

Procedures for the Examination of Research Projects in the Graduate School of Management (GSM) under the AY2023 Curriculum (Revised January 2024)

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1. Research Projects

1-1 What is a Research Project

The Research Project is the written original outcome of the research conducted while studying in the Master's program of the Graduate School of Management (hereinafter referred to as GSM) and the submission and passing the screening and examination of which is required for the acquisition of a Master's degree from GSM.

Research Project options include Master's Thesis, Independent Final Report, Internship-based Case Study, and Business Plan towards which completion every student works with a GSM faculty member assigned as their supervisor.

1-2 Language and Length of Research Projects

Research Projects should be presented in English. In principle, the length of a Research Project, excluding the list of references and any appendices, should be approximately as follows:

- Master's Thesis – 8,000 to 15,000 words;
- Independent Final Report – 8,000 to 15,000 words;
- Internship-based Case Study – 8,000 to 15,000 words;
- Business Plan – 8,000 to 15,000 words.

1-3 Format of Research Projects

In general, Research Projects must follow the format below:

1-3-1 Master's Thesis, Independent Final Report, and Internship-based Case Study

1. Title Page, 2. Certification Page (indicating the contents of the Research Project as original and/or properly referenced) , 3. Acknowledgments (for any support and advice received), 4. Executive Summary, 5. Table of Contents (in sufficient detail), 6. List of Tables/Figures/Appendices, 7. Main Text, 8. Conclusions, 9. List of References, 9. Appendices (supporting materials in addition to the text, if any)

1-3-2 Business Plan

1. Title Page, 2. Certification Page (indicating the contents of the Research Project as original and/or properly referenced) , 3. Acknowledgments (for any support and advice received), 4. Executive Summary, 5. Table of Contents (in sufficient detail), 6. List of Tables/Figures/Appendices, 7. Business/Startup Description, 8. Industry/Market Analysis, 9. Management Team, 10. Marketing Plan 11. Operation Plan, 12. Financial Plan and Risk Mitigation, 13. Business Model (e.g., Business Model Canvas), 14. List of References, 15. Appendices (supporting materials in addition to the text, if any)

1-4 Submission of Research Projects

Students must submit one soft copy of their Research Project to the Academic Office as stipulated in Appendix 1.

1-5 Application for extending the submission deadline of Research Projects

Students who are experiencing exceptional difficulties due to illness or other personal circumstances and need more time to complete their Research Project may apply to extend their submission. Students need to submit an application form and evidence in support of their application by the deadline of the “Research Project Submission” as stipulated in Appendix 1.

In case that the extension is approved, students’ Research Project will be evaluated only once and students must submit their Research Project by the deadline for “Resubmission after Revision” as stipulated in Appendix 1.

2. Submission Requirements for Research Projects

Before submitting the Research Project, all students should give a presentation at the Work in Progress Seminars and submit a summary of their Research Project within the designated periods and deadlines.

2-1 Work in Progress Seminars

All students registered for MBA Research Seminar II should present their research proposal and report on the current progress of their research to GSM faculty members within the field of their research topic on Wednesday of the exam period in the 2nd quarter as part of their seminar class. These presentations are referred to as Work in Progress Seminars. Work in Progress Seminars are open to all students and faculty members to attend. Additional Work in Progress Seminar may be arranged as deemed necessary by the faculty.

2-2 Submission of a Summary of the Research Project

Students in their final semester must submit a summary of their Research Project to the Academic Office as stipulated in Appendix 1. The summary must indicate the type of Research Project that will be submitted for examination and must be approved by the supervisor.

2-3 Changing the type of Research Projects

Changing the type of Research Projects after the summary has been submitted is strictly prohibited and may result in failure. Under exceptional cases a change may be allowed after research project submission based on the decision and approval of the secondary examiner, Research Projects Committee and the Dean.

3. The Research Projects Committee

3-1 Selection and Term of Appointment

A Research Projects Committee will be established in GSM for the examination of the Research Projects.

The Research Projects Committee is chaired by the Associate Dean of GSM and further consist of two members who are nominated by the Dean and appointed by the GSM Faculty Council. The Dean cannot be a member.

