NUS BUSINESS SCHOOL

BMA5901 Management Practicum Guidelines

Module objectives

1. The management Practicum aims to achieve the following objectives:
    a. Increase the practical relevance of the program
    b. Provide opportunities for students to apply the concepts and theories to business situations
    c. Strengthen linkages with the industry by offering the expertise available in the NUS school on specific projects
    d. Broaden the menu of course offerings in terms of pedagogical approaches

Nature of Module

1. The module will be worth 4 Management Credits (MCs), starting from 1 August 2009

2. Students can earn credit by completing one of the following three options:
    a. A Management Consulting project
    b. An industry case study
    c. An industry visit report

Module Enrolment

3. Students pursuing options (a) and (b) should normally enroll into the module two weeks before the commencement of each semester. Students cannot drop the module once the add/drop period is over unless there are extenuating circumstances. For Option c, the module enrolment will be related to visit schedules and are subject to the approval of the Academic Director.

4. Students will be allowed to enroll in this module only once during the MBA program.

5. Depending on the nature of the projects, the faculty member supervising specific projects can stipulate module perquisites.

6. A practicum can be completed by an individual or a team of students of no more than 4 students. Students will be allowed to form teams themselves, or at the discretion of the faculty member supervising the practicum.

7. All practicum must be approved by the Academic Director.

8. Approval will be on the basis of students' proposals which are to specify the objectives of the practicum, the general approach to be adopted, the deliverables expected, the schedule including date of completion, the resources required, and the support to be provided by the firm, if any.

Guidelines for the Consulting Project

Workload and Module Output

9. Each student should spend a minimum of 60 hours on the project, including company visits, individual and group work, report writing, and presentation to management. This is approximately equivalent to class contact hours, preparation, project work, and other continual assessment work in 2 MC modules.

10. The output of the module should be a substantial management report and an oral presentation to company personnel (See Appendix A).

Supervision

11. A faculty member will supervise each team of students. He or she will meet with student team members regularly, to monitor the progress of the project. Students are expected to keep a personal log book. This is to facilitate the monitoring of students' progress.

12. Students will be responsible for locating supervisors.

Grading

13. The faculty member supervising the team will assign grades for individual students. Team members may or may not get the same grade, depending on their individual contribution to the project, as assessed by the supervisor through observation and mechanisms such as peer review or evaluation.

14. Grading of the module could be based on the following criteria:
    i. Comprehensiveness and depth of analysis (30%).
    ii. Appropriateness, feasibility, and creativity of recommendations (50%).
    iii. Quality of presentation (20%).

15. The faculty member should get feedback from the organization's management on the student's or team's performance. However, grading should be an internal NUS process.

Scope of Projects and Administration

16. Faculty members and students should ensure there is no Conflict of Interest—e.g., faculty members should not supervise projects for firms who have engaged them as consultants.

17. Students working on a project who are related to the management of the organization should make this declaration.

18. Students should declare all compensation that they are to receive from any firm for the practicum. However, the receipt of payment does not prevent enrollment for this module.

Further Outputs from Projects

19. The faculty member supervising the projects can generate further outputs from the project materials such as through teaching cases or working papers. He or she should seek written approval from the organization in such undertakings, as confidential information or proprietary data may be involved.

Financial Support

20. Out-of-pocket costs of executing specific projects, for example, costs of conducting surveys for market research, should be borne by the organization concerned.

Guidelines for an industry case study

21. Students may also choose to write a publishable case study on an industry/ organization under the supervision of a faculty member.

22. The case study must be of a sufficiently high quality to be published in outlets such as the Case research Journal or the Asian Case research Journal.

23. The case also should be analytical and not just descriptive—i.e., it must contain analysis of the data presented, preferably in the form of a teaching note.

24. The formatting and presentation guidelines for the case study, as well as grading of the case study, are similar to those for the consulting project report.

Guidelines for study tour reports

25. The MBA office organizes study tours to different locations. These study tours include company visits and executive talks, among other activities.

26. Students may write an industry report as part of tours, to complete the requirements of the Management Practicum.

27. The reports must be analytical and not simply descriptive. Students must synthesize the insights they gained from the company visits and executive talks, relate them to the material learned in other MBA courses and, possibly, identify future issues and directions for the organization visited or discussed.

28. Students may also choose to do reports on cross-national or cross-cultural comparisons with regard to business practices, strategies or other similar issues. These reports must be sufficiently rigorous to incorporate key insights from existing literatures on these topics.

29. The formatting, writing and grading guidelines are similar to those for the consulting project report.

<u>Appendix A: Professionally Prepared Management Report and Presentation</u>

a. The report must be typewritten with proper headings and sub-headings. The text should have double spacing, 12-font size. The report should consist of a title page, table of content, executive summary, main body of text, appendices and references. Each page should have 1.5 inch margin on the left and 1.0 inch margin on the top, bottom and right. Sources of information or data must be referenced. The report should usually be more than 25 pages but may not exceed 50 pages.

b. Presentations to organizations should be done professionally, and in keeping with presentations undertaken by consultants.