

Center for Advanced Studies in Engineering



CASE BUSINESS SCHOOL

**FINAL YEAR PROJECT GUIDELINES
PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS FOR
UNDERGRADUATES**

YEAR 2013

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GUIDELINES FOR FINAL YEAR PROJECT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives

The objectives set for students undertaking the final year project are:

- To explore one area of your program in depth.
- To work independently on your own initiative.
- To gather information in a thorough and rigorous manner.
- To produce a coherent, literary document.

The FYP is a concise report comprising of a minimum of 10,000 and a maximum of 15,000 words. Course participants are required to carry out the projects in groups of 3-4 or as individual students. Please note that there is 50 percent weight age of group work and 50 percent of individual contribution.

1.2 Approaching the Projects:

This project at CASE Business School will encourage the student to ask a question about an aspect of business studies; it will research the material necessary to engage with that question; it will analyze and interpret that material to reach a conclusion; and it will present its findings in a concise report.

The Final Year Report, therefore, establishes an area of inquiry, assembles relevant evidence and argues to a conclusion that is supported by that evidence.

2. Format Options

There are a number of different formats that you may use for the final, written document of your FYP. These are the following:

- a) **The empirical research paper**
- b) **The feasibility study / business plan**
- c) **The business consultancy report**

2.1 The Empirical Research Paper

Empirical research involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. An empirical research paper presents its findings in the form of a well-developed analysis defended by the evidence. The data may be gathered first-hand (e.g. interviews, questionnaires, observations, focus groups, etc.) or second-hand (e.g. a content analysis of financial reports, television commercials or an organization's internal correspondence; or a re-analysis of existing data.

Like all FYPs, an empirical research paper will include an abstract, title page, table of contents, etc. The following is indicative of the layout of the main body of an empirical research paper:

- **Introduction** – summarizes the aims of the research project; defines the area or topic; sets the context
- **Literature Review** – reviews the relevant literature providing a commentary on the existing state of knowledge (theories, and empirical evidence), trends, controversies, etc.; identifies gaps in the knowledge and concludes with specific research questions
- **Method** – outlines the steps taken in the collection of data with enough detail that the study could be replicated (repeated); it provides concise justification for the research strategy chosen
- **Results** – details the findings from the data collection: may include tables, figures, and/or quotes from interviews; may include descriptive and inferential statistics.
- **Discussion (including Conclusion)** – pulls together the research questions that were asked with the answers that were obtained through the analysis of the data; provides commentary on these findings. Identifies limitations of the existing study and makes suggestions for future research;

states clearly the conclusions that are reached and the implications and recommendations for relevant stakeholders (e.g. businesses, practitioners, governments, academics).

There must be clear links amongst the various sections of the paper. You are telling one story that is made up from several parts; these parts must be well integrated. The data you collect must be linked to the research questions you have identified in your Introduction and to the conclusions you reach in your discussion. Your Discussion must also refer back to the Literature Review.

2.2 The Feasibility Study / Business Plan:

Whereas an empirical paper asks and answers a research question, a feasibility study asks and answers a question about whether establishing a new product or service is feasible. It assesses the commercial and technical viability of the proposed enterprise by exploring potential markets, preparing costing and financial projections, considering the sourcing of raw material, assessing any plant and equipment needs, etc.

Like all FYPs, it will include an introductory summary. However, in a feasibility study, this summary is called an Executive Summary instead of an Abstract. Like all FYPs, it will also need to include a title page, table of contents, appendices, etc. A typical layout for the body of the feasibility study is:

- **Introduction** – establishes the rationale for the business ideas, includes any relevant background information and generally introduces the project
- **Product/Service & process Description** – provides a clear description and profile of the proposed product/service – researches how you propose to manufacture the product or process the service
- **Product scope, future sales projections and demand gap**
- **Management/Employee Structure** – who will manage the business, how many staff do you require, profile of staff required
- **Facility layout** – Operational view of the business
- **Financial Requirements** – what finance is required to start the business, how/where do you propose to source this finance and financial projections up to the break-even
- **Plans for Future Development of the Business** – where and how will you progress the business idea, what are the issues and challenges

- **Conclusion** – is the product/service feasible, what are your conclusions and recommendations?

