

Module guide 2019 - 2020

AMSIB

Amsterdam School of
International Business

Business Consultancy Challenge

(BCC)

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Module overview

1.1 Content

The aim of the business consultancy challenge is to provide you with a thorough understanding of business consultancy by connecting you with an external organisation (corporate, NGO or SME) to work on a real “live”, growth oriented, business challenge. The experiential learning method, supported with theoretical foundation and intensive supervision, enables you to develop the skills and experience needed to perform a challenging business consultancy task.

The associated specific aim(s), objectives and professional outcomes will be unique to each firm/challenge. The learning outcomes can vary in terms of knowledge and content, but are similar for all students where it comes to dealing with professional problems, finding / creating opportunities, developing entrepreneurial and 21st century professional competencies (appendix 1), and specific competencies related to business consultancy.

As a team you will be provided information from the external organisation regarding your business model, the characteristics and needs of the organisation, and the challenge, to successfully plan and implement the live consultancy project. Your team will first produce a project management plan, clearly stating the aims and objectives, whilst identifying the suitable methodologies and timescales. During the 12 weeks of the business consultancy challenge you will work intensively on researching the problem, identifying opportunities and, in close collaboration with the company, your teammates and relevant stakeholders, work out a consultancy recommendation that solves the problem or challenge of the project, based on thorough research.

The final project will have to be agreed with the academic supervisor and the external organisation. Working closely your team will structure and shape the project using the appropriate tools and techniques to solve the challenges of the real-live project. Upon completion of the project, your team will present the implementation plan with recommendations to the external organisation.

During this module you will work on developing the following management consultancy skills:

- Change management skills
- Technical and business knowledge
- Business understanding
- Ownership, management and delivery of solutions
- Project delivery and risk management
- Interpersonal skills
- The ability to transfer skills to others
- Creative and analytical thinking
- Adhere to a code of professional conduct and ethical qualifications

Behaviors, skills and knowledge

An effective management consultant requires a balance of the following:

Market capability and knowledge: This is the application of fact-based knowledge. It brings together the combination of technical skills, business understanding, sector insight and external awareness

Consulting competence: These are the core skills, tools and techniques which are essential in delivering consultancy services

Professional behaviors: These are the entry-level professional behaviors and attitudes which act as enablers in achieving market capability and consulting competence

1.2 Learning goals

#	You can:
1	<p>Market capability and knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply fact-based knowledge, bringing together the combination of business understanding, sector insight and external awareness in problem analysis and business recommendation.
2	<p>Consulting competence:</p> <p>These are the core skills, tools and techniques which are essential in delivering consultancy services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate client focus Build and sustain client relationship Apply analytical and pro-active thinking to client agenda to ensure robust, appropriate solutions.
3	<p>Professional behaviors:</p> <p>These are the entry-level professional behaviors and attitudes which act as enablers in achieving market capability and consulting competence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate with professionalism and integrity in all aspects of your role including conduct, appearance, adherence to the Code of Conduct and working in the best interests of the client. Assume responsibility for your own actions, understanding the complexity of any given operating environment and the impact of a selected course of action on others Interact and emphasize effectively with others to achieve desired outcomes Works always with resilience, drive and commitment to achieving results
4	<p>Prove track record of self-development and personal growth</p> <p>Demonstrated behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show awareness of skills and knowledge gaps Seize opportunities to further own development Recognise impact of behaviour on others Seek and act on constructive feedback from clients, peers and team members Set and monitor personal learning objectives

1.3 Coherence with other modules

This course can be followed as part of the Minor Business Consultancy Clinic or as a separate elective.

1.4 Study materials & recommended further reading

Required study materials:

A digital reader is provided to students, with articles as a theoretical basis for the required business consultancy and entrepreneurial skills in conducting business research, ideation towards possible solutions, business modelling and business development.

Besides the reader, students receive separate instructions and materials, depending on the type of business challenge they work on.

Recommended further reading:

- Adamson, A. A Student's Guide for Assignments, Projects and Research, Arthur Adamson, (latest edition).
- Bell, J. Doing Your Research Project, Oxford University Press (2005, 4th edition).
- Biggs, D (2010) Management Consulting – A guide for students. South Western Cengage Learning
- Gundry, L.K. & Buchko, A.A. (latest edition) Field casework: Methods for consulting to small and start-up businesses. London: Sage
- Project specific reading will be individually negotiated with the supervising tutor
- Newton, R. (2010) The management consultant: mastering the art of consultancy. Harlow: Pearson Education
- Portny, S et al. (2008) Project Management – Planning, scheduling and controlling projects. Wiley
- Saunders, M, Lewis P, and Thornhill, A., Research Methods for Business Students, Financial Times / Prentice Hall (2012, 6th edition).

