



NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY

Bachelor of Business Administration

Guideline for BUS499 - Research Project



1. Research Project

A Research Project (BUS499) is a 4-month/12-week research engagement by a student under the supervision of a faculty member. The aim is to test the independent research skills students have acquired during their time at the university. Students can work on independent research or join their supervisor's ongoing research projects. At the end of the period, students are required to submit a dissertation/project report to their respective supervisor or a research panel for evaluation. Students must complete 112 credits and maintain a CGPA of 3.30 to be eligible to enrol in BUS499.

2. Research Project Report

Students enrolled in BUS499 are required to prepare and submit a research project report/dissertation based on their approved research topic. The report should demonstrate the student's ability to conduct independent academic research by clearly defining a research problem, reviewing relevant literature, applying appropriate research methodology, analysing data systematically, and drawing logically sound conclusions. It must reflect critical thinking, methodological rigour, and a coherent integration of theory and empirical evidence.

3. General Guideline

(i) Approval of Research Topic

- Each student must work on a research topic that has been formally approved by their assigned academic supervisor.
- The selected topic should be aligned with the supervisor's ongoing research work or a new independent study conducted in accordance with the prescribed guidelines.

(ii) Supervisor Meetings and Consultation Requirements

- Students must attend at least two meetings per month with their academic supervisors—either online (e.g., Google Meet or Zoom) or on campus.
- A minimum of six meetings must be held in total during the research period.
- Each meeting must be documented by the student, noting the date, key discussion points, and supervisor's feedback. A signed Meeting Log Sheet may be required as supporting evidence at the time of final report submission.

(iii) Progress Review and Feedback

- During each supervisory meeting, students must present their latest progress on the research report.
- Students should actively seek feedback from their supervisors and incorporate it into their subsequent work to ensure continuous improvement in the report's content and structure.
- Failure to demonstrate consistent progress may result in reduced evaluation marks or rejection of the final report.

(iv) Communication and Professional Conduct

- All communications with supervisors should be conducted in a respectful, professional, and timely manner, preferably through email.
- Students are expected to check their university email regularly and respond promptly to supervisor instructions or feedback.

- Unauthorised absence from scheduled meetings or unresponsiveness will be reported to the concerned Department Chairpersons or the BBA Programme Director and may negatively impact the final evaluation and grading.

(v) Adherence to Ethical and Academic Standards

- Students must maintain academic integrity in all stages of their research report preparation. Plagiarism, contract cheating, data falsification, and the use of artificial intelligence will be treated as serious academic offences and dealt with under the University's Academic Integrity Policy.
- If data are collected from an organisation or human participants, students must ensure confidentiality and ethical handling of all information.

(vi) Submission and Evaluation

- The final research report must be submitted by the stipulated deadline and conform to the prescribed structure and formatting guidelines.
- Reports that lack supervisor endorsement or evidence of regular supervision may not be accepted for evaluation and grading.
- Evaluation will be based on the quality of analysis, depth of reflection, adherence to academic writing standards, integration of supervisory feedback, and timeliness.

(vii) Time Extension and Incomplete Grade Policy

- Students who are unable to complete their research report within one trimester must formally apply to their supervisor for a time extension and an 'I' (Incomplete) grade. The application must clearly state the reason for the request.
- Approval of the extension and 'I' grade is entirely at the discretion of the supervisor, based on the validity of the reason and the student's overall progress and engagement.
- If the 'I' grade is granted, the student will be allowed a maximum of one additional trimester to complete and submit the report in full compliance with all requirements.
- Failure to submit the report within this extended period will result in the 'I' grade automatically converting to an 'F' (Fail) grade. The student will then be required to re-register for BUS499 in the subsequent trimester.

4. Report Formatting

- Report Size: 7,500 to 12,000 words.
- Font & Size: Arial (11) / Helvetica (11) / Times New Roman (12)
- Line Spacing: 1.5
- Margins: 2.54 cm (1 inch) on all sides
- Submission: In PDF, submitted through email, or in the Canvas portal as per the instructions of the supervising faculty member.

5. BUS499 Research Report Structure

Preliminary

Cover / Title Page

Essential identifying information (e.g., student name, ID, supervisor's name, section, report title, date of submission, etc.)

