
MBA Project Handbook



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Purpose of the Document

Purpose of this document is to outline the different areas under the MBA project and to update the reader regarding different activities and the people involved in the projects.

Organization of the Document

For the ease of the reader, the document is divided in to three sections:

[Section 1: General Information](#)

This section gives a general overview of the MBA project, the relevant project areas and brief description of the activities involved.

[Section2: Stake Holders](#)

This section highlights the roles and responsibilities of different groups involved in the MBA project.

[Section3: MBA Project Life Cycle](#)

This section describes the MBA project life cycle, presents the timeline for all activities involved in the MBA project along with a list of successful MBA project pointers.

[Section4: Grading Plan](#)

This section describes the major deliverables of the MBA project and the grading relevance of each of the deliverables.

Section1: General Information

The MBA Project is an integral part of the MBA program conducted at the Institute of Business Administration, Karachi.

A group of 4-5 second year students undertake a management consulting assignment in real life business environment related to managerial and organizational problems that need solutions.

The Project not only enables students to develop interviewing and report writing skills, but also provides an opportunity for them to enhance their managerial and leadership skills, besides their problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Project Areas:

Projects undertaken by the students revolves around the areas where organizations require in-depth analysis of any critical problem at hand, these could be:

- New Ventures / Feasibility Studies
- Management Control Systems
- Human Resource Restructuring
- Strategic Analysis & Management
- Marketing Strategy
- Supply Chain Management

Note: The project scope does not necessarily stick to one of the above mentioned areas; a number of projects are inter-disciplinary in nature that is they revolve around multiple areas.

The projects would be conducted under the close supervision of an industry experienced Project Advisor. The projects are done with both local and multinational companies, preferably those based in Karachi due to logistic reasons.

Project Benefits for the organization:

There are wide-ranging and numerous benefits of the IBA - MBA Projects, some of which are:

- Cost is minimal compared to the cost that will be incurred on engaging a professional consulting firm for delivering innovative solutions. Every group can also utilize the extensive resources available at the IBA including expertise of the faculty members.
- Each group comprises of talented and energetic students with sound academic background, who understand the market dynamics and, under the supervision of industry experienced Project Advisor, can be trusted to come up with practical and effective solutions.
- Final report is the result of months of extensive groundwork with every member of the group actively contributing towards its finalization. The client organization can thus benefit greatly from the substantial outcome.

The Activities Involved:

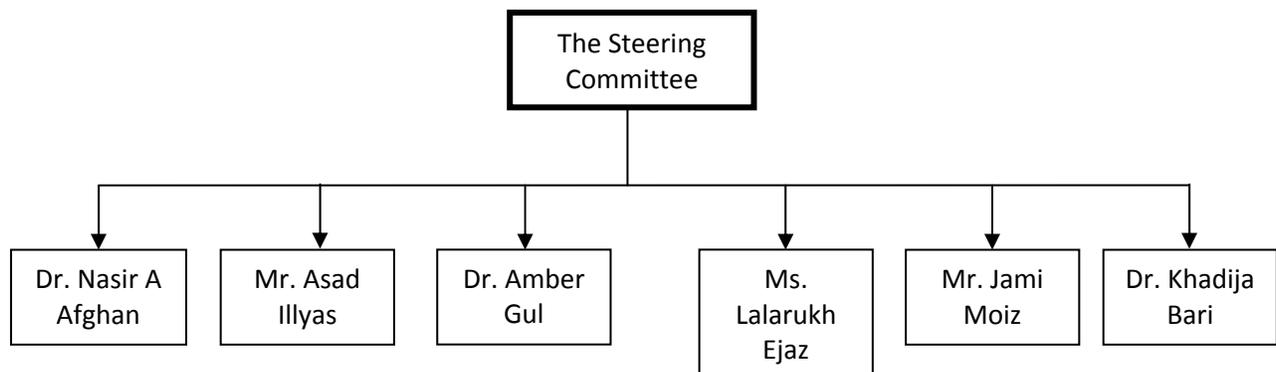
Brief description of the activities involved is as under:

- Initially students group (4-5 students) will prepare a project proposal (terms of reference) based on discussions with the company. A work plan is also prepared listing the main activities to be undertaken and a time table for completion of these activities.
- Students present the proposal and work plan before a faculty committee. During the year an interim progress report is submitted to the MBA Project Coordinator, Project Adviser and the Client.
- On completion of the project a draft written report is submitted and an oral presentation made to the client and the faculty committee. The presentation is held at the IBA Karachi.
- Based on client and faculty feedback a final written report is submitted to all and for final grading.
- A faculty committee (chaired by the project coordinators) guides and monitors the project through the year. This includes reviewing the terms of reference and work plan, the progress report, and the final presentation and report.

