

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Global Master in Business Administration
2020/2021

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1. Overview

The paper related to your Final Project is possibly the single most important paper you will write while a Global MBA student at Bologna Business School. One of the many formal requirements for the Global MBA degree, the Final Project is meant to serve both as a permanent record of your accomplishments throughout the program. In addition, developing the Final Project enables you to critically reflect on your experiences, and to generate a trace of those experiences that show your skills and expertise to the best possible advantage.

The Final Project Report is an important learning vehicle in the Global MBA Program at Bologna Business School. It consists of 6,000-7,500-word report and offers the opportunity to work on a project that challenges you to analyze and resolve complex business problems using the business skills, frameworks and tools acquired thus far in the program.

The report offers a unique opportunity to:

1. focusing on an issue of real and long-term importance to you and relevant to the concentration you chose;
2. challenging and exploring some of the ideas and concepts you have learnt in the Global MBA;
3. pulling together in an integrated framework your learning in the Global MBA;
4. applying your learning to a specific real-world situation;
5. giving something of value back to the School;

Final Projects might be of three main kinds:

Consulting work: focused quantitative and qualitative analysis of a business problem with emphasis on implementable, measurable results;

Business planning: either completed sections of, or an overview of a complete business plan suitable for investors (with market analyses, product definitions, marketing plan, operational design, and *pro forma* financials and projections);

Research (suitable for publication): focused, professional-quality research about an industry trend, a business strategy, a revenue/trading strategy, or a product's market that is suitable as a case study for a graduate course or for publication (such as those found in academic and professional business journals).

These three project types map into three main activities: a) a project based on a consulting work; b) an entrepreneurial project a student might want to pursue alone or along with external partners c) a research project aimed at extending a candidate's knowledge on topics relevant to the selected concentration.

Most importantly, it is a *general management* report, *not* a specialist report on a highly technical or specific problem. It should be understandable to any senior and junior

manager in your organization and to any non-specialist consultant. Problems that touch on a number of organizational issues, involving different stakeholders at different organizational levels, are particularly appropriate.

The faculty has developed these guidelines to help you meet basic standards of quality as well as the specific requirements of the report. These guidelines offer recommendations on the focus your report should take in order to fulfill the academic requirements and clarify format and style that should be respected.

It is recommended that you carefully read this document before you commence your Final Project report, yet always keep in mind that the ultimate responsibility of the project is yours.

2. Final Project supervisor

The report will be drafted under the supervision of a BBS faculty member.

- You are required to select a member of faculty to direct your project work.
Please note that the supervisor should be a member of the faculty and she/he must have taught at least 12 hours of lessons.
- The faculty supervisor could not be the Director of your Global MBA track.
- The faculty supervisor approves the detailed project proposal and supervise the project.
- You are responsible for making any arrangements with your supervision.
- You should seek out a faculty supervisor (if you opt for a research project) as soon as possible to discuss your plans before submitting your proposal (i.e. project topic).
- It is strongly advisable to agree on a schedule of meetings and dates for submission with your supervisor at the start of the process.
- You should fix a maximum of **three** meetings with your faculty supervisor unless, he or she decides otherwise. Meetings can take place via Microsoft Teams.
- **You** are responsible for the report you submit, **not** your faculty supervisor. Supervisors have an obligation to advise you, but the project is yours, and it is your responsibility to make effective use of the advice that you are given and ensure that you have sufficient time to integrate any feedback prior to the submission deadline.

In brief, your supervisor has typically the following roles:

- Reviewing the proposed project brief and formally approving the project;
- Helping to define the objectives of the project;
- Providing feedback on how you intend to structure your project (if you opt for the research project);
- Suggesting relevant academic frameworks, literature and sources to collect the data (if you opt for the research project);
- Giving feedback and guidance on the content/results of the project;
- Reviewing your draft project report or its outline prior to submission;
- Your supervisor can be very busy, so you should prepare for meetings to keep them focused. This may include sending brief papers in advance or a list of questions.

3. Final Project Report structure

A typical Final Project report consists of the following sections all of which are described in detail below: title page; abstract; table of contents; list of tables/figures (where appropriate); main text; references; appendices (if necessary).

3.1 Title page

It introduces your reader to your report by listing the following information: Final Project title; supervisor's name and affiliation; date of report submission; your name, student ID number, email address, Global MBA track, the university name; and the "partial fulfillment" phrase. (in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Global Master in Business Administration, Bologna Business School).

3.2 Abstract

Describes the main goals of your project (consulting, entrepreneurial, research), outlines the key questions/issues you aimed to address through your work and, finally it documents the primary findings/improvements that your work generated. The abstract is limited to 400 words in length. It should be 1.0 line-spaced, and should respect margin requirements (see below).

3.3 Acknowledgments (if any)

If you wish, you may include a page with a brief note of dedication or acknowledgment of help received from particular individuals.