Questions and who to contact

Questions about the module's content and study materials can be addressed to your lecturer(s) during the lessons. The consultation hours of the individual lecturers as well as your office location can be found in the lecturers' profile on BRIGHTSPACE or an appointment can be made per e-mail:

- a.n.timmermans@hva.nl

1.5 Set-up of this Module and Teaching Methodology

The approach to research rich learning in the module is primarily centred on the emphasis of research process and problem solving with a curriculum that is focussed on the problem/challenge of the client organisation. This business problem/challenge investigation and solving emphasises significant enquiry-based learning. As such the curriculum will be flexible and customisable to meet the demands of the various business challenges and student learning objectives in them.

This will involve active participation in your personal learning, requiring you to use the knowledge gained during your degree and the current information and data gathering to provide support to your business organisation/client on an ongoing basis, interact and make responsible business decisions. The enquiry-

based nature of this research and business development module is further reinforced through the summative assessment where you undertake a written report and theoretical research demonstrating appropriate research methods, data analysis and creation of appropriate solutions to the problem.

The supporting lectures and seminars provide the knowledge base for the module, therefore a research-orientated approach will be adopted. Whereby learning, as appropriate will involve students gaining a grounding in consultancy and research, further supported by staff using contemporary work to contextualise the lecture content within the module.

Each week will start with a topic that matches the phase of the business consultancy process, leading to the generation of research questions, business and personal enquiries to be specified and worked out during the week. Critical research and development enquiries are to be formulated at both an individual level and team/project level, linked to the Learning Goals specified in paragraph 1.2.

Research and development enquiries will be discussed with the coaches on Mondays. On Wednesdays each team will receive a full hour of coaching from an experienced business consultant / teacher-coach (content and process) on progress made with research and development enquiries.

On Thursday afternoon teams present their findings, most important lessons learned and difficulties in a peer-coaching session with the entire class and all coaches.

Teams need to spend at least 28 hrs per week on research and development of the business challenge, of which only 5 hours are to be in scheduled class-time. The remaining workload is to be scheduled for team work, conducting the research and development needed to answer the weekly enquiries. This demands a high level of independence from the students.

Coaching sessions must be accompanied by all team members and evidence of progress on weekly research and development enquiries must be brought to be shared with the coach.

The peer-coaching sessions must be accompanied by all team members, again bringing evidence of results and progress made.

1.6 Lesson Planning

Weeks 1 – Immersion week

Introduction, Team Building, Pressure Cooker, Business Consultancy Competency Framework

Weeks 2 -11 – Business Consultancy Research & Development

- The importance & Significance of the Business Problem / Challenge
- Project Management
- Secondary Research Methods & Techniques
- Primary Research Methods & Techniques
- Business Development
- Organisation, Implementation and Resources
- Consultancy Report Writing

Week 12 Client Presentations

Submission of executive summary to clients, presentation prep on Monday and final presentation to clients to be scheduled with the individual client.

2.2 Assignments & Assessments

Programme:	Business Consultancy Challenge
Module Code:	6119BCC/AT5001
Module Title:	Business Consultancy Project
Distributed on:	Teaching Week 1 (via the e-learning portal / Brightspace)
Submission Time and Date:	Date to be finalised by the AMSIB office
Word Limit:	N/A: See below instructions for further details
Weighting	The assessment has two tasks which are weighted as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Task 1: Presentation (20%)- Task 2: Group Consultancy Report (40%)- Task 3: Individual critical reflective learning statements (40%)
Submission of Assessment	Submitted electronically via the e-Learning Portal: Brightspace

Instructions on Assessment:

For this assessment you are required to use the case study provided by your consultancy project to which you are allocated in week 1. Case studies are registered on the e-learning portal. This forms the bases for all elements of assessment.

You will receive in-class support with further assessment guidance will be made available in class.

ASSIGNMENT 1: PRESENTATION

Completed: Group
Date: W/C ...tbd... [Slides **MUST** be submitted by ...tbd .. 12noon]
Duration: 20 minutes + Q&A
Marks: 20%

You are required to prepare and deliver (using appropriate visual aids) a group presentation which covers the key elements of your report, you may wish to include:

- An overview of the business, problem and context which are significant.
- A situational analysis review, using insight gained from desk research.
- A review of the customer journey mapping and significant touchpoints.
- The growth/expansion plan for the client in line with their project and problem.
- The implementation plan and challenges the organisation faces with resources and ways to overcome these challenges.
- The management implications of your findings.