Section 2: Stake Holders

The Steering Committee

The MBA project steering committee comprises of 6 high-level stake holders. The purpose of this committee to provide guidance on overall strategic direction and to monitor and govern all other stake holders involved

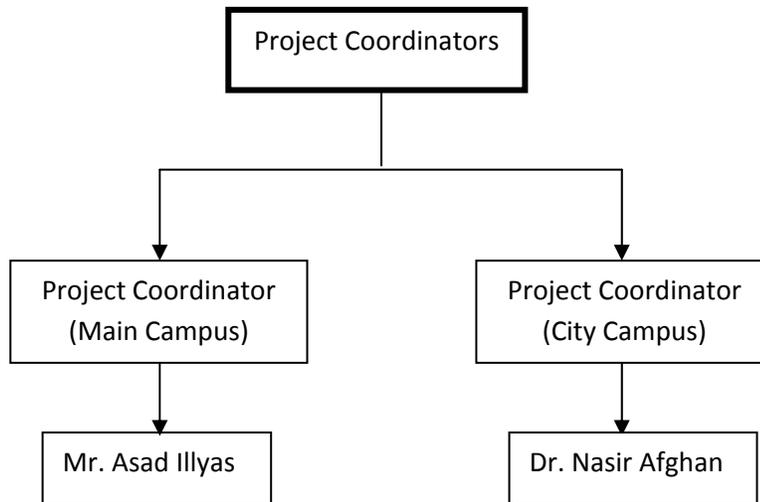


Role of the Steering Committee:

Scope of the steering committee revolves around:

- Ensuring quality assurance in all activities
- Designing and implementation of effective policies, regarding:
 - Workload distribution
 - Marketing of the MBA project initiative
 - The MBA project scope
 - Conflict resolution mechanism (this mechanism provides for an escalation system for resolving any conflicts arising between students and their respective advisor)
- Collection of MBA projects
- Administering quarterly meetings with stake holders
- Ensuring adequate transparency of all the activities undertaken in the MBA project cycle, through celebration of 'MBA Project Day' and publishing of a booklet containing briefing of all year long activities within the MBA project.

The Project Coordinators



Role of the Project Coordinators:

- Help students conceptualize problem and focus on objectives and deliverables
- Keep track of each project progress
- Help students focus and maintain high quality relationship with client
- Help students solve logistic/operational related problems
- Help students solve interpersonal / team issues
- Quality and professionalism in all deliverables and client conducts
- Provide students with access to data/library/specialist faculty

The Faculty Advisors

The MBA faculty advisors pool comprises of:

Dr. Nasir Afghan	Mr. Asad Illyas	Dr. Amber Gul	Ms. Lalarukh Ejaz
Mr. Jami Moiz	Dr. Khadija Bari	Mr. Akhter Mahmood	Mr. Zafar Siddiqui
Dr. Ather Elahi	Dr. Naeem uz Zaffar	Dr. Irfan Nabi	Dr. Mehnaz Fatima
Dr. Huma Amir	Mr. Hanif Ijari	Dr. Shahid Mir	Ms. Nyla

Role of the Faculty Advisors:

- Help students conceptualize the problem and focus on objectives and deliverables
- Help students follow deadlines (Monitoring progress)
- Help students to work with good team spirit
- Listen to student's ideas and share his ideas and concerns
- Help students to deliver high quality value added deliverables ethically and professionally

The Client Organization

Responsibilities:

- Provide IBA with a brief description of their requirements and scope of the project.
- Provide name and contact details of the individual in the organization who can be contacted by the group involved in the Project including to facilitate access, where necessary, to the relevant company material and information.
- Meet the financial costs incurred on the project including travel and accommodation cost, if any.