Letter of Transmittal

A short formal letter addressed to your NSU research supervisor, explaining the purpose of submitting the report and seeking feedback.

Acknowledgement

A brief personal note expressing gratitude to those who supported or guided the preparation of the report (e.g., supervisors, respondents, institutions, organisations, etc.).

Abstract

A concise, self-contained summary of the entire study to enable the readers to quickly understand the purpose, scope, methodology, key findings, and conclusions of the research without requiring them to read the full report.

Table of Contents

- Lists all sections and subsections with page numbers.
 - Separate lists showing figure and table titles with page numbers.
 - The lists should be formatted consistently with headings used in the main report.
 - List of Abbreviations / Glossary (if applicable) to define key acronyms, abbreviations, or specialised terms used in the report.
 - The Table of Contents must be accurately cross-referenced and hyperlinked to all corresponding sections throughout the document, enabling readers to navigate the desired section seamlessly.
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Main Body

Chapter One - Introduction/Motivation of the Research/Study

- i. Research title
 - ii. Research objective or purpose
 - iii. Research context or background of the study
 - iv. Research question(s) or problem statement(s)
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Chapter Two - Literature Review

A literature review is a critical and systematic examination of existing scholarly work relevant to the research topic, aimed at identifying key theories, findings, and gaps in current knowledge. It provides the theoretical foundation for the study and justifies the research problem and objectives by situating them within the existing body of literature. Students may consider the following (as applicable) while preparing this chapter:

- i. Learning from past experience
 - ii. Research gap analysis with narrative review
 - iii. Systematic literature review
 - iv. Theoretical or conceptual review
 - v. Longitudinal study
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Chapter Three - Theoretical Framework (if needed)

This chapter outlines the key theories, concepts, and variables that underpin the study, explaining the relationships among them. It provides a structured lens through which the research problem is examined, guiding the formulation of research questions, hypotheses, and analysis.

Chapter Four - Methodology

- i. Type of research (e.g., descriptive, analytical/interpretative, exploratory, investigative, feasibility, etc.)
- ii. Research design (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed)
- iii. Data type (e.g., primary, secondary, or both)
- iv. Appropriate methods for sampling, data collection, and data analysis

Chapter Five - Sample and Data (if needed for quantitative research)

For quantitative research, this chapter describes the population of interest, the sampling technique used, the sample size, and the characteristics of the respondents. It also explains the data sources, data collection procedures, and any inclusion or exclusion criteria applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the dataset. Statistical tools/analysis are necessary for analysis.

or

Chapter Five - Analysis and Findings (if needed for qualitative research)

For qualitative research, this chapter presents a systematic interpretation of the qualitative data, typically organised around themes, categories, or patterns that emerge from the analysis. It explains what was found in the data, supported by illustrative excerpts or examples, while linking the findings to the research questions and relevant theoretical concepts. Descriptive, Thematic, or Content Analysis are necessary for the analysis.

Chapter Six - Discussion of Results/Findings, Conclusion

This chapter interprets the study's results/findings by relating them to the research questions, theoretical framework, and existing literature, highlighting similarities, differences, and contributions. The Conclusion summarises the key insights of the study, outlines its theoretical and practical implications, acknowledges limitations, and, where appropriate, suggests directions for future research.

End Matter

References

APA or Harvard-style of referencing with in-text citations.

Appendices

Supplementary materials such as questionnaires, statistical analyses, interview transcripts, charts, detailed data tables, or additional documents that support the report but are too lengthy for the main body.

6. Remarks

The research project constitutes a capstone academic requirement within the NSU BBA programme, providing students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to conduct independent, rigorous, and ethically sound research. Students are expected to approach this endeavour with intellectual curiosity, academic integrity, and a strong sense of responsibility, recognising the research project as a culmination of the analytical, theoretical, and methodological skills developed throughout their

studies. Regular consultation with the assigned supervisor and strict adherence to the prescribed research guidelines are essential for ensuring the quality and credibility of the work.

By successfully completing the research project and report, students will not only satisfy the academic requirements of BUS499 but also enhance their critical thinking, research competence, and professional preparedness for postgraduate study or evidence-based managerial practice. The BBA Programme wishes all students every success in undertaking their research project and trusts that this experience will contribute meaningfully to their academic development and future professional pursuits.

