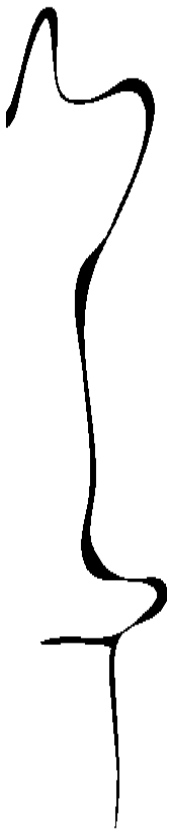




UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Bachelor of Science in

International Business Administration



COURSE SYLLABUS Bachelor Thesis

201200015 - Bachelor Thesis IBA/BK

15 EC

Language of the course: English

Period: 3rd year / 3rd quartile (preparation) / 4th quartile (execution) or
4th quartile (preparation) / 1st quartile (execution)

Pre-requisite: 1st year Bachelor & 75 EC (135 EC in total)

Contact: Programme Coordinator

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1. Introduction

In the Bachelor Thesis course you show your acquisition of competences as mentioned in the intended learning outcomes of the BSc-programme in International Business Administration. At the School of Management and Governance two quartiles of the BSc Programme in International Business Administration are reserved for the execution of the research proposal for a bachelor thesis.

If you have obtained 135 EC in the scheduled study pace you can start in April (4th quartile,); otherwise you start in September (if you could not do so in April).

The research proposal, that is part of the course, *has to be prepared mainly in the quartile preceding your thesis work.*

The Bachelor Thesis course enables you to explore a topic of interest in detail and to demonstrate gaining in-depth knowledge and competencies as mentioned in the intended learning outcomes of the BSc BA programme.

1.1 Learning objectives

Upon finalizing the Bachelor Thesis course you are expected to show proficiency in:

- formulating a research question;
- applying fundamental business management concepts and/or theories to analyse the research question; develop a research framework (model if applicable); and/or design a solution for a business problem;
- adopting a coherent research design, and using appropriate data collection and analysis techniques for the validation of the empirical findings (if applicable);

- demonstrating the scientific contribution and practical relevance of the research carried out;
- providing a consistent, well-structured and -argued text of a Bachelor Thesis article;
- planning and managing your own learning process; and
- presenting and defending results of your Bachelor Thesis course during the Students' Bachelor Thesis Conference .

1.2 Deliverables

As a result of finalizing the Bachelor Thesis course you are expected to deliver:

- A research proposal for your individual research project;
- Three or more submissions reporting your paper-in-progress (see timetable)
- An individual final report, comparable with a scientific article (prepared for a possible contribution to a conference, book, and/or journal manuscript); fixed deadlines per quartile – in-line with the conference template
- Presentation of your results of the course at the Students Conference.

Ψ: In this format, you do not hold a bachelor thesis colloquium. Instead, you present your thesis at a student conference that is the final stage of the course.

1.3 Types of assignments for the bachelor thesis

The Bachelor Thesis course is a research-oriented assignment, with justified choices towards theoretical, empirical, or design contribution to existing knowledge within the (International) Business Administration field of inquiry.

Whatever placement you choose (together with supervisors), the Thesis assignment should contribute to running research projects within the (International) Business Administration field of inquiry at the University of Twente.

The thesis project can be conducted in either:

- The University of Twente (so-called "internal assignment"); in case of an empirical research, you will visit organizations as an outside observer.

Ψ: In this option you take part in research projects generated by faculty members (see 2.1, Calls for Proposals)

- A company (so-called "external assignment"); you will conduct research from within a company, with a focus on participative research.

Ψ: It brings additional challenges, however. Please be aware that it may cause delay in the thesis progress: conducting external assignments needs extra and serious time management (because of the involvement of an external organization). Your thesis supervisor must approve the subject, so timely contact is a necessity!

- A foreign university (so-called "international assignment"); you may choose to participate in international research, with a focus on international management aspects within a specific knowledge domain.

Ψ: Preparations for an international assignment should begin at least four months prior to leaving The Netherlands. Again, because another organisation is involved, time management is very important.

NB! As oriented towards knowledge development, the Thesis cannot be treated as a confidential document. In case of sensitive empirical data, it is your responsibility to ensure the anonymity of the data, analysis, and results. It is also your responsibility to

reach a consensus with the hosting organization on a public version of the thesis. This particularly applies to external assignments.

2. Thesis research project & supervision

2.1 Finding a research project

Business Administration research groups place Calls for (Bachelor Thesis) Proposals within specific topics in December-January each academic year. These topics are valid for theses in 4th and 1st quartiles.

Ψ: The topics for the bachelor theses are published once per year, and hold through 4th and 1st quartiles.

Topics are a subject to annual changes, depending on the status of running research projects within the groups.

Be advised to monitor these Calls at the Blackboard site during the 3rd quartile, even if you plan to write your bachelor thesis in the 1st quartile. Minor deviation from the Call for Proposals is subject to discussion with supervisors.