The IBA does not charge for the Project conducted by its students.

Section 3: MBA Project Lifecycle

One of the most crucial milestones in the MBA project lifecycle is the design of Terms of Reference (TOR) document, this document serves as the main kick-off component for the MBA project.

Terms of Reference (TOR)

During the initial contacts with the client and the subsequent preliminary problem diagnosis the student / researchers / consultant should have collected and evaluated enough information to be able to plan the assignment. This is what the client expects at this stage: A TOR (Terms of Reference).

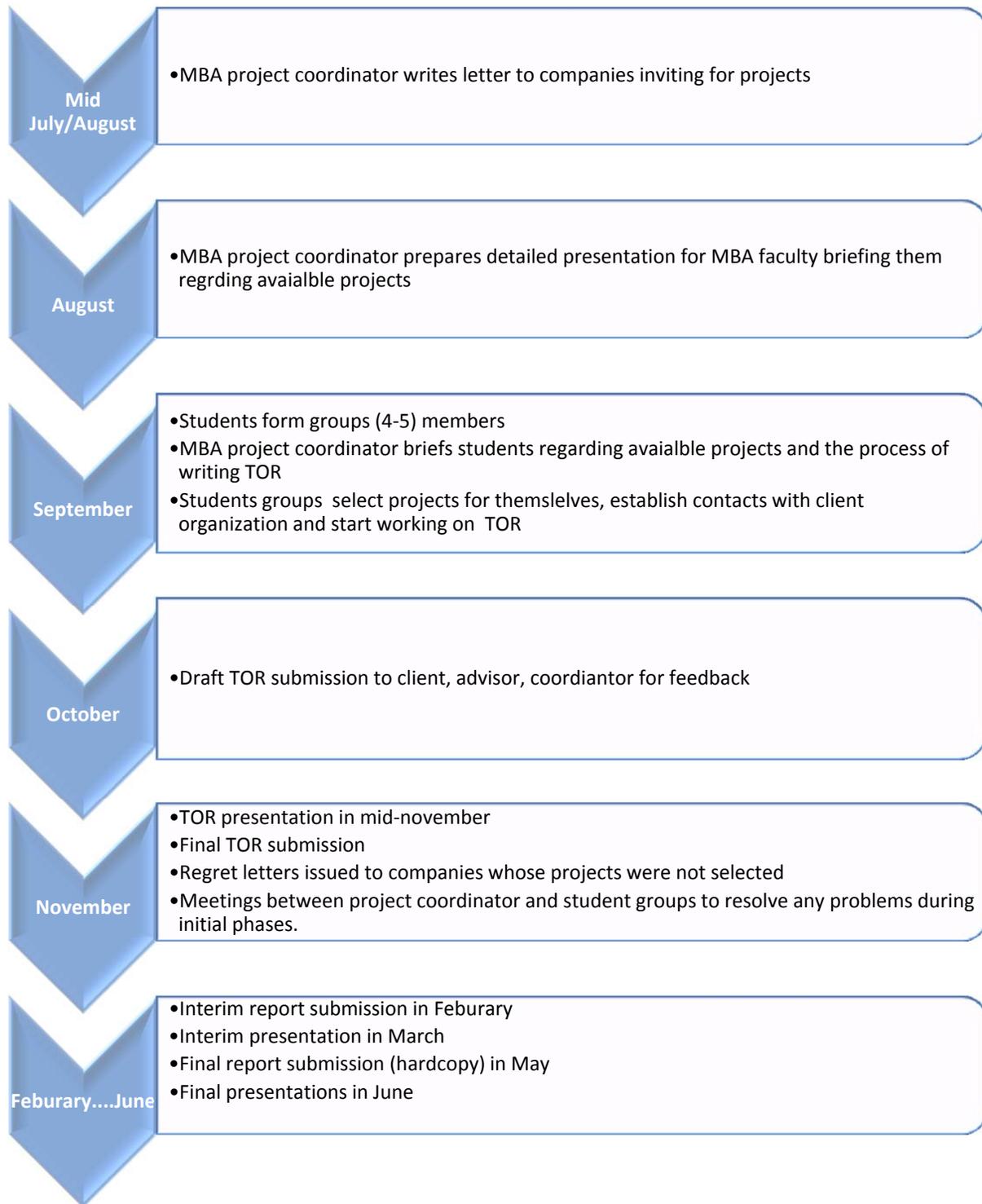
During this initial phase of the project, students should be able to determine not only the key objectives / problems but also the methodology or the implementation strategy of the project. It must be determined that what data must be collected and how it must be collected and what resources are needed from the client? What are the benefits of the successful outcome of the project?