7. BUS499 Research Project — Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Description	Weight (100%)
Research Report	Structural coherence, quality of the research project, appropriate literature review and framework, methodological clarity, rigour of data analysis, quality of data sources and interpretation, findings, discussion and conclusion.	60%
Formatting & Submission	Compliance with report formatting and submission guidelines, and adherence to ethical and academic standards.	10%
Supervision & Progress; Professional Conduct	Fulfilment of the supervisory meetings and progress requirements outlined in the guidelines.	15%
Exit Assessment Test	The examination, consisting of 120 MCQs (80 from core courses and 40 from major courses), will be administered by the SBE Assessment Coordinator. The test scores will be shared with the internship supervisors prior to the grade submission deadline.	15%

8. BUS499 Research Project Report — Grading Rubric (100 marks)

Criteria	Weight (%)	Excellent (A) (90 - 100%)	Good (B) (80-89%)	Satisfactory (C) (70-79%)	Poor (D) (60-69%)	Unsatisfactory/ Fail (0-59%)
Research Project Report	60%	Demonstrates an excellent research topic with clear objectives; shows outstanding critical analysis and synthesis of literature; employs appropriate and rigorous methodology; findings are well-analysed and coherently discussed; report is logically structured, professionally presented, and written in clear, academic language with near-perfect referencing and formatting.	Demonstrates a clear research topic and objectives; strong literature review and appropriate methodology; analysis and discussion are sound with minor gaps; report is well structured and clearly written with only minor errors in language, referencing, or presentation.	Research topic and objectives are identifiable but lack depth or clarity; literature review and methodology are adequate but descriptive; analysis is limited with weak integration of theory; report contains several grammatical, structural, or referencing errors but remains acceptable overall.	Research topic is poorly defined; weak or incomplete literature review; inappropriate or poorly explained methodology; minimal or superficial analysis; discussion lacks coherence; report shows poor organisation, frequent language errors, and clear deviation from research guidelines.	Incomplete or incoherent report; absence of a clear research problem; inadequate or missing literature review, methodology, or analysis; serious academic writing and referencing deficiencies; little or no evidence of independent research effort or compliance with BUS499 guidelines.
Formatting & Submission	10%	Perfect adherence to all formatting requirements; properly submitted in PDF; error-free application of APA/Harvard referencing.	Minor formatting inconsistencies; well-presented report with accurate and consistent referencing, contains only a few citation errors.	Noticeable formatting problems; acceptable presentation but several errors in layout or referencing style.	Multiple formatting errors and inconsistent or inaccurate referencing throughout the report.	Major formatting deficiencies; improper submission, very poor or no referencing.
Supervision and Progress; Professional Conduct	15%	Attended all six+ meetings on time, improved consistently by applying all supervisory feedback, professional and responsive.	Missed one or two meetings, applied most supervisory feedback, maintained good communication overall.	Irregular attendance, missed most supervisory feedback, and delayed responses with an informal tone.	Rarely attended meetings, ignored supervisory feedback in general, unprofessional communication.	No communication with the supervisor, unresponsive.
Exit Assessment Test	15%	As per the exam score administered by the SBE Assessment Coordinator.				

Title of the Research Project

Prepared by
Student's Name
Student ID
Enrolled Trimester

Prepared for
NSU Faculty Supervisor's Name
Designation, Department

Date of Submission

Bachelor of Business Administration
School of Business and Economics
North South University

Sample Letter of Transmittal

[Date]

To

The Name of the Faculty Member

Designation, Department

North South University

Subject: Submission of my BUS499 Research Project Report

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to submit my research project report entitled '*[insert full title of the research project]*', in partial fulfilment of the requirements for 'BUS499: Research Project' under the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme at North South University.

The study aims *[briefly state the research objective in one sentence]*, employing appropriate research methods and analysis in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the BBA Programme.

I hereby declare that this report is my original work and has not been submitted, in whole or in part, for any other degree or academic qualification. All sources of information have been duly acknowledged in accordance with accepted academic standards.

I respectfully request that you accept this report for evaluation. I shall be grateful for your kind consideration.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

[Student's Full Name]

ID No.:

Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

North South University