3.4 Table of content/List of tables

The report should have a table of contents for the benefit of the reader. If figures or tables are present a separate “List of Figures” or “List of Tables” should be included after the Table of Contents.

3.5 Main text

This is the core of your final report, it is commonly made up of the following main divisions: Introduction, Project Objectives, Analysis: Methods, Findings and/or Solutions and Conclusions.

You should make sure your report addresses a question of significance to the business and frames the question in a way that analysis, proposition and testing are needed to find a solution. You should also make explicit reference to frameworks and/or theories you learned during your Global MBA. The report should demonstrate the links between knowledge and logical deductive processes, their application to the client's problems (or the research problem), and the data available or obtained about those problems. In the report you should also reach a solution to the problems posed, provide conclusions from the analysis and make clearly implementable propositions. The conclusions should draw on appropriate theory and are convincing both to the client and to the faculty reader as a well thought out report. Please note that the methods section offers a complete analysis of the methodological approaches and procedures followed in the project. All assumptions made, hypotheses tested, computational techniques and facilities employed, and criteria used to evaluate alternatives (if appropriate) are discussed in this section. Primary data and supporting sources do not go in the results section but in appendix, properly labeled and referenced.

3.5.1 References

References have to include links to any information that is coming from external sources. This includes data or any other material on which your analysis is based. You should therefore list all those books and journals, and if necessary, web pages, to which you specifically refer in your report. The references should follow a well-established and consistent style.

3.5.2 Appendix

The appendix offers back-up information that enriches, but is not essential to, the development of your arguments, or any additional information that is required in order to justify your statements and which are too lengthy to incorporate in the main body without hampering the line of thought developed there.

4. Evaluation criteria

Two members of faculty will mark each Report, one of them will be your concentration Director, but neither of them will be your report supervisor (in case you opt for the research project).

The final assessment of your report will be based on the following criteria (with a maximum score of 100%):

- **Problem definition (15%)**
The report should address a relevant business problem that you have been exposed during the internship (consulting), or that seats at the heart of your entrepreneurial project (business plan); or that you intend to investigate (research project).
- **Use of academic frameworks (20%)**
Your analysis should be grounded on the material/theory/frameworks you learned during the Global MBA.
- **Linking knowledge to practice (30%)**
The report should document your ability to investigate a business problem basing on general frameworks and empirical evidence.
- **Solving the problem (20%)**
The report should find a solution to the problems posed, provides conclusions from the analysis and makes clearly implementable propositions. The conclusions should draw on appropriate theory and be convincing both to the internship firm (if applicable) and to the faculty readers.
- **Presentation (15%)**
The report is well presented and structured to suit both the client as reader and the academic assessor. Appropriate parts of the report should be contained in appendices.

According to the Italian grading system, the passing grade of your Final Project will be from 18 to 30. The Final Project is worth 20 CFU/ECTS. Please note that the final grade of the Global MBA will be calculated based on your grade for each course (Final Project included) as well as the amount of credits that each course is worth.

5. Format and style

5.1 Spacing

The Internship report must be double-spaced or 1.5-spaced. Single spacing may be used only in the Table of Contents, footnotes and endnotes, charts, graphs, tables, quotations, appendices, and reference list.

5.2 Font

A single font must be used throughout the thesis or report, the only exceptions being in tables, graphs, and appendices. Use regular, unadorned fonts (e.g., New Times Roman or

Arial), 11-12-point size for text. Headings may be bolded and no more than 2 points larger than the rest of the text.

5.3 Margins

All reports must have consistent margins of at least 1.25 inches at the top, bottom, left, and right edges of the page. Page numbers must be placed at least one inch from the bottom of the page. Margins which are larger than those required are acceptable, but smaller margins are not.

5.4 Length

The report should be of 6,000 – 7,500 words (exclusive of appendices).

6. Timeline and Deadlines

First Step, by the end of October 2020

Student should contact a supervisor and present the project to her/him.
The student and the supervisor have to agree on the project.

Second Step, by the end of October 2020

Student should send an email to the Director of her/his concentration, containing the following information:

1. Topic of the Project;
2. Name of the Supervisor.

The email should have mbateam@bbs.unibo.it and the email of the supervisor in cc.

Third Step

Deadline for the submission of the Final report: **31st January, 2021**

A copy of the final project should be sent to 1) MBA Team; 2) MBA director and MBA track director; 3) supervisor.

Fourth Step, by 2 days before the final discussion

Prepare a Power Point presentation of maximum 7 slides that sums up the contents of your Project. Student will use this presentation during the final discussion of the project. The presentation should be sent to mbateam@bbs.unibo.it at least 2 days before the discussion.

Fifth Step, February/March 2021

Final Project discussion. The Final Project will be discussed in front of a Commission.

The date of the final discussion will be notified by the MBA Team by the end of January 2021.