2.3 The Business Consultancy Report

A Business Consultant draws on theory, knowledge and practical experience and applies them to solving a particular business problem or issue. In the Business Consultancy Report, the student assumes the role of a consultant advising the client on the best options available to solve a business problem. This process involves clarification of the specific business problem, identification, research and evaluation of the various solutions to the problem, the recommendation of one best solution and recommendations on how best to implement this solution. The consultancy project could be in Financial Management, Accounting system design, Marketing, Human Resource Management, Information Technology, etc. It could involve the analysis of an industry, a company, a brand or product line, an expansion, a take-over, as well as systems development, training, exportation, etc. As with all FYPs, your project will require a title page, table of contents, appendices, etc. It will also need an introductory summary (here called an Executive Summary instead of an Abstract). A possible layout for the body of a business consultancy report is:

- **Introduction** – describes the consultancy project, its goals and the initial issues and options identified
- **Scope & Goals** – includes the time scales, the areas the project covers, basic assumptions and constraints. Covers the goals relating to the project
- **Methodology** – details the research process
- **Analysis** – includes a review of the findings (primary and secondary). Identifies and lists the issues
- **Recommendations** – makes recommendations of the options based on the analysis carried out
- **Implementation** – (if applicable) details the action plan for carrying out the recommendations
- **Consequences and Requirements** – (if applicable) identifies the implications of the recommendations
- **Conclusions**

2.4 APPROXIMATE TIMELINES RELEVANT TO EACH FORMAT

The summary with approximate timelines for the chapters of each of the format is given below:

| Timelines | Week 1-5 | Week 5 -10 | Week 10-15 | Week 15 - 18 |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Empirical research paper | Brief and draft proposal. Finalization of proposal | Working on introduction & literature review, and possibly data collection instrument. Method of study should be finalized. | Field work should be in progress. Results should be compiled. Conclusion must come to an end. | Finalization of chapters. Viva/presentation. Award of grades for the Semester |
| Feasibility study | Brief and draft proposal. Finalization of proposal | Working on introduction, product service and product service process description. Project scope, future sales projections, management/employee structure be finalized | Financial requirements chapter should be concluded. Plans for future development of the business and conclusion chapters must come to an end | Finalization of chapters. Viva/presentation. Award of grades for the Semester |
| The business consultancy report | Brief and draft proposal. Finalization of proposal | Working on introduction, scope and goals, and possibly methodology | Analysis & recommendations should be provided. Implementation and conclusion must come to an end | Finalization of chapters. Viva/presentation. Award of grades for the Semester |

3. Thesis Layout

The physical layout of the thesis should be as follows:

| Sections of FYP | Information to be included, in specified order |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Front cover | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name of the institution • Title of FYP • The author's name and student ID number • Programme of Study for which FYP is submitted • Supervisor's name • Year of completion |
| 2. Title page | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name of the institution. Programme of Study for which FYP is submitted (e.g. e.g. MBA, BBA etc.) • The year of submission • The author's name and student ID number • The title of the FYP • The word count • The name of the Supervisor • The following statement to be included at the bottom of the title page: "This project is solely the work of the author and is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of _____" (submit appropriate degree, e.g. Bachelors of Business Administration) |
| 3. Abstract (Executive Summary) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This stand alone summary should not exceed one page |
| 4. Acknowledgements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not required, but you may wish to thank individuals or organizations that helped with the project |
| 5. List of contents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be entitled "Contents" • Include list of titles of sections of the project |
| 6. List of tables and figures * | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include if there are more than five tables/figures |
| 7. Main body of text | |
| 8. Bibliography | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should follow the format provided in this document |
| 9. Appendices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should include details that are not appropriate to include in the main body of the text (e.g. questionnaires, transcripts of interviews, etc.) • To be lettered A, B, C, etc. • To have a cover page "Appendices" that appears in the table of contents • It is not counted as part of the 10,000 word count |
| 10. Back cover | |

*All tables, figures and charts should be clearly labeled and numbered. Each table, chart or figure will have a number which reflects the chapter and the order within the chapter e.g. the first table in Chapter 3 will be Table 3.1, while the first figure in Chapter 3 will be Figure 3.1.