Students apply for a research project by writing a research proposal and submitting it to their supervisor before the start of the bachelor thesis. Based on the research proposal the supervisor decides for a "go" or "no-go" decision to supervise the thesis. In case of a "no-go" decision the student can re-apply for a bachelor thesis in the next possible quartile by submitting a new research proposal at the end of the current quartile.

In case of a disagreement regarding a "no-go" decision, students are free to submit an appeal to the BSc thesis working group and the programme director. The motivated appeal should be submitted within 2 days after the "no-go" decision.

If you write your BSc thesis in the 4th quartile, you submit the research proposal in the first of week of the 4th quartile. If you write your BSc thesis in the 1st quartile, you submit your research proposal before the summer break.

2.2 Supervision

You will receive guidance from two UT-M&G (MB) faculty members whose responsibility is to give you academic advice in writing a good Thesis paper.

The 1st supervisor (also known as the lead supervisor) is an expert in the field from the Call for Proposals. The 2nd supervisor is invited as a "reading committee member" to monitor and help, if needed, in the progress of the thesis. Guidance includes reading and assessing all drafts and the final article during the research project, and assessing the presentation and defence of the final thesis.

The official start of Thesis work is marked by signing the Bachelor Thesis Project form (so-called "SMS").

In general students meet with their supervisor(s) every 2 weeks. In week 5 supervisors may decide – after consulting with the Programme Director – to discontinue providing supervision, if they, after several advisory sessions observe that you fail to sufficiently progress in the project. In such instance, you can start a new project in the next quartile, if necessary with new supervisors. The supervisor decides whether the thesis can be continued or a new research project needs to be started.

External supervisor

When working on an Thesis project in an external organization, it is essential that you have a contact at the organization, who acts as an external advisor. This external supervisor must have sufficient knowledge and experience to supervise the BSc student in the Thesis project.

The external supervisor is:

- 'sparring partner' with regard to the project content;
- source of information with regard to data acquisition and project implementation;
- organisational gatekeeper in so far as relevant to project implementation;
- process advisor during the project implementation;
- adviser with regard to the assessment of the project results, the Thesis and the student's performance.

NB! Although the external supervisor is involved in the Thesis project's successful execution, the UT supervisors are responsible for grading your Bachelor Thesis, in accordance to the IBA BSc programme learning goals and related criteria. The UT is not responsible for an external project and will therefore not sign Thesis agreements with external parties. This is a matter between student and external organisation.

ψ: Make sure to have a meeting with UT and external advisor(s) together at the very beginning of the project.

2.3 Working in Bachelor Thesis research groups

Every Bachelor Thesis project is an individual work, and is graded individually. However, it is recommended to consider combining research effort in a group with peers, to obtain better and timely results.

For example, students may work on one research question from the Call for Proposals but diverge in research methods; or students may consider approaching the same research problem from different theoretical perspectives. In any scenario, research proposals with a possibility for team work and individual contribution should be discussed with supervisor(s).

2.4 Your role in this course

Be pro-active and think in advance about your research interests in business

studies; prepare all formalities and read necessary documents on time.

Study activities in this course include individual (and group) work:

- Individual work – reading articles, writing your research proposal, conducting peer review of other research proposals, writing the Thesis (article), and presenting it at the Students Conference.
- If your project is part of a group project, team work is essential. You may be expected to participate in discussions during the sessions, conducting (parts of) the project in collaboration with peers if the project requires .

3. Assessment

The final Thesis article will only be accepted for the Students' Conference with a mark of 5 or higher; in case the mark is 5, you must revise.

Appendix 1 shows the assessment matrix that supervisors will use to evaluate the final version of the thesis.

The graduation committee (consisting of your UT supervisors) assesses the Bachelor thesis using eight criteria:

- Research question
- Literature review & Theoretical framework
- Research method / design
- Data collection and analysis / Validation of the design
- Conclusions & recommendations / Contribution to theory & practice
- Writing structure and style
- Independence and professional skills
- Oral presentation and defence

These criteria are not equally-weighted. The quality of the content of the thesis and the contribution of the research / design to the relevant academic field may weigh more heavily than student's performance at the oral presentation & defence. You must earn at least a 6 for the Bachelor Thesis Course.

Each UT supervisor fills in the assessment form (Appendix 1) separately; and after the presentation of the thesis, supervisors (including external ones if appropriate) discuss the final mark.

You will be asked to fill in an evaluation form about this course, to enhance its quality. The forms are to be handed in to BOZ before the students conference.

4. Academic conduct

Along with the Thesis article, you will submit the check-list where you declare to have followed the academic integrity rules in preparing your bachelor thesis.

Any student found to have engaged, or attempted to engage, in any of the following while within the university's jurisdiction, will be subject to disciplinary action by the program.

