

## **Research Projects Requirements**

### **Types of Research Projects**

All students need to conduct research under the direction of a faculty advisor and prepare an extended written report that follows formal standards of research. All research projects must be based on real data, be accurate and clear and include completely all sources of quotations, citations and the use of other materials. There are three types of Research Projects: Master Thesis, Independent Final Report and Internship-based Case Study. These research project types epitomize distinct research purposes, use different methods and must satisfy formal requirements. The alternative research projects offer the opportunity for students to pursue a variety of research topics and methods of inquiry. They allow students to conduct academic research as well as to respond to recent developments in corporate or market behavior and the international economy without narrow formal restrictions. All research projects must abide to principles and standards of research at universities. The three research project types differ in their degree of abstraction, generalization and practical applicability.

#### Master Thesis

A master's thesis is an original scholarly research project that is narrowly focused on an abstract topic or theoretical argument linked to a real world problem in business and addressing a gap in understanding of a business situation.

Thesis students will respond to a debate in the management or economic literature and will bring new evidence or arguments to bear upon the topic. The thesis topic is a scholarly issue anchored in or linked to an academic strand of literature and originating from the discussion in the seminar with the advisor. The student must show familiarity with previous work in the field. The thesis typically conceptualizes the research issue, offers a higher degree of abstraction by presenting a model or theoretical argument that is or can be generalized from the particular research object or location. It does not need to address a practical business problem but is applied to a for-profit or non-profit business context or governmental regulation of a business or industry. The written thesis follows the traditional structure of academic inquiry, comprising various chapters in which a research gap in literature identified, clear and comparatively narrow research objectives are set, a review of previous literature is provided, a scholarly methodology applied, empirical results are presented and critically discussed and consequences for business and governments are derived.

A master thesis is especially but not exclusively recommended for students who are interested in pursuing further research, for instance in a doctoral program or as a researcher in a public agency. As a rule of thumb, a master's thesis should be publishable or form the empirical basis for an article in a scientific journal.

## Independent Final Report

The independent report is a scholarly research project in which a novel or broad subject is explored in a rather descriptive approach. An independent report can be primarily a bibliographic essay, an exhaustive survey of literature on a broad topic and a descriptive assessment of primary or secondary data.

It offers an opportunity to pursue a more practical research objective that lacks a theoretical foundation or generalizable conceptualization and instead is more location-specific, for or instance industry- or country-specific than a thesis. The topic must be timely and of high current relevance for an industry or policy maker. Compared to the thesis it is more exploratory or evaluative than causal and confirmatory. The independent report allows for a more flexible structure and inquiry. It might connect ideas and fields in a novel way and consist of descriptive primary or secondary data. One strength of an independent report is that it allows for a broader or more detailed assessment of previous research including grey and non-scholarly literature or secondary data. It may predominantly consist of a critical assessment of literature or a meta study that identifies and appraises previous research and qualitative and quantitative evidence about a novel research question. An independent report should eventually come up with practical recommendations but also show a passway to the identification of a model or theoretical applicability of the topic.

## Internship-based Case

Students are able to choose an internship as the basis for their final project. The internship-based case follows an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context. That is, the internship-based case project must be academic and related to concepts students have worked with in the courses but the discussion of the project results will be drawn primarily on the company-specific insights and practical learning experiences from the internship. The difference to the above thesis and report option is the degree of specificity of the research; the internship-based case is basically an application of concepts or theory in real life at a particular company. It follows an in-depth approach and can incorporate different issues in a company in order to demonstrate the complexity and interrelatedness of a subject. The internship report must be written as a case study of the company in which the internship has been conducted. The report does not need to follow the formal structure of a thesis but need to relate each part into an organized account. The account can be primarily illustrative in its content and does not need to be generalizable for other contexts. It may include statistics about the industry, the market and competitors of the company and it may present quantitative primary data such as surveys. Students are required to critically assess the issues raised in the company and provide practical recommendations.

