 form

• I confirm that as Supervisor I will monitor progress of the project.

• I confirm that the project complies with the Code of Practice of the following Professional Body (if not applicable, then put n/a)

• I certify that the project should proceed without Application for Approval by a Research Ethics Committee

Signing this form, you are certifying that the following have been considered:

1. **Any possible risks** to participants and/or researchers **have been assessed**

2. Use of procedures for preserving **confidentiality** and complying with **data protection law**

Date: _____

3. Potential **conflicts of interest** involving monetary inducements and/or funding of the project

Signature of Researcher:

Signature of Project Supervisor/Director of Studies:

Date: _____

APPROVAL or REFERRAL

To be completed by Chair of School Research Ethics Committee

EITHER:

As Chair of the Research Ethics Committee of the School responsible for the project, I have read the University's Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Research Ethics, and confirm that:

- The Researcher/Supervisor has received, or has been exempted from University Research Ethics Training, and this training attendance has been verified; and
- Appropriate procedures exist for monitoring the progress of the project.

I now authorise the project as recommended above.

Signature of Chair of School Research Ethics Committee::

Date: _____

OR:

As Chair of the Research Ethics Committee of the School responsible for the project I recommend that the project should be **referred** to the School Research Ethics Committee for Approval, and a Request for Ethical Approval Form (EthApp) must be completed.

Appendix C: Project Title Page (Template)

Mahatma Gandhi University

“Your Title Here”

Your Full Name Here

Master Business Administration Programme

Level 7 Research Methodology & Project : Project

Mahatma Gandhi University

August 2017

Appendix D: PROJECT CERTIFICATION (TEMPLATE)

Mahatma Gandhi University

Level 7 Research Methodology & Project

Project Certification

1. I confirm that the work in this Project is original and has been carried out by me as part of my programme of study.
2. I confirm that all secondary material has been properly acknowledged by me and referenced in this work.

Signed:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....

Course/Programme of Study:

.....

Appendix E: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING MARKING CRITERIA

On the next page is a copy of the Mahatma Gandhi University generic marking criteria.

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY GENERIC MARKING CRITERIA

Level 7 (Master)

90%-100%

Exceptional work. Presentation is logical, error-free and, where appropriate, creative. There is an in-depth understanding of issues/problems and excellent critical/deep engagement with the material and concepts involved. Very skilful interpretation of data. Arguments, ideas and, where appropriate, solutions are presented coherently and fully underpinned by thorough research and reading.

80%-89%

Outstanding work with presentation of a very high standard. There is comprehensive understanding of key concepts and knowledge and clear evidence of critical analysis and insight. Accurate interpretation of data with arguments, ideas and solutions presented effectively and based on strong research and reading.

70%-79%

Extremely good work with presentation of a high standard. Demonstrates an excellent knowledge base with a clear understanding of the issues and application to practice where appropriate. There is some effective critical and analytical application of relevant research and reading.

60%-69%

The work is very good, logically structured and presented to a high standard. Demonstrates a strong knowledge base with a clear understanding of the issues and application to practice where appropriate. There is some critical and analytical application of relevant research.

50%-59%

The work is clearly presented and logically structured. It shows evidence of a sound understanding of the topic and addresses major issues. The work contains some discussion and interpretation of relevant perspectives although further development of the arguments presented would be beneficial. There are examples of critical reflection and evidence of application of theory to practice.

40%-49%

Adequate presentation. The work displays basic knowledge and understanding of the topic but is largely descriptive. There is an attempt to bring together different ideas and concepts although this would have been strengthened by the inclusion of further key issues. The structure of the work requires attention to its coherence and logical development of content. The link between theory and practice, where appropriate, is somewhat tenuous and its development would enhance the work considerably.

30%-39% – Fail

The work is poorly presented and contains numerous errors, inconsistencies and omissions with limited use of source material. The work displays a weak knowledge base and a lack of sufficient understanding of the topic. There is limited evidence of the application of theory to practice where appropriate. It contains many unsupported statements with limited attempts to bring issues together and lacks critical analysis and reflection.

20-29% – Fail

The work is very poorly presented and contains numerous serious errors, inconsistencies and omissions with little use of source material. The work displays a very weak knowledge base and a lack of sufficient understanding of the topic. There is very little evidence of the application of theory to practice where appropriate. It contains many unsupported statements with very little attempt to bring issues together and there is a complete lack of critical analysis and reflection. To obtain a mark of 20% the work must show evidence of a genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and with the subject matter.

0-19 % - Fail

The work is extremely poorly structured and presented. It demonstrates no real knowledge or understanding of key concepts and principles. Much material is irrelevant, incorrect, inconsistent or omitted. No evidence of critical analysis and reflection. No effective use of supporting material. No application of theory to practice where appropriate. Not a genuine attempt to engage with the assessment requirements and/or subject matter.

Appendix F:

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Research Methodology and Project-Generic Marking Criteria

Introduction

- Background to the project
- Justification for doing the project and discussion of importance/need
- Identification of audience/stakeholders

Aims, objectives and project identification

- Clearly stated and logically derived aim and objectives (and clearly articulated research question[s] if appropriate)
- Clear statement of the nature of the chosen issue or problem

Understanding of the principles and theory underpinning the chosen issue or problem

- Ability to select appropriate principles or theory
- Ability to apply principles or theory to the chosen issue or problem
- Understanding of principles or theory at an appropriate level

Research design and information sources

- Explanation of and rationale for research strategy
- Justification of methods adopted for both the collection and analysis of data
- Range and appropriateness of information sources used including 'academic' sources and other appropriate sources such as policy documents, company literature, and market/industry reports, etc.
- Use of academic references to enhance validity
- Discussion of any limitations of the research strategy

Analysis and evaluation of the chosen issue or problem

- Evidence of scholarship in the analysis and evaluation
- Appropriateness of methods of analysis chosen
- Ability to apply methods of analysis in an appropriate way
- Logical and coherent development of analysis
- Evidence of analysis and interpretation of data, not just presentation of data

Conclusions and recommendations

- Logically derived from the foregoing analysis
- Understanding of the significance of the foregoing analysis
- Reflection on the limitations of the foregoing analysis

Reflection

- Critical discussion of the limitations of the foregoing analysis (how might these limitations affect your results)
- Critical discussion of the research process and learning experience

Referencing, bibliography, structure and quality of presentation

- Adherence to specified criteria for presentation
- Evidence of an appropriate structure
- Correct spelling and grammar and appropriate narrative style
- Evidence of proof-reading to eliminate typographical and other errors
- Correct referencing both in the text and in the reference list