The term of appointment is one (1) semester and members can be reappointed.

3-2 Duties

The duties of the Research Projects Committee are as follows.

a) Ensure that a rigorous screening and examination are conducted;

- b) Review the evaluation assessment and screening standards and put forward their conclusion about the screening results to the GSM Faculty Council;
- c) Review the evaluation assessment and screening/examination standards and put forward their conclusion about the re-screening and examination results to the GSM Faculty Council.
- d) Determine whether there is any grounds for plagiarism or other forms of research misconduct.
- e) Screen and determine whether to approve the application for extending the submission deadline of Research Projects

4. Screening and Examination of Research Projects

4-1 The Screening and Examination Process

The Research Projects Committee shall coordinate the screening and examination process for each Research Project and ensure that it has been conducted in a rigorous way. The Research Projects Committee should ensure that check for plagiarism or other forms of research misconduct has been conducted, should draw the attention of the examiners to any indication of the above and recommend actions to the GSM Faculty Council and the Dean.

4-2 Selection of Examiners

Two (2) faculty members are chosen to examine the Research Project appointed by the Dean on the recommendation of the Research Projects Committee. The supervisor is one of the examiners if available. In order to ensure unbiased examination and balance within the faculty members, examiners other than the supervisor shall be selected in the field of the Research Projects sequentially from the APM/GSM faculty list. If the student's supervisor is a member of the Research Projects Committee, other members of the Research Projects Committee may not be appointed as examiners.

4-3 Screening and Examination Standards

a) Screening

Research Projects will be assessed based on a set of criteria specific to each type of Research Project that will be outlined in rubrics. The rubrics will be provided to students at least 12 months before the submission of the Research Project.

b) Oral Examination

Research Projects will be assessed based on a set of criteria specific to each type of Research Project that will be outlined in rubrics. The rubrics will be provided to students at least 12 months before the submission of the Research Project.

4-4 Examiners' Evaluation

The examiners of the Research Projects will submit one of the following evaluations accompanied by an evaluation report to the Research Project Committee by the designated deadline.

- a) Pass: in the case that the Research Project fully fulfills the examination standards.
- b) Minor Revision: in the case that the Research Project needs corrections of the structure, typos, or clarification of some areas.
- c) Major Revision: in the case that the Research Project needs corrections of significant errors, extensive changes or adding data.
- d) Fail: in the case that the Research Project does not fulfill the examination standards.

Examiners may deem it necessary for students to submit additional information or be called in for an interview.

4-5 Screening Results

Screening results will be reviewed by the Research Projects Committee to make their conclusion based on the evaluation assessment and the screening standards. If the examiner is a member of the Research Projects Committee, this member is excluded from the deliberation of the student's case and does not take part when the conclusion on the result is made. The conclusion of the Research Projects Committee will be put forward to the GSM Faculty Council after which it is to be presented to the Dean for a final decision.

The Research Projects Committee may deem it necessary for students to submit additional information or be called in for an interview.

4-6 Notifying Students of Screening Results

Students shall receive notification of the screening results and a copy of the examiners' evaluation reports according to the schedule stipulated in Appendix 1.

4-7 In case the Screening Result is "b) Minor Revision" or "c) Major Revision"

In case that the screening result is "Minor Revision" or "Major Revision", the supervisor shall coordinate the revision process unless the Dean and/or the chair of the Research Projects Committee requires another faculty member(s) to coordinate the process or re-screen the revised Research Project.

4-8 Re-submission of Research Projects

Revised Research Projects are to be submitted as stipulated in Appendix 1.

4-9 The Oral Examination

Examiners shall conduct an oral examination of the Research Projects. The examiners shall submit the examination result upon evaluation result to the Research Projects Committee from among the following possible results:

- a) Pass
- b) Fail

In addition to the examination result, each examiner shall submit an individual evaluation report to be presented to the student.

4-10 Oral Examination Results

The oral examination results will be reviewed by the Research Projects Committee to make their conclusion based on the evaluation assessment and the examination standards. If the examiner is a member of the Research Projects Committee, this member is excluded from the deliberation of the student's case and does not take part when the conclusion on the result is made. The conclusion of the Research Projects Committee will be put forward to the GSM Faculty Council after which it is to be presented to the Dean for a final decision.

The Research Projects Committee may deem it necessary for students to submit additional information or be called in for an interview.

4-11 Discrepancies in the Evaluation

In the event that there is a discrepancy in examiners' evaluations and/or the Research Projects Committee finds inconsistencies in the assessment, the Research Projects Committee may invite the examiners or the student to their meeting to discuss the case before making a conclusion on the result.

In case of a continuing disagreement, the Research Projects Committee will make a conclusion on the result if it is supported by at least two (2) of the Research Projects Committee members.

4-12 Notifying Students of Examination Results

Students shall receive notification of the oral examination results and a copy of the examiners' evaluation reports according to the schedule stipulated in Appendix 1.

5. Research Misconduct

In case of suspected or alleged plagiarism, unacknowledged use of AI-generated content and other forms of research misconduct being uncovered during the examination process, the Research Projects Committee determines whether the suspicion / allegations have any grounds. The Research Projects Committee may deem it necessary to conduct interviews with the student or the supervisor to confirm if this is a case of plagiarism or any other form of research misconduct.

The final decision will be made as outlined in 4-5 and 4-10.

6. Grade of MBA Research Seminar III

The supervisor shall evaluate the grade for MBA Research Seminar III. If the student fails the Research Project, the MBA Research Seminar III grade will be changed to Fail with the Dean's approval.

7. Appeal Procedures

A student may appeal the result.

7-1 Submission of an Appeal Statement

A student who wishes to appeal must submit an appeal statement using the prescribed form to the Academic Office by 16:30 on the 7th day from the date of the notification of results, including the day the results were notified. The statement must present clear and accurate arguments that may overturn the original result.

7-2 Decision to Conduct Appeal Investigation

The Dean will decide whether to conduct an investigation into the appeal. Investigation will be conducted only if the appeal statement provides reasonable evidence to overturn the original result.

7-3 Appeals Committee

7-3-1 Members of the Appeals Committee

An Appeals Committee shall be formed in case it has been decided to conduct investigation into the appeal.

The Appeals Committee will consist of three (3) faculty members appointed by the Dean. Members of this Committee must not be:

- (1) examiners of the Research Project
- (2) members of the current Research Projects Committee
- (3) the Dean

7-3-2 Duties of the Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee will decide how to conduct the investigation of the appeal and if deemed necessary, may require the student to present further evidence in written or oral form to substantiate the grounds of the appeal. The Appeals Committee will carefully examine all documents related to the appeal during the investigation.

7-3-3 Determining the Result of the Investigation

The Appeals Committee will submit to the Dean one of the following results accompanied by an evaluation report.

a) Reject the Appeal

In this case, the result originally announced to the student remains unchanged.

b) Accept the Appeal

In this case, the result originally announced to the student will be changed to “Pass”.

7-4 New Evidence of Misconduct

In the case that new evidence of misconduct is uncovered during the investigation of the appeal, it will be included in the assessment and reflected in the result of the Appeals Committee.

7-5 Finalizing the Result of the Appeal and Notifying the Student

The Dean will decide the final result of the appeal after procedures 7-2 to 7-4 have been conducted.

The final result of the appeal accompanied by appropriate feedback will be announced to the student by the Dean, barring any unavoidable circumstances, by the day of the Graduation Ceremony of that semester.

8. Preservation of Research Projects

All Research Projects that passed the examination will be bound by the University. Bound Research Projects will be forwarded to the University Library, where they will be catalogued for APU Library users.

Students are allowed to edit and make certain corrections to Research Projects that have passed the examination. Edited and corrected versions must be approved by the supervisor. Only the final version of the Research Project will be preserved.

Appendix 1 Examination Schedule

	Spring Semester	Fall Semester
Summary Submission	April 30	October 30
Research Project Submission	May 31	November 30
Notification of the Examination Results	June 25	December 25
Resubmission after Revision	July 15	January 15
Notification of the Final Results	July 31	January 31

Note: If the deadline falls on a weekend or a holiday, or a day when the office is closed, the deadline will move to the immediately preceding working day.