Terms of Reference set out the scope and purpose of the study or the project. In this phase the clients specify their ideas and requirements, which are then used to formulate a TOR. It includes following elements:

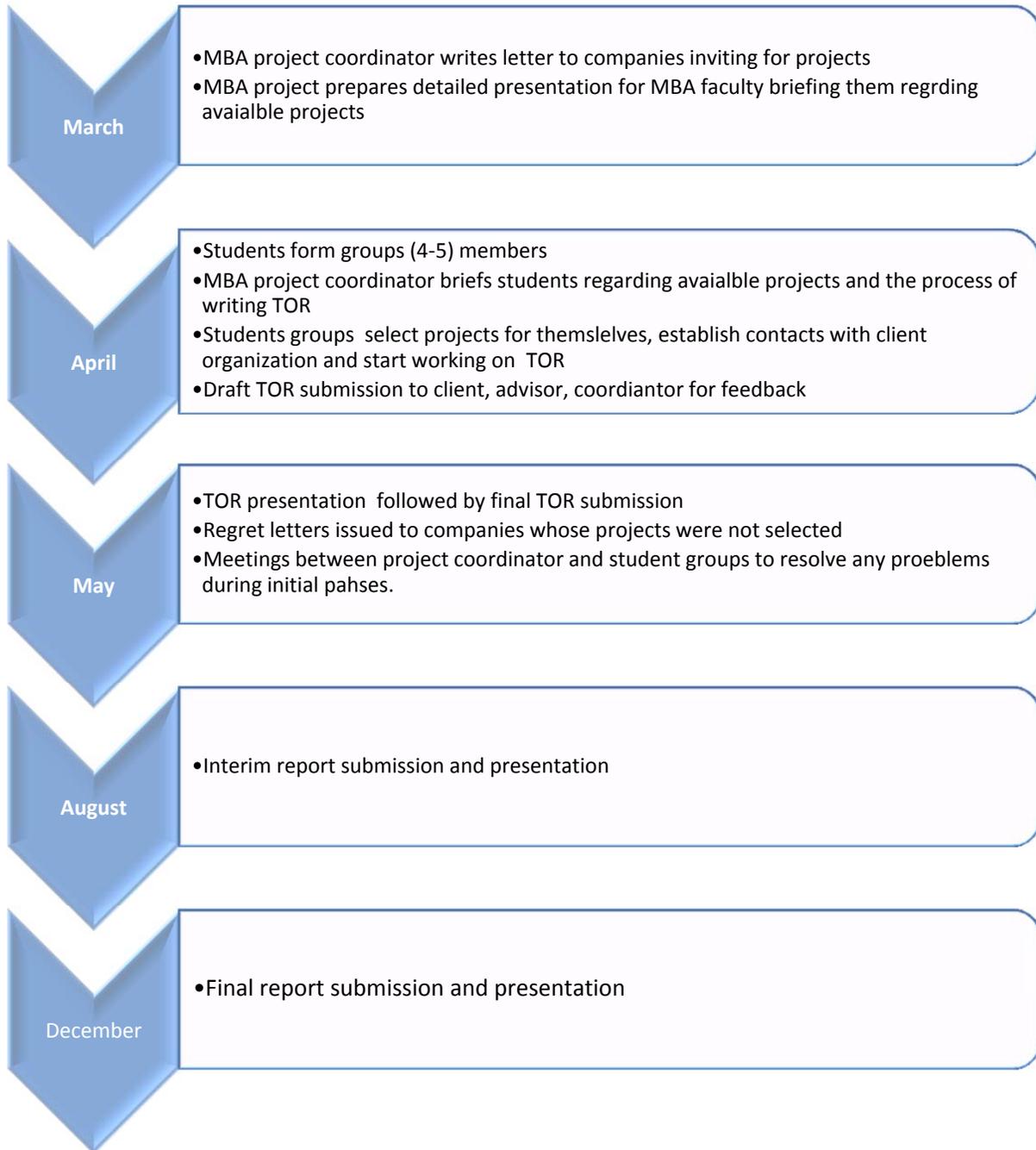
- Background of the project
- The main objectives / tasks
- Specific technical inputs or areas of in-depth investigation
- Methodology to execute project
- Geographic scope and location
- Timeline of activities
- Project outputs or key deliverables (in the form of a report)
- Resources required, both human and financial