**Student  
Name**

**Examiner's Name\***

\*In case you do not wish your name to be disclosed to the student, please leave this section blank.

**Evaluation criteria for GSM Master's Thesis**

Please highlight in any color of your choice the appropriate evaluation for each criterion.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>A+ 90% &gt;</b>	<b>A 80% - 89%</b>	<b>B 70% - 79%</b>	<b>C 60% - 69%</b>	<b>F – 59% &lt;</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	Clearly and eloquently identifies a theoretical central argument.	Identifies theoretical central argument reasonably clearly.	Identifies theoretical central argument but not very clearly.	Central theoretical argument can be discerned with difficulties	Does not identify central argument
<b>Originality</b>	Creative, intellectual sophisticated, and leaps into new territory.	Expands rather than alters the thinking of a field	Re-uses someone else's idea but in a new context.	Applies someone else's idea in a usual way	Applies someone else's ideas, without any adaptation at all.
<b>Research questions/ hypotheses</b>	Defines in an original way and identifies new hypotheses	Defines clearly and identifies key hypotheses.	Definition is given but needs refinement of key hypotheses.	Definition is incomplete and minimally worked out	Research questions and hypotheses not clear at all
<b>Conceptualization/ Model</b>	Presents advanced theoretical conceptualization of the research	Applies an existing model to a new context	Re-uses the usual model for the research question	Model is minimally developed	Does not conceptualize the research issue or its context.
<b>Survey of relevant literature</b>	Excellent deep grasp of literature on the research question	Shows a good grasp of relevant literature and of their parts.	Shows average grasp of relevant literature and of their parts.	Shows poor grasp of relevant literature and of their parts.	Shows extremely poor grasp of relevant literature and of their parts.
<b>Data</b>	Presents original and accurate data or applies data in an innovative way.	Collected or uses data with effort; accurate but with exceptions	Reasonable data but not original and not always accurate	The data is cursory or weakly related to the research questions	Insufficient or highly inaccurate data
<b>Data Analysis and results</b>	Extremely well analyzed; quantitative data (if any) is statistically confirmed.	Reasonably well developed and persuasive and confirmed	Partially but not fully analyzed or tested	Analysis is minimal but sufficient	Analysis is insufficient or misleading
<b>Provision of evidence and source materials</b>	Facts and source materials are rich, detailed and appropriate.	Facts and source materials are appropriate but not very rich or detailed.	Facts and source materials is missing in many parts	Facts and source materials is missing in most parts.	There are no facts and source materials supporting the arguments
<b>Sentence construction and grammar</b>	All sentences are complete and grammatical.	All sentences are reasonably complete and grammatical.	Most sentences are complete and grammatical.	Large majority of sentences are ungrammatical and incomplete.	Almost all sentences are incomplete and ungrammatical
<b>Citation of Sources</b>	Sources of information and	Sources of information and	Sources of information and	Citations of sources of	Sources of information and

	ideas are consistently and always correctly cited.	ideas are correctly cited with some exceptions	ideas are cited not consistently and correctly.	information and ideas are missing in several places.	ideas are not properly cited beyond reasonable omissions.
<b>Overall structure</b>	Overall structure as a whole is logical and quickly apparent.	Overall structure is reasonably logical and apparent.	Overall structure is logical but not always apparent	Overall structure and logic can only be discerned with effort	Overall structure is neither logical nor apparent
<b>Conclusion</b>	Draws original conclusions, points out shortcomings, identifies areas where further research is needed	Concludes main points reasonably well, identifies shortcomings and areas where further research is needed.	Summarizes but by and large repeats what has been presented in the text.	The conclusion is discernible only with an effort.	There is no conclusion.
Appropriate length and format for the subject matter (10,000 to 15,000 words)	Meets the requirements of minimal length and format				Does not meet the requirements of minimal length and format

**Student  
Name**

**Examiner's Name\***

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**Evaluation criteria for GSM Independent Final Report**