5. Planning the project and milestones

Week		Activity	Grade	Remarks
4 th quartile	1 st quartile			
Quartile 3; week 2-3	Throughout the 4 th quartile	Students: Monitoring the Bb site for the Calls for Bachelor theses' proposals	no	
Week 1 Monday 9.00 AM	Quartile 4; Before the summer break	Students: Submission of the research proposal	Go/ no-go decision	Students: submit an SMS form for thesis supervision to BOZ
Quartile 4; Week 3	Quartile 1; Week 3	Students: submission of the paper-in-progress 1		Students may be involved in peer-reviews (not obligatory)
Quartile 4; Week 5 Monday 9.00 AM	Quartile 1 Week 5 Monday 9.00 AM	Students: submission of the paper-in-progress 2		Students may be involved in peer-reviews (not obligatory)
Quartile 4; Week 5	Quartile 1 Week 5	Supervisors: estimation for the timely completion of the project	If no sufficient progress is observed, a decision to discontinue the bachelor thesis project is taken	
Quartile 4; Week 7	Quartile 1 Week 7	Students: submission of the paper-in-progress 3		Students may be involved in peer-reviews (not obligatory) Supervisors: informing BOZ about principal "go/no-go" decision for the graduation.
Quartile 4; Week 9 Monday 9.00 AM	Quartile 1 Week 9 Monday 9:00 AM	Students: pre-final submission		Green light meetings
Quartile 4; Week 10 Monday 11.00 AM	Quartile 1 Week 10 Monday 11.00 AM	Students: final submission of the thesis		Thesis should be submitted in a conference format (according to template)
Quartile 4; Week 10 (or 11) Thursday or Friday	Quartile 1 Week 10 Thursday or Friday	Students conference	Final grade for the thesis Students fill in the evaluation forms and join the LinkedIn group of BA BSc alumni.	Graduation after the conference (altogether, best-paper awards).

6. Thesis formalities

6.1 Registering for the Bachelor Thesis course

Once the lead advisor accepts a thesis proposal, the student must formally register by completing the 'Bachelor Thesis Project Form'.

The required information must be entered within the web application Student Mobility System (SMS), webapps.utwente.nl (login to your ICT account).

Students are responsible to check whether they fulfilled the requirements to start the thesis project beforehand (1st year of Bachelor and 75 EC, 135 ECs in total).

Appendix1: Bachelor Thesis Assessment Matrix

Student Name: _____

Student number: _____

Assessment criteria	≤ 5	6	7	8	9	10
Research question	Unclear	Broad	Clear and specific	Clear, specific and well-defined	Clear, specific, well-defined and original	Excellent and innovative
Literature review & Theoretical framework	Almost no link with the scientific literature	Limited explanation of the scientific literature	Adequate explanation of the scientific literature; use of a loose conceptual framework	Well-explained and somewhat critical description of the literature; use of a clear conceptual framework	Critical evaluation of the literature; use of a very clear conceptual framework	Excellent; Profound and critical evaluation of the literature leading to a very clear conceptual framework
Research method / design	Disorganized; not based on the scientific literature	Limited explanation; vaguely justified using the scientific literature	Adequate explanation; appropriately justified using the scientific literature	Well-explained and well-justified using the scientific literature	Profound and critical explanation and evaluation of the research method	Excellent; original & innovative method.
Data collection and analysis / Validation of the design	Inadequately described; unclear analysis	Rather limited explanation; clear analysis	Adequate explanation; clear analysis	Well-explained; very clear analysis and validation	Profound demonstration of data collection and analysis; very clear validation	Excellent; application of latest, broad and in-depth analytical techniques, and validation
Conclusions & recommendations / Contribution to theory	Vague	Clear but not based on the reported findings	Conclusions based on the reported findings; appropriate recommendations for future research	Conclusions firmly based on the reported findings; valuable recommendations for future research	Profound conclusions; original recommendations for future research	Excellent; original and innovative contribution to the existing knowledge on the subject
Conclusions & recommendations / Contribution to practice	Vague	Clear but not based on the reported findings	Conclusions based on the reported findings; appropriate recommendations for practice, practical implications	Conclusions firmly based on the reported findings; valuable recommendations for practice, practical implications	Profound conclusions; original recommendations for practice, practical implications	Excellent; original and innovative recommendations for practice, practical implications

	≤ 5	6	7	8	9	10
Writing structure and style	Poor; illogical structure	Clear and consistent	Clear and consistent; adequately expressed	Clear and consistent; well-expressed; appropriately argued	Very clear and consistent structure; strong arguments	Excellent; enthuses and engages the reader
Independence and professional skills	Dependent on supervisors; poor demonstration of timely & well-prepared communication and other skills	Not so independent; satisfactory demonstration of skills	Semi-independent; good demonstration of skills	Rather independent; very good demonstration of skills	Very independent; superior demonstration of skills	Excellent; superior demonstration of skills, and helped other perform better in their project
Oral presentation and defense	Scrappy presentation; ambiguous answers	Satisfactory	Good	Very good; clear demonstration of engagement with the subject	Very good; superior demonstration of engagement with the subject	Excellent; superb demonstration of engagement with the subject
					FINAL MARK:	

Comments (if any):

Date:

Name of Examiner 1:

Name of Examiner 2:

Signature:

Signature:

