



# **Dissertation Guidelines**

**MBA program**

**29 April 2021**

## **Overview**

Conducting a research project under the guidance of a faculty member is a unique opportunity for students to not only hone their critical analysis and writing skill but also engage in deep exploration of real life problems. With this in mind, an applied research dissertation has been added as a compulsory component of the MBA program at IMT. This opportunity helps the students to familiarize themselves with industry best practices in the region, apply cutting edge theory to newer situations and deepen their knowledge in a chosen domain. Depending on the scope of the identified problem of research, the chosen topic for the dissertation can also be interdisciplinary in nature.

### **I. Objectives of Dissertation**

The objective of dissertation is to:

1. Develop research and analysis capabilities to solve real business issues.
2. Learn to work independently in a given situation.
3. Learn to communicate effectively especially through academic writing.

### **II. Learning Outcomes**

After completion of this dissertation, students will be able to:

1. Exhibit business management related knowledge to identify issues for conducting research. **(Knowledge)**
2. Apply theories, concepts and research tools to real life business issues. **(Skill)**
3. Apply critical analysis to a situation and develop alternative arguments and solutions for evaluation **(Self Development & Role in Context)**
4. Work independently by applying own mind to complex and intractable business problems. **(Autonomy & Responsibility)**
5. Persuasively communicate the findings of the analysis in the form written report and presentation **(Skill)**

### **III. Time Schedule, Procedure and Credits**

1. The Dissertation commences in the 3<sup>rd</sup> term and submission is in the 4<sup>th</sup> term of the program.
2. The Dissertation is equivalent to 6 credit hours.
3. The Dissertation has to be conducted by students individually.

4. Each student will be attached to one IMT faculty (maximum up to two faculty). Student can approach faculty directly or through program office to seek their guidance to work on a topic of research.
5. Students may also take the help of the office of career services to connect with Industry for the purpose finalizing the dissertation topic.
6. Students must submit a dissertation proposal in the form of topic definition and justification of the dissertation through CANVAS LMS.
7. The dissertation proposals will be evaluated by the Chairperson for Internships & Projects. They may seek help from faculty members from other fields to evaluate the proposals when needed. Students whose proposals are rejected may be asked to find new projects or recommended to expand the scope of the project and submit the same for approval.
8. After the appraisal of proposals, the faculty supervisor for the Dissertation will be assigned by the Chairperson for Internships & Projects.
9. The assigned faculty member will discuss with the concerned students the topic, scope, methodology and objectives of the Dissertation proposal.
10. The proposal will then be registered by the MBA program office.
11. Chairperson for Internships & Projects will liaise between the students and faculty members and will also monitor the timely progress and submission of the Dissertation.
12. At the mid of 4<sup>th</sup> term, students are required to submit an interim report reflecting the progress of their dissertation to their respective faculty supervisor.

#### **IV. Dissertation Proposal**

The Dissertation proposals shall include the following:

- Information about the company if the project is proposed in collaboration with a company
- Summary in paragraph format of the topic of research highlighting the main research questions.
- Motivation or the statement of the reasons to study this topic.
- Statement of specific goal(s) and objectives of the proposed topic.
- Identification of any secondary information/literature/research that may be helpful/relevant to the topic.

#### **V. Evaluation & Grading**

After completion of the Dissertation work as per the timeline communicated by the program office. Each student will submit a soft copy (MS Word) as per the report writing guidelines on CANVAS LMS (<https://imtdubai.instructure.com/login/canvas>). Subsequently, the student is required to defend his/her research in front of a panel of faculty experts including the faculty supervisor. The faculty supervisor will independently evaluate the report and assign a grade for 70% of the

dissertation component and the panel will assess the presentation that will carry 30% weightage. The following is to be used as a guideline for assessing the dissertation report and presentation.

Sl.no	Content	Marks
1	Topic definition, Objectives and Scope	10
2	Literature Review	10
3	Choice of Research Methodology	10
4	Data Collection and Analysis	15
5	Recommendations and Conclusion	15
6	Report Writing Quality	10
7	Presentation	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>

#### VI. Suggested Reading List

- John Beech, Doing Your Business Research Project, Sage Publications, Illustrated Edition (17 November 2014)
- Jigme Keizer, Piet Kempen, Business Research Projects, Butterworth Heinemann, Elsevier. (2006)
- Jonathan Wilson, Essentials of Business Research: A Guide to Doing Your Research Project, Sage Publications. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (October 23, 2020)
- A.D. Jankowicz, Business Research Projects, Cengage Learning EMEA; 4th edition (9 December 2004)
- William G. Zikmund, Barry J. Babin, Jon C. Carr, and Mitch Griffin, Business Research Methods, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, Cengage Learning, 2013.
- Bryman and Bell, Business Research Methods, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Oxford University Press, 2015
- Joe F. Hair Jr., Mary Celsi, Arthur Money, Phillip Samouel, Michael Page, Essentials of Business Research Methods, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Taylor & Francis, 2016.
- Saunders, Philip Lewis, Adrian Thornhill, Research Methods for Business Students, Pearson Education, 2009.