TOR must also provide a brief framework of diagnosis phase, design and analysis phase and implementation phase of the project. So the client organization contact person knows exactly what the student / consultant / researcher intend to do in their organization in the coming weeks. Moreover, each phase of the project requires different set of information and activities etc. When students / consultants / researchers have prepared the TOR, it must be presented to the client to have a consensus on TOR and client feedback is incorporated.

MBA Project Activity Timeline – Morning and Evening Non BBA Stream Students



MBA Project Activity Timeline – Morning and Evening BBA Stream Students



MBA Project Assessment

Successful MBA project includes:

- Identification and conceptualization of problem by students.
- Excellent guiding and mentoring by MBA adviser / coordinator
- Well structured MBA project plan. Phase wise deadlines/ deliverables / resources needed list etc.
- Project methodology and tools/data collection technologies
- Efficient/effective team work and healthy cooperation and team dynamics. Good client-student relationship
- Top quality reports and deliverables
- Open communication and feedback between students - adviser, students - coordinator and students - client.

Section 4: Grading Plan

The MBA project Deliverables:

During the course of MBA project lifecycle, a student is expected to produce five deliverables, the following table summarizes the grading plan with respect to each of these deliverables:

Deliverable	Grading Status	Weight age in Final Grade	Deliverable Sub-component	Sub-component Weight age
Group submission	Not Graded	-	None	-
TOR submission	Graded	10%	None	-
Interim Progress Update	Graded	25%	Interim Presentation	30%
			Interim Report	70%
Final Progress Update	Graded	65%	Final Presentation	30%
			Final Report	70%

Grades and Specifications:

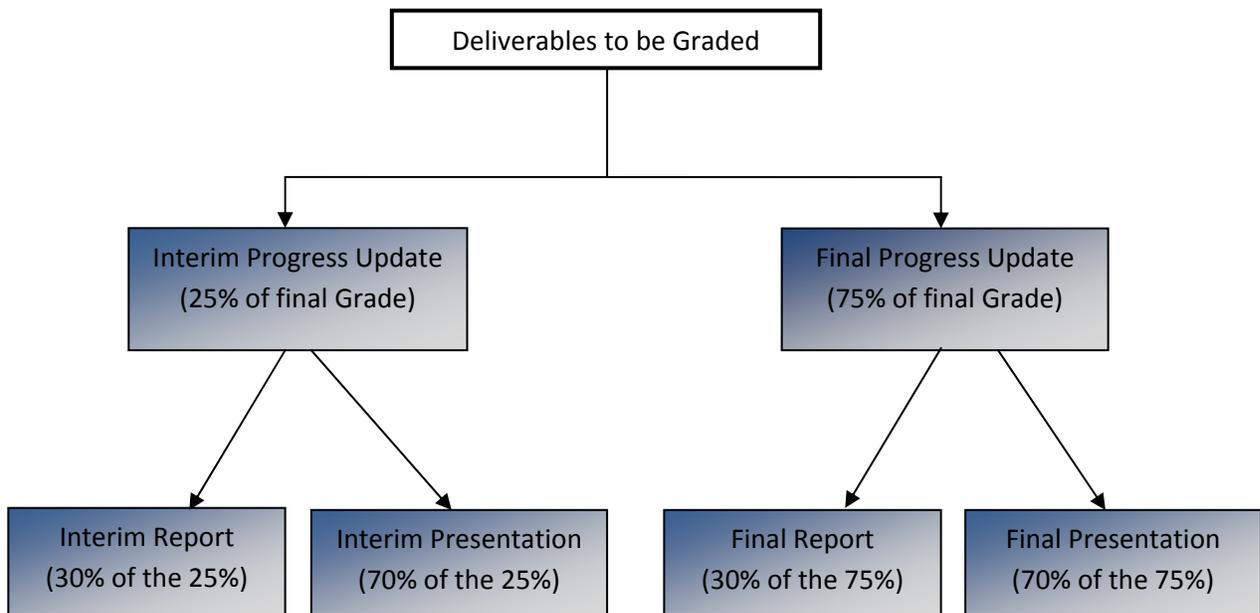
- Different grades may be awarded to individuals within a same group
- MBA project carries 6.0 credit hours (equal to two courses).

