



International
Business College
Mitrovica

From Theory To Practice

Bachelor Thesis Manual 2017

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1. Goals and objectives of the Bachelor thesis

To complete your Bachelor you must write an individual bachelor thesis. The objective of the bachelor project is to prove that you are able to demonstrate the ability to process, based on a methodical and theoretical basis, a complex issue related to a concrete, practical task. As a rule, the bachelor project will take its point of departure in the company where you have undergone your internship.

Knowledge:

The student will:

- have knowledge about the profession's and subject area's applied theory and methods along with practice
- be able to understand theory and methods along with being able to reflect upon the profession's application of theory and methods

Skills:

The student will:

- be able to apply methods and tools for collation and analysis of information and will master the skills related to employment in the profession
- be able to assess theoretical and practical problems and substantiate the chosen actions and solutions
- be able to communicate practical and professional problems and solutions for colleagues and users

Competencies:

The student will:

- be able to handle complex and development-oriented situations in relation to work and study
- be able to independently enter into academic and interdisciplinary cooperative work and take on responsibility within the settings of professional ethics
- be able to identify their own learning needs and, in relation to the profession, develop their own knowledge and skills

1.1 Prerequisites:

You must have passed all previous examinations of the programme.

2. Assignment description

The bachelor assignment is an interdisciplinary, written thesis that contains material from at least three disciplines that were covered in the programme. The thesis must be completed by the individual student and the paper takes its point of departure in key issues within the areas of study, thus combining knowledge from various elements.

The bachelor thesis should be based on information gathered in our country and/or abroad. The thesis should demonstrate the ability to prepare, analyze and assess the gathered data as well demonstrate how the accumulated knowledge can be combined with the theory and methodology from the programme's subjects. The bachelor paper must be supplemented by an executive summary of no more than two standard pages.

3. Content and wording of the issue to be treated

You will work out the content of your paper with your mentor. The mentor will make sure that the assignment can be completed and that it represents a qualified academic challenge.

4. Who will be your mentor?

IBCM students can specify a preferred mentor by the beginning of seventh semester according to primary area of study you have chosen and will be confirmed by IBCM. Your mentor will be one of IBCM lecturers.

As early as possible, but no later than the beginning of seventh semester, you must reach an agreement with your mentor regarding your bachelor thesis. The agreement includes a topic, learning objectives, and deadlines. IBCM students have the responsibility to ensure that this agreement is signed by you and your supervisor and submitted to student services at the start of the seventh semester. In some cases, IBCM lecturers can refuse to accept a student, in which case the head of department can advise on the selection of other available mentors.

If in the course of the internship your bachelor thesis takes a different academic angle than what you originally expected, contact the head of department if you need to change your mentor. If it just requires rewriting your problem statement or slight modifications to the topic, you should contact your mentor.

5. Responsibilities of you and your mentor

Your mentor is there to offer you counseling/advice, but it is entirely up to you to write the paper.

When you need individual counseling, you must make an appointment with your mentor. When you make an appointment, you should have a clear overview (in writing) of the issues you wish to discuss. A plan for your writing process will allow you to calculate when you might need counseling and allow you to make appointments ahead.

It is mandatory that you stay in close contact with your mentor both prior to and during the writing process. How you will work together depends on your agreement with your mentor, which includes meeting milestones and submitting drafts of written work well in advance of the final deadline. Internal deadlines agreed with the mentor must be strictly followed

You may not submit your thesis without the written approval of your mentor.

Remember, your mentor can help you clear up any unclear points, and is a resource you should take advantage of. You are responsible for making use of this offer and you are also responsible for defining any questions you may have. The more precise you can make your questions, the more precise your counseling will be.

6. General information

Since the bachelor paper is part of the final bachelor examination, the deadlines *must* be kept. Any deviance from deadlines will be considered a failure to attend the exam.

Confidential papers, i.e. papers that may not be read by others than the evaluators, will not be made available in the library. You have to inform IBCM in such cases.

If you do not submit your paper on time, or if you receive a mark under 02, you must revise and re-submit the paper according to the deadlines set by IBCM. Students will have two

chances to pass the thesis in order to graduate according to schedule. A third may only be granted one time and will be subject to additional fees paid by the student.

7. Formal requirements of the paper

You must adhere to the “**Required Format for Project Reports**” document. This gives you all relevant information regarding requirements, how to structure your work as well as presentation technique.

The Bachelor thesis is an individual report and should normally comprise of maximum 40 pages of written work, excluding appendices.