Please highlight in any colour of your choice the appropriate evaluation for each criterion.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>A+ 90% &gt;</b>	<b>A 80% - 89%</b>	<b>B 70% - 79%</b>	<b>C 60% - 69%</b>	<b>F – 59% &lt;</b>
<b>Introduction of central issue</b>	Clearly and eloquently identifies a central argument, problem or issue.	Identifies central argument reasonably clearly.	Identifies central argument but not very clearly.	Central argument can be discerned with difficulties.	Does not identify central argument, problem or issue.
<b>Originality</b>	Creative and challenges conventional knowledge.	Explores an under-researched problem or issue.	Applies someone else's idea but in a new way.	Applies someone else's idea in a usual way.	Applies someone else's ideas, without any adaptation at all.
<b>Awareness of context of Problem or Issue</b>	Defines a problem or issue and its context in an original way.	Defines clearly and identifies key components of a problem or issue and its context.	Definition is given but needs refinement of key components.	Definition is incomplete and minimally worked out.	Problem or issue or context not clear at all.
<b>Review of literature</b>	Skillfully identifies and comprehends literature and sources closely related to the problem or issue.	Shows a good grasp of literature and sources and of their parts related to the problem or issue.	Makes an effort to identify sources and of their parts related to the problem or issue.	Shows poor grasp of sources and of their parts related to the problem or issue.	Though there is literature related to the problem or issue but it is completely ignored.
<b>Data Basis</b>	Presents accurate and highly relevant data or applies data in an innovative way.	Presents relevant data with some effort.	Presents data that is not always accurate or relevant.	Marginal data is weakly related to the problem or issue.	The data is inaccurate or completely unrelated.
<b>Analysis of data</b>	The problem or issue requires the presented data to be analyzed and this is extremely well conducted.	Reasonably well developed and persuasive.	Partially but not fully analyzed.	Analysis is minimally sufficient.	The problem or issue requires the presented data to be analyzed to be of any value but is not.
<b>Provision of source materials</b>	Facts and source materials are rich, detailed, appropriate and verifiable.	Facts and source materials are appropriate but not very rich or detailed.	Facts and source materials is missing in many parts.	Facts and source materials is missing in most parts.	There are no facts and source materials supporting the arguments or they are false.
<b>Sentence construction and grammar</b>	Sentences are complete and grammatical.	Sentences are reasonably complete and grammatical.	Large majority of sentences are complete and grammatical.	Many sentences are ungrammatical and incomplete.	To a large degree sentences are incomplete and ungrammatical.

<b>Referencing of Sources</b>	Sources of information and ideas are consistently and always correctly referenced.	Sources of information and ideas are correctly referenced with some exceptions.	Sources of information and ideas are referenced not consistently and correctly.	Referenced sources of information and ideas are missing in several places.	Sources of information and ideas are not properly referenced beyond reasonable omissions.
<b>Overall structure follows that of a Report<sup>1</sup></b>	Overall structure is very logical and quickly apparent.	Overall structure is reasonably logical and apparent.	Overall structure is logical but not always apparent	Overall structure and logic can only be discerned with effort.	Overall structure is neither logical nor apparent.
<b>Conclusion and recommendations</b>	Draws conclusions, points out shortcomings, and sets out original recommendations.	Concludes main points reasonably well, identifies shortcomings and gives some recommendations.	Summarizes but by and large repeats what has been presented in the text.	The conclusion is discernible only with an effort.	There is no conclusion or recommendations.

