**Research Methods Assessment Brief**

**MA BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT**

This module is assessed by a **research/project proposal (100%) - 3,500 words** (excluding abstract, reference list, and appendices)

**DUE DATE: Sunday 23.59, 11/02/2024.**

**Assessment Details:**

All Masters level students are required to take a 60-credit module where they undertake a major project (equiv. 14,000-20,000 words). The project offers you the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have gained across your taught modules in an extended project that justifies the ‘Masters’ level award.

The assessment for *this* module (Research Methods) is an *initial proposal* for that 60-credit project.

Students in the **MA Business and Management** choose *one* of two different types of 60-credit projects:

● **Dissertation**

○ The **dissertation** involves choosing an area of research interest related to the wider themes covered in your course. A dissertation of this type includes a review of current literature related to the topic and can also incorporate a field study and/or the collection, analysis and evaluation of original data. You will analyse the findings from your research to draw conclusions (and if appropriate make recommendations) within the wider context of theories, models and/or frameworks appropriate to your course.

● **Consultancy Project**

○ The **consultancy project** connects your chosen research area to a real-world problem or opportunity for an organisation to which you have requisite access. In consultation with this organisation, you will investigate the problem/opportunity within the context of appropriate business and management theories, models and/or frameworks. You will analyse the data you collect during your investigation and compile a compact and informative package of findings and recommendations for your organisation. You will also evaluate your consultancy project, critically reflecting on the consultancy process and to what extent your academic skills and your practitioner skills have been enhanced because of undertaking your project.

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For your Research Methods assessment, you choose **one** of the two project types for your proposal based on what you think your intended trimester three 60-credit module project might be at this stage:

You should select your proposal type in discussion with the Module Leader for your 60-credit module and with your allocated supervisor.

The following generic guidance should be followed for all proposals:

a. Clear font (e.g., Arial or Calibri) with accessible size (i.e., font size 11 or 12)

b. All references must be in Harvard citation format, including both in-text referencing and the endpaper reference list.

c. Reference list is left-justified with double spacing between references.

***Type 1. Dissertation Proposal***

The dissertation proposal outlines an academic research project aimed at expanding knowledge and understanding of your chosen topic.

Your proposal should set out a clear and coherent plan for your research project. It clarifies your ideas and helps you organise them and shows us that you have a good knowledge of the existing work in your wider topic area. It enables your supervising tutor to consider your research ideas and give you feedback and guidance on how to proceed with your final project to make sure your research project is viable, and that it will meet the GBS’s [Ethical Approval](https://thehub.bathspa.ac.uk/services/research-and-graduate-affairs/graduate-college/integrity-and-ethics) [Policy.](https://thehub.bathspa.ac.uk/services/research-and-graduate-affairs/graduate-college/integrity-and-ethics)

Your proposal should include:

● Title

○ Proposed title of your research project

● Introduction

○ A brief overview of your research topic ○ What is your research about?

○ Why do you think it is worth studying?

● Research question and objectives

○ Set out your research question (or statement) ○ Set out your objectives (or sub-questions)

● Preliminary literature review

○ An overview of the key relevant literature in your topic area

● Method

○ How do you propose to collect data to address your research question and each of your objectives?

○ What will the setting of your research be, who will be the participants, what tests/scales, interview or observation schedules/questionnaires will be used and what will the procedures be?

○ What are the ethical implications of your research?

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● Timescale and resources

○ What is the timescale of your research?

○ What project management resources will you use to help keep you on track (e.g., Gantt chart, online project management tools like Trello, etc.)?

○ What other resources might you need to complete your project (e.g., access to confidential organisational data, specific software, etc.)?

○ What challenges might you face in terms of access to your organisation, data collection, etc. given Covid-19?

● References

○ Full list of references using the Harvard style of referencing

● Appendices (*optional*)

○ Any supplementary material that supports our understanding of your proposal.

***Type 2. Consultancy Proposal***

The consultancy proposal outlines a professional management consultancy project aimed at addressing a problem or seizing an opportunity raised by your chosen ‘client’.

Your written proposal should set out a clear and coherent plan for your research project. It clarifies your ideas and helps you organise them and shows us that you have a good knowledge of the existing work in your wider topic area. It enables your supervising tutor to consider your research ideas and give you feedback and guidance on how to proceed with your final project to make sure your research project is viable, and that it will meet the University’s [Ethical Approval Policy.](https://thehub.bathspa.ac.uk/services/research-and-graduate-affairs/graduate-college/integrity-and-ethics)

Your proposal should include:

● Title

○ Proposed title of your consultancy project

● Introduction

○ Introduction to the organisation your consultancy project engages with, setting out that you understand the external environment in which your organisation operates, and that you are aware of the external pressures and challenges it may face.

● Identification of the initial problem or opportunity

○ Overview of challenge or opportunity your consultancy project will address

○ Sets out the overall purpose of your investigation; ○

● Consultancy strategy

Initial discussion on the key concepts and key theories that are closely relevant to the consultancy topic.

○ What theories, models and/or frameworks might be used in identifying the problem/opportunity, analysing the key findings, and making recommendations?

○ Initial setting out of client/consultant relationship and consultancy strategy

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● Method

○ What research methods might be used to investigate the problem/opportunity and to collect the data?

○ Are your proposed research methods feasible, manageable and effective to enable data collection to be thorough, reliable and valid?

○ Which stakeholders might you need to engage with for your project (e.g., within the organisation - employees, management, board members, etc.; external to the organisation (e.g., customers, clients, sector bodies, government agencies, etc)?

○ What are the ethical implications of your research?

● Timescale and resources

○ What is the timescale of your project?

○ What project management resources will you use to help keep you on track (e.g., Gantt chart, online project management tools like Trello, etc.)?

○ What other resources might you need to successfully complete your project (e.g., access to confidential organisational data, specific software, etc.)?

○ What challenges might you face for your consultancy project, e.g., Covid-19?

● References

○ Full list of references using Harvard style of referencing.

● Appendices (*optional*)

○ Any supplementary material that supports our understanding of your proposal.

**Submission Instructions:**

Please submit your assessment through the Turnitin portal in the module Assessment folder in Moodle.

You do NOT need to submit a paper copy of your assignment.

**PLEASE NOTE: submission through TURNITIN constitutes your agreement to abide by GBS/Bath Spa University's** [**Academic Misconduct (unfair practice) Policy.**](https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/governance/policies/academic-misconduct/)

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