

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON  
*Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui*



**SCHOOL OF MARKETING AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

**IBUS 311**  
**International Business Research Project**  
**[24 points]**

**COURSE CO-ORDINATOR:**

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**SUPERVISORS: (Students will be assigned a supervisor based on their research proposal)**

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**PAPER OBJECTIVE:**

This paper involves the application and assessment of an approved topic relevant to international business through supervised practical experience in an agency, firm or organisation involved in the development, planning and management of international business programmes, policy formation and/or enterprise.

The primary purpose of the paper is to allow students to work for credit on a supervised IBUS project while employed at a company or agency involved in some aspect of international business. Typically this would be in the form of a research project for the company, or employment with the company where the students gain international experience. Research projects can be quite varied in scope and could include topics such as the following:

- Developing a market entry strategy into a new market for an existing export product.
- Assessing the business outlook for New Zealand trade into a specified market.  
Preparing a case study of a international company, focussing on a selected aspect of their international operations.
- Auditing the “International Business Readiness” of a small/medium sized business.
- Evaluating the impact of “greenhouse emission” accords (or other policy) on New Zealand trade policy.
- Examining the impact of currency fluctuations on export pricing strategies.
- Identifying the key factors that shape FDI policies in selected regions.  
Investigating the future impact of changes to trade and investment policy, ie. China’s entry into the WTO; Host-country targeting foreign investment via incentives; etc.
- Analysing domestic and international competitors for a selected firm or industry.

It is expected that the IBUS 311 project will normally be carried out within a partnering agency for whom the student is working. There is provision however for students to work on a supervised project within a company or agency without specifically being employed. The key consideration in these circumstances is identifying a manager who is willing to take direct responsibility for working with the student on a project with mutually agreed objectives and outcomes. This includes being reasonably available to the student through the project period (8-10 hours over three months), and assuring reasonable access to people and information likely to be required in adequately completing the project.

The School for its part works closely with the student in formulating an agreed topic and project outcomes, and supervising the work to ensure that academic requirements are met. While the School is happy to work with students in identifying possible project sites, responsibility for this rests finally with students themselves.

PLEASE NOTE that acceptance into IBUS 311 is subject to approval by the course coordinator. Approval is based on the quality of the student’s proposal, and the availability of a project supervisor.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

The objectives of IBUS311 are to:

- Develop the students’ analytical and interpretive skills in the context of international business strategy, strategy formulation and/or management functions within an organisation engaged in some aspect of international business activity.
- Give students practical experience in some aspect of international business that will build on existing academic knowledge and skills, and more specifically;
- Promote the application of skills, techniques and tools relating to international business, strategy and research to solving the problems or otherwise of a real-world case study firm.
- Refine skills in research, analysis, written presentation of research reports and communication.

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Approximately ten hours of supervision by a full-time staff member.  
Contact times to be arranged between student and supervisor.

**LECTURE TIMES AND ROOMS:**

None.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

No prescribed text, however, readings may be suggested with regard to the research topic and student's background. Additional readings and/or references can be obtained from the bibliographies of these readings, or can be requested from the supervisor. Additional readings and/or reading lists, where not included in these texts, will be provided by the supervisor as required.

You are encouraged to make use of academic material (journals and books), and resources available on the web (databases, web pages of companies, and international organisations, and media-related sites) as additional sources of reading and reference material.

**PREREQUISITES:**

1. IBUS301, International Management, a further 24 300-level points, QUAN 102 (or an approved substitute).

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

2. Access to suitable placement sites is limited and therefore enrolment in IBUS 311 will normally be permitted only for students with a B+ average or better in IBUS courses previously completed.

3. University policy requires all research projects involving human subjects to be approved by the Human Ethics Committee. Approval for IBUS 311 projects, *that meet certain conditions*, has already been granted. Students should ensure that their research project meets these conditions, or they will need to apply for HEC approval independently. A copy of these conditions is available at [www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject) under Info for students, the expectations.

4. In addition students are required to submit and gain approval from the supervisor for their proposed research topic. A proposal form is available at [www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject) under Info for students, submit proposal, and should be submitted to the Course Coordinator.

**ASSESSMENT:**

Research Project	100%
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**GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

**Student Conduct and Staff Conduct**

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the website at:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct).

The policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:  
[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct).

### **Academic Grievances**

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the Associate Dean (Students) of your Faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy which is published on the VUW website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances).