## VII. Plagiarism

The similarity of 15% or less in the submitted students' work, as detected by the anti-plagiarism software tool OURIGINAL is excluded from any penalty. Similarities above 15 percent are classified into two levels- Level 1 and Level 2 as shown below. The level-wise penalties are as follows:

Level	Similarity Percentage	Penalty
I	16 - 25%	This level is considered a moderately high level of similarity. For this violation, 25% of the awarded score in that assessment shall be deducted.
II	Above 25%	This level signifies a serious compromise with academic integrity. The concerned faculty shall refer such cases to the Disciplinary Committee through the Program Chairperson.

Faculty submits plagiarism incident reports covering both Level-I and Level-II cases with all the details to the Program Chair. The program Chair keeps a record of all such incidents of plagiarism during the semester. The Program Chair shall report the cases of level II to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee evaluates the cases of level-II and may come up with the following penalties:

- Award zero marks for the component of assessment.
- Award grade XF (fail due to academic integrity violations) in the course. The student has to repeat the courses once again.
- In case of repeat violations, the student may be dismissed from the program.

For details on Plagiarism Policy refer to Section W. Student Academic Integrity of the PPM August 2022, Page 172.

### Tips for students

To avoid similarities, students should not copy sentences / paragraphs from someone else's work. To quote someone's statement, provide the statement within quotation marks and refer it with author name and page number of the original text where the statement is present. In case of presenting someone else's ideas, students are required to present the idea(s) in their own language with proper citations to the author/sources.

## VIII. Report Writing Guidelines

- The Dissertation report should not exceed 30-40 pages.
- The word count limit is 12000 words
- The contents should be typed in Times New Roman font 12, justified, 1 ½ line space, 1-inch margin on all sides.

- All pages, tables, figures, charts and annexures should be numbered properly, and should be included in the table of contents.
- Executive summary should be maximum of 1 page.
- Heading font: 12, Times New Roman, bold, title case. e.g. **Heading Font**
- Subheading Font: 12, Times New Roman, underline, title case. e.g. Subheading Font
- The sequence of content is:
  - Cover Page (As per the attached format)
  - Table of Contents
  - Acknowledgement
  - Dissertation Completion Certificate signed by Faculty Supervisor
  - Executive Summary (Maximum one page)
  - Chapter 1 - Introduction
  - Chapter 2 - Literature Review
  - Chapter 3 - Methodology
  - Chapter 4 - Analysis and Results
  - Chapter 5 - Discussions and Recommendation
  - Chapter 6 - Conclusion
  - References/Bibliography: Please acknowledge the use of materials from different sources in the preparation of your dissertation and provide a citation including: author's name, title of book, year published, publisher's name, city, ISBN number, page number. Bibliographic entries are listed alphabetically by the name of the author or by the first major work of the title.

For example: Vetterli, C. "Technical Report Guidelines", Internship Journal, Vol. 1 No. 1, August 1992, pp.51-53.

- Appendix: Appendices can contain program listings, drawings, extra figures, technical specifications, or other detailed explanations of some aspects of your Report. These are not relevant enough to include in the main report but supplement the reader's understanding of the subject matter.
- IX.** For a Sample Cover page refer to page-7, For Completion certificate refer to page-8, Dissertation evaluation form for faculty and panel members are presented in page-10 and 11 respectively.
- X.** An expert led session on academic writing, referencing and plagiarism will be conducted for all students before the commencement of the dissertation.

*(Cover Page Sample)*



# Title of Report

**Submitted by**  
**Student Name**  
**Student ID**

**Under the Supervision of**  
**....Prof.....XYZ...**

**Year**  
**Term**



## Institute of Management Technology, Dubai

### Completion Certificate (Sample format)

This is to certify that ..... (Student Name) with Roll No..... of the MBA Program has successfully completed the Dissertation titled ..... under my supervision as partial requirement to complete the program.

#### Faculty Supervisor

Name:

Signature:

Date:



## Dissertation Report Evaluation by Faculty Supervisor

<b>Name of the Student:</b>	<b>Roll No</b>
<b>Organization Name:</b>	
<b>Title of Dissertation:</b>	

Components	Maximum Marks	Marks Awarded
Topic definition, Objectives and Scope	10	
Literature Review	10	
Choice of Research Methodology	10	
Data Collection and Analysis	15	
Recommendations and Conclusion	15	
Writing Quality	10	
Total	70	

<b>In what areas does the student need to improve?</b>	
<b>Name of Faculty:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Signature</b>

## Dissertation Presentation Evaluation by Faculty Panel

<b>Name of the Student:</b>	<b>Roll No</b>
<b>Date of Presentation:</b>	
<b>Title of Dissertation:</b>	

Component	Maximum marks	Marks Awarded by Faculty Supervisor	Marks Awarded by Faculty Examiner
Scope and Objective of work	5		
Methodology for the study	10		
Analysis & Conclusions	5		
Pacing and clarity of presentation	5		
Response to questions by the panel	5		
Total	30		

**Faculty Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Examiner:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_