4 MARKING STRUCTURE FOR THE FYP REPORT

Marking Structure for BBA

A three member Panel, including one Supervisor and two Evaluators will take the defense of the FYP. FYP evaluators will be decided by the Director CASE Business School in consultation with the Cluster Heads.

| Sr.# | | Supervisor | Evaluator 1 | Evaluator2 |
|------|--------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. | Report | 40 | 20 | 20 |
| 2. | Presentation/viva | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| | Total Marks | 100 | 25 | 25 |

5. ESSENTIAL GUIDELINES

5.1 PROVIDING REFERENCES

References form an essential part of the FYP. To provide proper references, you must train yourself to think in term of ‘in-text referencing’ and ‘end-referencing’ which is also called the ‘list of references’. The former is about providing a reference while you are writing the main document, while the latter is a detailed list which is provided at the end of a document. Examples of Harvard referencing, which is the most commonly used style in management journals, are provided below.

In text referencing

Some examples of how to use references in the main text are:

- Cooper and Schindler (2001) argued that
- There is general consensus in the literature that..... (Goodstein, 1994; Ingram and Simons, 1995; Wood et al., 2003).
- It has been argued that(Goodstein, 1994a, 1994b, 2003; Ingram and Simons, 1995).
- The findings of an earlier paper by Goodstein (1994) differ from the subsequent trends indicated

by the literature in this area (Goodstein, 2003; Ingram and Simons, 1995; Wood et al., 2003; Wikipedia, 2007; MoD, 2007).

- When indicating a page number, you can do it like this (Meyer and Rowan, 1977, pp. 342) or (Meyer and Rowan, 1977: 342) or (Meyer and Rowan, 1977, p. 342)

Please note:

- **All** the commas, semicolons, colons full stops and brackets serve a purpose.
- **Where** the name of an author is a natural part of the sentence, it is not written in the brackets.
- **ALL NAMES ARE SURNAMES** i.e. FAMILY NAMES or SECOND NAMES ...DO NOT USE FIRST NAMES

The list of references at the end of a document

This should be arranged alphabetically, by the SURNAME of authors. Table 1 provides examples of how information should be presented for commonly used material (using Harvard system). The same material is provided as a list of references after Table 1.

