

Title	MSEC60922 Business Feasibility Study
Credit Rating	15
Level	7 (MEng, MSc)
Semester	2
Course Coordinator(s)	Dr. Martin Henery, Manchester Enterprise Centre
Methods of Delivery	Enquiry Based Learning (EBL)
Lecture Hours	8-10 hrs (dependant on meetings organised)
Seminar Hours	
Private Study Hours	~140
Total Study Hours	150
Pre-requisites	n/a
Co-requisites	n/a
Dependant Courses	n/a
Assessment Methods and Relative Weightings	- Group work (business report 50%, group presentation 10%) - Individual Reflective Report including weekly progress, reports, contribution assessment (40%)
Aims	
<p>The unit aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide students with the opportunity to work on a typical business brief and to identify how they may utilise their subject specialism in conjunction with a range of business and management tools and techniques in order to identify ways in which value may be created for the client and / or one or more of the client's stakeholders. The value added may take the form of a new product, service, process, business model, marketing strategy, etc or any combination of the above. The students should strive to take into consideration the current moral climate and value system of their client, prevailing legal and regulatory frameworks and existing codes of practice maintaining a professional attitude in their dealings with the client, their team and any other third parties. • Create a learning environment in which the student can become comfortable in coping with the uncertainties presented by the many conflicting requirements of a typical brief, to gain experience of working in a team, to learn to accept responsibility for their own actions, to provide a means by which to improve their oral and written presentation and communication skills, and to encourage an enquiring and creative mind that is able to challenge the status quo and to identify and evaluate opportunities for innovation. • Develop the student's ability to deploy appropriate management and business tools and techniques so that they and their team may achieve given objectives within a commercial and economic context taking into consideration associated risks and resource constraints including time, people and finance. • Encourage students to develop the habit and the ability for effective independent learning and to reflect on the process undertaken by both themselves and their team in the completion of the brief in order to identify opportunities for personal development 	
Learning Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise relevant factors that can impact on the ability to successfully meet a given brief be they economic, environmental, legal, personnel, health, safety, or other potential risk factors, e.g. Data Protection Act, EU regulations, H&S, Freedom of Information Act, Functional safety, Environmental legislation, Contract law, Copyright and patent law, Professional and product liability • Establish the commercial and economic context relevant to a given case or 	

project, characterising the wider customer context identifying problems that such contexts might deliver

- Evaluate proposed solutions, recommendations and courses of action against the aims, constraints and value system of a given client as well as considering additional relevant internal and external factors that may provide opportunities or be a source of risk or hazard
- Analyse the results of primary and secondary research in order to more fully understand the environment the organisation is operating in order to identify situations/opportunities relevant to the brief.
- Deploy appropriate management and business tools and techniques so that the student and their team may achieve given objectives within a commercial and economic context taking into consideration associated risks and resource constraints including time, people and finance.
- Employ their subject specialism in conjunction with a range of business and management tools and techniques in order to identify and/or create opportunities to create value for a client and / or relevant stakeholders.
- Demonstrate originality and innovation in the application of knowledge and techniques from the student's own subject specialism to solve problems (of a business nature) in a way that generates value for a client (a range of) [one or more] stakeholders
- Demonstrate a professional attitude in their dealings with the client, their team and any other third parties.
- Communicate in a professional, confident and credible manner recognising the needs and requirements of your stakeholders, primarily the client and in a way that engenders support for your chosen recommendations
- Demonstrate an ability to cope with the uncertainties presented by the many conflicting requirements of a typical brief
- Demonstrate an enquiring and creative mind that is able to challenge the status quo and to identify and evaluate opportunities for innovation.
- Demonstrate the ability for effective independent learning able to reflect on the process undertaken by both themselves and their team in the completion of the brief with the aim of identifying opportunities for personal development
- Develop problem-solving and decision making competencies through applying sound judgement in assessing different types of information from a range of sources in order to reach a robust position based on reasoned and balanced arguments.
- Work effectively as a team member, effectively accommodating different approaches to working whilst maintaining clear goals & deliverables.

Syllabus

Over a period of 6 weeks the students will work in teams on a brief supplied by a real-life client which may be a charity, SME, social enterprise, university spin-out or large corporate. Within their groups, they will work with the client in order to first explore and clearly articulate the clients requirements, to then generate and evaluate one or more options for their client and to present back to their client a fully worked up business case including an implementation plan outlining the value that will be created for the client, the nature of any associated risks, how they will be addressed and the proposed opportunity will be realised.

Prior to the submission of the business report the student and their team will have the opportunity to present the key elements of that plan to an audience which will include the client as well as the marking panel which will be made up of academics from Manchester University.

There are no formal lectures, tutorials or seminars; students are expected and encouraged to establish their own action plan through which they will meet a set of objectives which to some extent will be self-determined. As part of the initial

presentation the students will be a clear as to the expected deliverables from the unit and how these will be assessed. Beyond these suggested guidelines, it is very much for them to determine a realistic set of objectives, decide what to work on and decide how to work together.

Students will be assessed on both group and individual performance. This won't be limited to assessing the product, i.e. the tangible outputs of this unit such as the business report and panel presentation but also on the process undertaken as they work to establish the business feasibility of their idea. This latter requirement will be evidenced through reflective feedback on weekly presentations as well as a more in-depth individual reflective report. The weekly presentations will also provide ample opportunities for the tutor to provided formative feedback.

The learning strategy underpinning this module is that of enquiry based learning (EBL) which involves students directing their own lines of enquiry, identifying critical information gaps, developing strategies to address those gaps, taking responsibility for analysing and presenting it appropriately. There will be no formal lectures, tutorials or seminars.

Students will undertake a real life open-ended problem which has the potential to be a messy and highly iterative process. Therefore the students will be strongly encouraged to refer back to theory to shape, frame and direct their actions but will be equally encouraged to put that knowledge into practice and test their conclusions and findings in a real-world context. To ensure that this is the case they will be directed to identify and make contact with, industry / business experts, practitioners, potential customers, partners and so on. It is expected that these interactions will lead to a range of issues some of which may be quite complex to deal with. A variety of assessed activities will ensure that many opportunities will be provided for the students to review and reflect on these issues and constantly re-evaluate planned actions and pre-determined objectives.

Group working will be supported through weekly meetings with a tutor as well as access to a range of resources via Blackboard. Each week the team will present an update of the progress achieved so far as well as an action plan for the following week. Each member will be responsible for undertaking a number of tasks and feeding back their findings to the rest of the team. Together, the team will evaluate and assimilate those findings and reflect on whether they are still on course or whether they need to modify planned activities and / or objectives.

In week team the students will present back their findings to their client and to the marking panel made up of academics. This activity will be assessed but will allow the opportunity for formative feedback which can be highlight any remaining issues that need to be resolved prior to submitting the group business report in week 12.

Through an individual reflective report, each student will have an opportunity to reflect on the panel feedback to their business presentation and plan as well being able to review and discuss the work carried out over the course of this unit as well as on individual and team performance.

Blackboard content for this unit includes: unit spec, assessment, resources, group-work.

Reading List

There are no formal recommendations aside from the guidance notes and other material which will be available on the Blackboard site for this unit. Students will be expected to use on-line resources, the library facilities (general and business

sections) as well identifying and utilising their own primary sources.

Eddie Davis Library –

<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/academicsupport/subjects/business/marketsandsectors/>

<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/academicsupport/subjects/business/helpingyou/delicious/>

A-Z guide to Business & Management databases.

<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/academicsupport/subjects/business/helpingyou/howtoresearchguides/>