### **Plagiarism**

Victoria University defines plagiarism as the copying of ideas, organisation, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate reference or acknowledgement so that it appears to be one's own work. This includes published and unpublished work, the Internet and the work of other students and staff. Plagiarism is an example of misconduct in the Statute of Student Conduct. Students who have plagiarised are subject to a range of penalties under the Statute. See the website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct).

### **Students with Disabilities**

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463-6070, email: [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz). The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant or the School Prospectus.

### **Student Support**

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, the following staff members will either help you directly or quickly put you in contact with someone who can.

<i>Staff</i>	<i>Faculty Room number</i>
Sue Dover Student Support Coordinator, FHSS	2 Wai-te-ata Road
Kirstin Harvey Law	Old Gvt Building room 103
Liz Richardson Science and Architecture and Design	Cotton Building room 150

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at [www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/) or email [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz).

VUWSA employs two Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building, phone 463 6983 or 463 6984, email [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz).

## **STYLE GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH REPORTS**

### Length

Reports should be approximately 6 000-10 000 words in length, plus appendices, executive summary and contents pages. Note that this is a guide only, and students' should aim to address their issue/problem/research question comprehensively, yet be mindful of staying focussed on the key objectives of the project.

### Format

Reports should have a cover page clearly showing the title of the research report, your name and ID number, your supervisor's name, and a WORD COUNT.

Reports should also include a TABLE OF CONTENTS and an Executive Summary.

### Headings

Main and secondary headings should be numbered. Example:

3 Alternative Strategies

3.1 Market expansion into Europe

3.2 Product diversification into fortified wines and liqueurs

### Type Format

Use a 12 point/pitch font, and either double spacing or 1.5 spacing between lines. Add an additional line space between paragraphs.

### Tables and Figures

Tables and figures should supplement and clarify the text, not completely duplicate it. Avoid repetitive figures (e.g., pie charts, histograms) which could be summarized more succinctly by one or two tables, or simply covered in the text.

Each table or figure should have the word Table or Figure and its number at the top, followed by its title. Tables, as well as figures, are numbered consecutively from the beginning to the end of the essay/report. Example:

Table 1. Numbers of Foreign Firms in New Zealand, 1990 - 1994

Sufficient information should be contained in the table or figure so that the reader can understand it without having to consult the text. Footnotes immediately underneath the table or figure should be used to explain all abbreviations and symbols used. Do not forget to give the source of your material with your table/figure. Also the readers attention should be drawn to your table/figure by referring to it in your text, e.g. "as can be seen in table 1..." or "the majority of people (refer table 1).

### Appendices

You may use appendices to place supplementary material (background material) which does not directly relate to the text of your essay/report. If something is important then it should be included in your discussion proper. Reference must be made to the appropriate appendices in your text (ie. refer Appendix A). A single appendix should be titled APPENDIX. Multiple appendices are titled

APPENDIX A, APPENDIX B, etc. Appendices appear in the order that they are mentioned in the text of the essay/report.

### Language

Avoid terms or usages that are or may be interpreted as denigrating to ethnic or other groups. Be particularly careful to use gender-neutral terms. For example, use plural pronouns (e.g., clients...they) rather than gender-specific pronouns (e.g., client...he).

Using the first person is discouraged in academic writing. For example it is better to say "In the author's opinion....." rather than "In my opinion.....", or "the author believes...." rather than "I believe...". Alternatively, reword your sentence to avoid using these terms.

### Quotations

Quotations are used to support specific points you wish to make. They should readily fit with the idea you are discussing and should thus need no further explanation. Generally, two types of quotations are used - the short quotation (a few words of clarification) and long quotations (a full sentence or two that makes a specific point by itself).

A **short quotation** (fewer than 20 words) should be incorporated in the text and enclosed by quotation marks. It may include whole sentences or part of a sentence. For instance:

The use of adequate referencing is "absolutely essential" for professional report-writing (Hughes, 1990, p. 456).

A **long quotation** (20 words or more) should be displayed in a free standing block, double indented from the margins, without quotation marks. Spacing in long quotes is reduced to one line (single spacing). This paragraph is an example of a long quotation (Author, year, p. xx). Make sure you cite the reference for the quotation, including the page number.

### Footnotes

Footnotes should be used sparingly. Points that are important can usually be integrated into the text. Avoid footnotes or endnotes for referencing (see Referencing below).

### Referencing

See the website for referencing guidelines at [www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject/referencing.htm](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject/referencing.htm)

### Report Structure

See the website for report structure guidelines at [www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject/format.htm](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/ibproject/format.htm)