| Nature of material | The way information should be presented |
|---|---|
| Book: When the whole book is written by the named author(s). | Cooper, D. R. and Schindler, R. S. (2001), <i>Business Research Methods</i> (7th edition), Singapore, McGraw-Hill. Note: provide the information on edition of the book if available. |
| Book: When you are naming the editor of the book | Baum, J. A. C. (ed.) (2002), <i>Companion to Organisations</i> , Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd. Note: use (ed.) for one editor and (eds.) if more than one editors. |
| Book chapter: When each chapter is written by different authors. | Amburgey, T. L. and Singh, J. V. (2002), ‘Organisational Evolution’ in Baum, J.A.C. (ed), <i>Companion to Organisations</i> , Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd. Note: Mention edition of the book at the end of the book name, if applicable. |
| Report 1: A stand alone report | Chaplin, J., Mangla, J., Purdon, S. and Airey, C. (2005), <i>The Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004 Technical Report</i> , London, National Centre for Social Research. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Report 2: Part of a series, hence series number mentioned | Hogarth, T., Hasluck, C. Pierre, G., Winterbotham, M. & Vivian, D. (2001), <i>Employee friendly flexible working 2000: Baseline study of employee friendly flexible working practices in Great Britain</i> , DfEE Research Report No. 249, Nottingham, DfEE Publications. Or With three or more authors, you can give the first two surnames and et al. So the above would be: Hogarth, Hasluck et al. (2001), <i>Employee friendly</i> |
| Journal article: | Meyer, J. W. and Rowan, B. (1977), 'Institutionalised organisations: formal structure as myth and ceremony', <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , Vol. 83, No. 2, pp. 340-63. OR Meyer, J. W. and Rowan, B. (1977), 'Institutionalised organisations: formal structure as myth and ceremony', <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , 83 (2), 340-63. |
| Magazine article: e.g. in Time | Elliott, M. (2007), The Chinese Century, <i>Time</i> , Vol. 169, No. 2, pp. 15-23, January 22 Or Elliott, M. (2007, January 22), The Chinese Century, <i>Time</i> , Vol. 169, No. 2, pp. 15-23 |
| Newspaper article 1: When author is known | Roberts, D. (1998), 'BAe sells property wing for \$301m', <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> , London, 10 October, pp. 31. |
| Newspaper article 2: When author is not known | Guardian (1992), 'Fraud trial at Britannia Theme Park', <i>The Guardian</i> , Manchester, 5 February, pp. 4. |
| Net download 1: Your favourite site | Wikipedia (2007), <i>Harvard Referencing</i> , [online] Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_referencing , [Accessed 6th April 2007] Note: Trust this sheet more than you trust wikipedia! Note: On most web pages, you can see the date on which it was last modified. Use that date in the initial parenthesis and not the date you accessed it on. |
| Net download 2: Corporate author | Telenor (2007), <i>About Telenor</i> , [online] Available from http://www.telenor.com/about/ , [Accessed 6th April 2007] Note: On most web pages, you can see the date on which it was last modified. Use that date in the initial parenthesis and not the date you accessed it on. |
| Working paper | Dex, S. and Smith, C. (2001), <i>Which British employers have family-friendly policies? Analysis of the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey</i> , Research papers in management studies, WP 17/2001, Cambridge, The Judge Institute of Management Studies. |
| Thesis | David, S. (2003), <i>The role of power in employment relations</i> , Unpublished PhD thesis, Cass Business School, London. |

Table 1: Examples of the way information should be presented in the end list of references

REFERENCES

(This is how your end referencing should look like – ALPHABETICALLY arranged)

- Amburgey, T. L. and Singh, J. V.** (2002), 'Organisational Evolution' in Baum, J.A.C. (ed), *Companion to Organisations*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Baum, J. A. C.** (ed.) (2002), *Companion to Organisations*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Chaplin, J., Mangla, J., Purdon, S. and Airey, C.** (2005), *The Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004 Technical Report*, London, National Centre for Social Research.
- Cooper, D. R. and Schindler, R. S.** (2001), *Business Research Methods* (7th edition), Singapore, McGraw-Hill.
- David, S.** (2003), *The role of power in employment relations*, Unpublished PhD thesis, Cass Business School, London.
- Dex, S. and Smith, C.** (2001), *Which British employers have family-friendly policies? Analysis of the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey*, Research papers in management studies, WP 17/2001, Cambridge, The Judge Institute of Management Studies.
- Elliott, M.** (2007), The Chinese Century, *Time*, Vol. 169, No. 2, pp. 15-23, January 22
- Guardian** (1992), 'Fraud trial at Britannia Theme Park', *The Guardian*, Manchester, 5 February, pp. 4.
- Hogarth, T., Hasluck, C. Pierre, G., Winterbotham, M. & Vivian, D.** (2001), *Employee friendly flexible working 2000: Baseline study of employee friendly flexible working practices in Great Britain*, DfEE Research Report No. 249, Nottingham, DfEE Publications.
- Meyer, J. W. and Rowan, B.** (1977), 'Institutionalised organisations: formal structure as myth and ceremony', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 83, No. 2, pp. 340-63.
- Roberts, D.** (1998), 'BAe sells property wing for \$301m', *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 10 October, pp. 31.
- Telenor** (2007), *About Telenor*, [online] Available from <http://www.telenor.com/about/>, [Accessed 6th April 2007]
- Wikipedia** (2007), *Harvard Referencing*, [online] Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_referencing, [Accessed 6th April 2007]

REFERENCES

*Final year project booklet for undergraduates, class of 2008: **Kemmy Business School***

*Final year project booklet for undergraduates, class of 2011: **FAST School of Business***