- A student must submit the thesis to the mentor by week 17 in the semester, normally in early February;
- The mentor has to and provide feedback to the student for final revision, prior to official submission, within one week (week 18);
- The student then has to revise and submit thesis to the mentor for final approval in week 20.
- The mentor then has one additional week to provide written approval that the student has met all minimum requirements for the bachelor thesis to be graded.
- Mentor can reject the thesis being submitted in case that all requirements are not satisfactorily completed as per guidelines provided at the start of the semester.
- Once the student receives the written approval, the form must be submitted to student services in order to formally upload the thesis on Google Classroom.
- Three hard copies of the thesis must be submitted to Student Services.

Beyond the requirements, you may choose your own layout and section headings, etc. You want to aim for a neat, clear and well-illustrated report.

As a minimum, your bachelor paper must contain the following elements:

7.1 Cover page

The cover page must clearly state: the title of the paper, the number of keystrokes, the date of delivery, your name and student number, as well as the correct designations for the academy, the programme and your class.

7.2 Executive summary

The thesis must include a 1-2-page executive summary. The summary is not the same as the conclusion. It must be a summary of what the thesis deals with, its key issues, investigations and conclusions.

7.3 Literature Review

The thesis must include a review of the literature that reflects the current knowledge on the topic and provide context for the problem being addressed in the thesis.

7.4 Problem statement

The thesis must include a clear, concise problem statement that describes the main issues and investigative questions that the paper aims at addressing.

7.5 Methodology

The report must include a separate methodology section where you explain the research methods and models used in the paper.

7.6 Analysis

The analysis is the core area of your paper and is where you show that you can apply theory to a practical problem. The analysis may be quite long, so be sure to summarize your results along the way in a well-structured manner.

7.7 Discussion

This is where you discuss various proposals to the company (if applicable to your thesis) based on your methodology and the results of your analyses. Be sure to substantiate your approaches in the theories and models you have chosen to use in your paper – your personal opinion is not enough.

7.8 Conclusion and recommendations

Your conclusion must address the issues you have set out to investigate in the paper. This is where you draw up conclusions and propose solutions based on the results of the entire assignment – and you must not leave your reader(s) in doubt.

8. General advice

8.1 Be critical

Have a critical attitude to your sources and what you write. The good bachelor paper is well-founded and substantiated – i.e. it is based on reliable sources and all of your approaches are based on the theory and models you have used in the assignment.

8.2 Be structured

Take care with your structure and keep your audience in mind. Keep your main thread evident so that your audience is always able to anticipate the next section of your report.

8.3 Proofread

Proofread your report at least five times to make sure that it meets all your requirements. Many minor mistakes can have a huge effect on the impression the report makes on the audience.

8.4 Do not plagiarise

No report that makes use of others' written work without clear references to the original source will be accepted. If there is any doubt that a text from other sources appears as your own, it will be considered cheating. No copying from any other papers or publications is allowed. Cheating or careless handling of source material will have serious consequences. At best, the report will only be rejected, which means that you have failed and can only be recommended for examination at a later date. At worst it may mean expulsion. The following definition of cheating is applied:

“Cheating” refers to unauthorized help on an assignment, quiz, or examination in any method of transmission of knowledge: (a) a student must not receive from third parties, another student or give to another student any assistance, information, or answers during an exam (b) a student must not use unauthorized sources in their BA project. The example of APA referencing: (*Adapted from Tools for Teaching, B G Davis, 1993, pp.300*)

“Plagiarism” means submitting work that is someone else's as one's own: (a) using an author's work which is paraphrased or presented without a reference, (b) copying other

students' work; including items of assessment which are written in conjunction with other students (without prior permission of your lecturer) (c) submitting work which has already been submitted for assessment previously in another course.

You are expected to complete tasks to the best of your ability without resorting to cheating or plagiarizing, as defined above.

9. Guidelines for evaluation of the Bachelor thesis paper

It is not possible to give detailed guidelines for evaluation of a BA paper, but below are some of the things taken into account:

1. Formulation of the problem statement and delimitation of the thesis statement
2. Application and choice of theory and models
3. Depth of analysis
4. How well-founded the paper is in general and the discussion in particular
5. Correlation between the problem statement and the conclusions and recommendations
6. Structure
7. Quality of the sources
8. Spelling and writing ability (including punctuation)

9.1 Other things to take into consideration

Beyond the above, you should be aware that your efforts will also be assessed according to:

- your ability to assess information
- critical analysis of source material
 - the company's information/action, if applicable
 - other sources
- the analysis
 - the degree of difficulty of information retrieval
 - the specific country/area
 - the degree of desk and field research
 - your ability to develop questionnaires, etc.
 - your ability to conduct key interviews, etc.
 - your ability in general to retrieve data
- the conclusions and recommendations

10. Grading of the Bachelor thesis

The grade of the Bachelor thesis consists of the thesis grade and the oral examination grade. Thereby the thesis grade is considered with 70% of the overall value, the oral examination grade is considered with 30% of the overall value. The Bachelor thesis has to be assessed by two examiners, of which one is the IBCM supervisor of the Bachelor thesis. In cases of disagreement over the grade, the examiners have to build an average of their valuations.

10.1 Written Examination

The level of the written part is judged by the advisor and an additional examiner before the oral exam, but no grade is given. The grade is based on the entire Bachelor assignment.

10.2 Oral examination

Based on his/her Bachelor thesis, a student has to sit an oral examination of 45 minutes. The oral Bachelor examination takes place within three weeks of the formal submission of the thesis following the mentor's approval.

The oral examination, based on the written report, allows you to elaborate / further substantiate your issues of investigation and proposals.

The mentor and external examiner will decide and award you the unofficial grade immediately following the oral examination. This grade covers the entire assignment – both written and oral. The official grade will be communicated through Student Services.

Your advisor and the external examiner give you feedback on your bachelor thesis via the examination and substantiation for the grade.

11. How the exam takes place

The academy will send you, by post or e-mail, an exam schedule.

The schedule will be sent to the advisors and external examiners with the papers to be judged.

The oral exam takes 45 minutes per student, including the awarding of the grade. The exam will typically be run thus:

15 min.: the student presents:

- the general key issues and conclusions of the paper
- methodology
- additions/adaptations to the report
- weighting of the subjects
- practical application, etc.
- strengths and weaknesses of the report

25 min.: mentor, external examiner and student

- questions and comments to the report
- does the report stick to the main thread?
- discussion of the conclusion

5. min.: awarding of unofficial grade

11.1. Failure of Bachelor thesis

If a student's Bachelor thesis is assessed with a final grade of 0 or grade -3, he/she failed and has to repeat the Bachelor thesis.

11.2. Repeating of Bachelor thesis

A Bachelor thesis is an examination and can be reviewed twice by the mentor during the semester. If the mentor does not approve of the thesis within these two attempts, the student can apply for a final attempt, subject to a small fee. No thesis will be accepted without mentor's approval.

12. Ethical and legal problems in connection with completing the company related Bachelor thesis paper

The Bachelor thesis paper may involve various forms of contact with people in companies, organizations or others.

You should be aware that although this is a Bachelor thesis exam, IBCM has no part of ownership of the paper. The students are not employees of IBCM and do not therefore act on behalf of the College nor are they subject to the control of the College. The College has

no claim on the student's property rights. Exceptions to this are the rare instances where students have been given use of IBCM's resources and the conditions dictated by the examinations. The paper must be available to the external examiner, examiner and the IBCM administration.

Unless otherwise agreed, the Bachelor thesis will be available for the public at the IBCM library. *Any student and/or company may make an agreement with IBCM for full confidentiality.*

Conflict may rise between a student and people connected to the academy if the student tries to use his/her rights to the report in order to sell it commercially. Conflict can be avoided if the parties follow these four recommendations:

Ethical recommendations:

1. The student and any commissioning parties of the report should make an "ethical contract" as soon as possible after the assignment has been defined. The contract should delineate the relationship between the parties so that the parties can determine copyright. This "ethical contract" should not prevent the student from further work with the project, even in cases where cooperation has ceased prematurely (see item 2).
2. Reports should not include information that originates from the commissioning parties or others who consider the information confidential. It should otherwise be agreed whether the information may be made public.
3. People contributing information to the student should be informed whether the information they provide will be distributed to others.
4. The student must not give the impression that he/she is acting on behalf of IBCM.

5. Important dates

Before 3rd semester	Deadline for choice of advisor
Week 17	Final draft submitted to mentor for review
Week 20	Final revised draft submitted to mentor to receive written approval for formal submission

If deadlines are not met, you must write a new Bachelor report.

If you fall ill and are unable to meet deadlines, you must at least 8 days before delivery date provide documentation for the delay (e.g. doctor's statement) and send a written, well-founded application for extension of deadline to the head of department. Depending on the situation, you may be granted an extension.

The head of department will determine whether or not dispensation can be granted for any other excuses.

Good luck!