Note: Given each problem is focused on the client, it's important to consider elements of the presentation, which are significant to meet the client's brief and beyond, as feedback from clients will be included. You will be required to submit your presentation materials by ... tbd.... 12 noon.

ASSIGNMENT 2: GROUP CONSULTANCY REPORT

Completed: Group
Date:tbd... Dec 2019, 23:55 BST
Word Count: 3,000 word +/- 10%
Marks: 40%

The report may cover the following areas:

- An overview of the business, problem and context which are significant.
- A situational analysis review, using insight gained from secondary research.
- A review of the customer journey mapping and significant touchpoints.
- The growth/expansion plan for the client in line with their project and problem
- The implementation plan and challenges the organisation faces with resources and ways to overcome these challenges.
- The management implications of your findings.
- Recommendation of the strategic plan for the organisations.

This task brings together the main themes of the module and requires you to develop a consultancy report as a group (3-6 within each group).

Note: Given each problem is focused on the client, it's important to consider elements of the presentation, which are significant to meet the client's brief, as feedback from clients will be taken into account.

ASSIGNMENT 3: INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

Completed: Individual
Date: DEC 2019 23:55 BST
Word Count: 3 Completed STARRT forms
(1000 words each + 250 words feedback from each team member)
Marks: 40%

The individual self-reflection is your ability to review your personal development of the management consultancy competences applied in the module. As such the individual reflection is your opportunity to demonstrate key skills and experiences that you have demonstrated and expanded over the course of the module. You may choose to use relevant criteria and theory to support your reflection, using the STARRT forms which will be made available in Brightspace.

You reflect on how you have developed each of the following competency categories during this module.:

- 1) Market capability and knowledge:** Apply fact-based knowledge, bringing together the combination of business understanding, sector insight and external awareness in problem analysis and business recommendation.
- 2) Consulting competence:** These are the core skills, tools and techniques which are essential in delivering consultancy services, including:
 - Demonstrating client focus
 - Building and sustaining client relationship
 - Application of analytical and pro-active thinking to client agenda to ensure robust, appropriate solutions.
- 3) Professional behaviors:** These are the entry-level professional behaviors and attitudes which act as enablers in achieving market capability and consulting competence, including:
 - Operate with professionalism and integrity in all aspects of your role including conduct, appearance, adherence to the Code of Conduct and working in the best interests of the client.
 - Assume responsibility for your own actions, understanding the complexity of any given operating environment and the impact of a selected course of action on others
 - Interact and emphasize effectively with others to achieve desired outcomes
 - Works always with resilience, drive and commitment to achieving results

Each start must reveal;

- Your awareness of skills and knowledge gaps
- How you seized opportunities to further own development
- That and how you recognized the impact of your behaviour on others (so must include a feedback section from your team mates)
- How you sought and acted on constructive feedback from clients, peers and team members

Deliverance

- Hand in assignments before the deadline by means of a digital (soft) copy, submitted on BRIGHTSPACE.
- If the lecturer requests, also by handing in a hardcopy (printed).

1.9 Assessment

The assessment methods used in this module are summarized below. The table also shows how the grade for this module will be calculated.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment will take place through group work, assignment discussion, presentations, case study activity and theory/practice related discussions in the context of a teaching and learning plan. A significant proportion of workshop contact time is specifically dedicated to providing regular formative feedback on the assessment.

Summative Assessment

Assignment hands in dates are determined by the Portfolio Programme Office and are communicated to students via notices and on blackboard.

The module utilises a live case study provided by the external companies. Students will work in groups on the brief provided to develop a professionally report, presentation and individual reflection , which will encompass many of the principles covered in the module. A peer evaluation process will be included in the assessment.

Assignments graded are:

Portfolio (including the progressive research findings, professional report, presentation) 60%
Personal development portfolio & reflection 40%

1.10 Resit

If the average grade obtained for this module is below 5.5 students are allowed a resit.

Resits are only allowed for:

- Pop quizzes (including all theoretical articles)
- Crosscultural Research Assignment

Situation:	The resit will consist of the following test(s):	Your average module grade after resit will be calculated using the following weights:	The resit(s) will be scheduled in:
1 <input type="checkbox"/> Average grade for the whole module \geq 5.5	No resit needed	N.A.	N.A.
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Average grade for the whole module $<$ 5.5	POP Quizzes Research Assignment	N/A N/A	Wk 13

1.11 General rules and regulations

In order to successfully complete the course students must

- Attend at least 80% of all lectures
- Participate actively
- Complete and hand in assignments and preparations before the deadline
- Pass all assignments