1. Report Model format

- a. Title Section
- b. Summary
- c. Introduction
- d. Body
- e. Conclusion
- f. Recommendations
- g. Appendices
- h. References and Sources

**Student  
Name**

**Examiner's Name\***

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**Evaluation criteria for GSM Internship-based Case Study**

Please highlight in any colour of your choice the appropriate evaluation for each criterion.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>A+ 90% &gt;</b>	<b>A 80% - 89%</b>	<b>B 70% - 79%</b>	<b>C 60% - 69%</b>	<b>F – 59% &lt;</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	Clearly and eloquently identifies a central theme or case context.	Identifies central theme or context reasonably clearly.	Identifies central theme or context but not very clearly.	Central theme can be discerned with difficulties.	Does not identify central theme.
<b>Originality</b>	Creative, intellectually adventurous.	Expands rather than alters common knowledge.	Applies someone else's idea but in a new way.	Applies someone else's idea in a usual way.	Applies someone else's ideas, without any adaptation at all.
<b>Case questions</b>	Defines in an original way and identifies key components.	Defines clearly and identifies key components.	Definition is given but needs refinement of key components.	Definition is incomplete and minimally worked out.	Case questions not clear at all.
<b>Awareness of the Problem facing the company</b>	Problem and its context are clearly defined and are important to the company.	Defines the problem and its context and identifies key components for the company.	Definition of the problem and its context is strong but needs refinement of key components.	Definition of the problem and its context is incomplete, and specification of key components is minimal.	Does not define the problem or the company context or it is not relevant at all.
<b>Survey of Case-relevant Information and Data</b>	Connects case uniquely to literature and supported with highly relevant data.	Shows a good sense of information or data and literature relevant to the case.	Few but relevant sources or data.	Shows poor grasp of information or data to the case.	No connection of case to any relevant sources or data.
<b>Case Relevance</b>	The link between case and sources and the business problem in the case is clear and original.	The link between case and a business problem is clear.	The link between case and a business problem is common place and poorly supported with data.	The link between case and a business problem is cursory or weak.	There is no link between case and a business problem.
<b>Case Analysis</b>	Extremely well defined, well developed and persuasive.	Reasonably well defined, well developed and persuasive.	Partial analysis of case problem.	Problem analysis is minimal.	The case problem is not analyzed.
<b>Provision of source materials</b>	Facts and source materials are rich, detailed and appropriate.	Facts and source materials are appropriate but not very rich or detailed.	Facts and source materials is missing in many parts.	Facts and source materials is missing in most parts.	There are no facts and source materials supporting the thesis.

<b>Sentence construction and grammar</b>	Sentences are complete and grammatical.	Sentences are reasonably complete and grammatical.	Large majority of sentences are complete and grammatical.	Many sentences are ungrammatical and incomplete.	To a large degree sentences are incomplete and ungrammatical.
<b>Referencing of Sources</b>	Sources of information and ideas are consistently available and referenced	Sources of information and ideas are available and referenced	Sources of information and ideas are available but not consistently and correctly referenced.	Sources of information and ideas are missing in several places.	Sources of information and ideas are not correctly cited beyond reasonable omissions.
<b>Overall structure follows the Case Method<sup>1</sup></b>	Overall structure is very logical and quickly apparent, follows the Case Method	Overall structure is reasonably logical and apparent, follows the Case Method	Overall follows the Case Method structure is logical but not always apparent	Overall structure and logic can only be discerned with effort	Overall structure is neither logical nor apparent
<b>Predicted Outcome or Recommendations</b>	Draws original recommendations, points out shortcomings, identifies areas where further analysis is needed.	Justifies main recommendations reasonably well, identifies shortcomings and areas where further analysis is needed.	Summarizes recommendations but by and large repeats what has been presented in the text.	The recommendations are discernible only with an effort.	There are no recommendations

1. The Case method

- a. Cover Page
- b. Introduction
- c. Current Situation Analysis and pertinent Background including a synopsis of the relevant information from the case analysis
- d. Body • Key Issues/Goals/Problems
- e. Decision Criteria
- f. Assumptions
- g. Data Analysis (analysis in appendix and summary info in body)
- h. Preferred Alternative with rationale
- i. Justification/Predicted Outcome or Recommendations
- j. References section.
- k. Appendices