Grading Authority:

The grading authority for each deliverable is split between the project coordinator and project advisor in (50-50) ratio. The following chart depicts the grading authority breakup.

Note:

Every box with a gradient means the specific deliverable/deliverable sub-component will be co-graded by the project Coordinator and project Advisor in a 50-50 split-up.



Grading Criteria Checklist:

The following checklist is designed to highlight the important of different project attributes which contribute towards the final grade secured by the students.

✓	Clarity of TOR
✓	Rigor exhibited in qualitative research
✓	Accuracy of facts, figures and graphs quoted in the report
✓	Analysis of facts and figures
✓	Application of qualitative and quantitative tools
✓	Methodology adopted by students for solution implementation
✓	Commercial relevance and financial implications of the proposed solution
✓	Structure of the interim and final report
✓	Quality and relevance of the recommendations made
✓	Final conclusion of the report
✓	Client feedback

Appendix 1

MBA Project Final Grading Criteria Grid

Criteria	Grading Scale				
	Weak	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Presentation:					
Analysis relevant to Data					
Level of Analysis					
Confidence, Eye Contact and Communication					
Eye Contact					
Communication					
Report:					
Conceptualization of the problem					
Literature Review					
Research Design					
Data Collection and Analysis					
Conclusions and Recommendations					
Rigor in the report					
Structure of the report					
Solution relevancy to the problem					
Creativity / Out of the Box Thinking Skills					
Demonstration of Problem Solving Skills					
Analytical Thinking skills					
Report Writing Skills					
Demonstration of Conducting a business Research from conceptualization to implementation research					
Macro level analysis and sector level analysis					
Existing problem analysis and exiting Business model of the firm					
Industry level analysis					
Feedback from the Client: (1-10 Scale)					
Team Work					
Communication frequency (# of Visits)					
Overall satisfaction with the outcome of the report (1-10 Scale)					

MBA Project Invitation Letter

<Date>

MBA PROJECT

Dear Sir/Madam,

IBA would like to invite your company to engage one of our student groups in a relevant project with your organization. IBA students in the second year of the MBA Programme; undertake a management consulting assignment called the **MBA Project**. The student group will conduct primary and field research, analyze the issue that you want investigated and find cost effective implementable solutions.

The areas in which our students are interested in doing projects include.

- New ventures / Feasibility Studies
- Management Control Systems
- Human Resource Restructuring
- Strategic Analysis & Management
- Marketing Strategy
- Supply Chain Management

However, we will welcome other projects or problems that your organization requires in-depth analysis for including suggestions for improvements. These MBA projects will be conducted under close supervision of IBA faculty -advisory committee.

If you would like our students to work on a project in your organization, please contact us with a brief description of your requirements and scope of the project. Student groups whose interests match project requirements will then contact you directly. Please send a brief scope of the project, name and contact information of the person in your organization dealing with your MBA Project to **Dr. Nasir Afghan** (MBA Program Director) or **Asad Ilyas**(Co-coordinator MBA Projects), before <Date>.

nafghan@iba.edu.pk

Cell: 03028499324

Direct line: 021-99261803.

ailyas@iba.edu.pk

Cell: 0321-279-2862