MGSM953

Management Consulting: The Living Case Study

Term 1 North Ryde 2019

Department of Management

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
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Credit points
4

Prerequisites
((Admission to MBA and 32cp including MGSM835 and (MGSM820 or MGSM850)) or (admission to MSocEntre and 32cp including MGSM869) or (admission to GradCertMgtPostMBA)) and permission by special approval

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit is designed to introduce students to the management consulting sector and to enable them to confidently use the practice and processes of management consulting in the context of working on a specific, identified business issue for a client. The unit is designed to enable participants to assume the role of consultants to management and presents an intense experiential learning opportunity in a 'real world' situation. As such the unit is structured so that participants develop creative results-oriented solutions to the issue(s) faced by the client and to obtain the client's engagement and 'buy-in' to the recommended solutions.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Comprehensively research and synthesise complex business data in reference to the identified business problem, to develop commercially sound and ethically responsible recommendations to the client.

Apply relevant frameworks and models to analyse key data and produce multiple perspectives that address the client's engagement brief.

Assess, reflect and respond appropriately to a wide range of personalities, attitudes and perceptions with a view to influencing people with views that may be different to their

own

Integrate and address ethical, social and environmental responsibilities into recommendations submitted to the client.

Develop recommendations for the client that create sustainable value for clients by ensuring the client's organisational resilience and adaptability

General Assessment Information

For group work, it is assumed that all members have made a fair contribution and so will be awarded the same mark. You are required to contribute and participate fully in your group. You are required to contribute and participate fully in your group. At the end of this assessment task each student must submit a confidential peer review, for each member of their group. The peer review, along with the lecturer's evaluation, will inform the final individual grade awarded.

I reserve the right to adjust marks upwards or downwards for any student if I have reason to believe that the group grade does not accurately reflect a student's contribution.

Marking Criteria

Grading of the group presentations and consulting reports will take into account the following criteria (note – the report will be marked as a whole and therefore these criteria are not equally weighted):

- Clear diagnosis and framing of the issue
- Clear identification of the deliverable(s) / output(s)
- Effective use of primary / secondary data sources
- Systematic use of qualitative and quantitative data and accurate data analysis (with an ability to generate new insights and / or to support / substantiate arguments)
- Logically developed arguments and critical evaluation
- Strength of recommendations (incl. understanding of what it will take to make it happen and potential resource and organisational impacts), applicability and originality
- Clarity of presentation: structure, linkages in logic maintained; flow, clear messages
- Client feedback on the process and deliverable, e.g. the consulting team's intellectual approach, relationship management, quality of final deliverable, extent to which the client is persuaded as to your recommendations
- Participation and contribution in update meetings with the lecturer in working towards the final deliverable

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Client Presentations	40%	No	Session 10

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Consulting Report	40%	No	Session 10
Individual Reflections Report	10%	No	Session 9
Class Contribution	10%	No	Session 10

Client Presentations

Due: **Session 10**
Weighting: **40%**

Each group will be required to make a presentation of the key report findings to the client and class (recognising client confidentiality issues). This presentation will be assessed and graded with major input from the client.

These presentations will be of a maximum **20 minutes duration** after which the group will take questions from the client and the lecturer. The lecturer will provide more details during the course, including the basis on which the presentations will be assessed.

In addition, the group may decide (or be requested) to make separate presentation/s to the client organisation. These are strongly encouraged, but will not be marked/assessed as part of the course.

You are required to contribute and participate fully in your group. At the end of this assessment task each student must submit a **confidential peer review (5% of total weighting)**, for each member of their group. The peer review, along with the lecturer's evaluation, will inform the final individual grade awarded.

On successful completion you will be able to:
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Consulting Report

Due: **Session 10**
Weighting: **40%**

The Consulting Report will be addressed to the client, as would be the case in a professionally engaged assignment. It must be a professionally written document, using consistent professional language and with full referencing of your evidence based research.

The Report must stand on its own; independent of the Presentation you will be giving. The Report is not to be a transcript of the Presentation.

As a general guide the report will follow this type of flow:

1. Table of Contents
2. Executive summary - max 2 pages
3. Background
    1. The challenge set by the project sponsor, and some broader context to this, e.g., what is driving this need (but don't just use their language, prove it up).
    2. Some core facts about the client, and why these facts are relevant to both the challenge and your thinking.
    3. Where possible also make reference to the industry/ecosystem in which the client operates/sits – but ensure you identify the 'so what', how does understanding the industry/broader economic backdrop impact the project?
4. Approach to the assignment
    1. The high level steps you went through.
    2. How you developed your ideas, and turned them into a range of options/ hypotheses etc.
    3. How you selected the ideas/options that you chose to prove up into recommendations.
    4. Anything else in the process you used that is interesting and relevant, e.g., you may identify what you rejected (and why) before you move to the recommendation(s).
5. Recommendation(s)
    1. What is it/are they
    2. What is your justification (i.e., why?)
    3. How the recommendation(s) meet the challenge set by the sponsor
    4. How the recommendation(s) fit within the client's organisation
    5. High level implementation and integration considerations
    6. Anything else interesting and relevant, that does not distract from your key

points.

6. A conclusion is optional and not always necessary, don't repeat the executive summary and usually if you end the recommendation(s) section cleverly that is enough.

7. Appendices to include reference material that detracts from the flow of the main document, it must be fully referenced, attributed and relevant.

The activity on which you will be assessed will be your ability to structure a logical flow of reasoning and to argue in a tight, compelling way **(a)** what is being addressed, **(b)** why it is an issue, **(c)** what the key dimensions and implications / impacts of the problem are, **(d)** what the proposed solution encompasses; and of course, **(e)** how you have arrived at the proposed solution / recommendation.

Some **instructions** on the final client report:

- Executive Summary - 2 pages maximum.

- Typed in 11-point, Arial, 1.5 lines spaced, A4 paper.

- The main body of the report is to be produced in MS Word.

- Please provide 2 bound print copies and 1 electronic copy to be submitted in iLearn.

- Confidentiality of the report's contents is assured.

Report length - **Fifteen pages maximum** (including Executive Summary and excluding Appendices). Assignments longer than the prescribed limit may be penalised. If you need to include extra material, you can do so in a *small* number of appendices that are clearly numbered and referred to in the body of the report. Please assume that the appendices will only be read if they are relevant and useful.

You are required to contribute and participate fully in your group. At the end of this assessment task each student must submit a **confidential peer review (5% of total weighting)**, for each member of their group. The peer review, along with the lecturer's evaluation, will inform the final individual grade awarded.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Comprehensively research and synthesise complex business data in reference to the identified business problem, to develop commercially sound and ethically responsible recommendations to the client.

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Individual Reflections Report

Due: **Session 9**
Weighting: **10%**

This individual reflections report is about testing your capability to articulate your personal journey on this unit that will also draw upon the application of what you have learned in your other MBA units and your professional work.

It is about your ability to articulate, i.e., put into words, your personal journey of self-discovery. Typically this is about recognising change in yourself, moments of epiphany (ah-ah moments) when something that was unclear, becomes clear, and new learnings that have truly become manifest.

This will test your self-awareness.

This report must not be just a description of the process you followed, nor should it be used as a means to comment on others in your group.

You are advised to keep a diary or record points as they arise over the weeks before the report is due. Do not leave it to week 8 or 9 to complete it, you will be running out of time and will be focused on the Consulting Report and Presentation.

This report must be 2000 words (+/- 50 words) in length. Submission will be done in class in print form and in iLearn at the class in week 9.

Extensions and penalties:

No extensions will be granted. There will be a deduction of 10% of the total available marks made from the total awarded mark for each 24 hour period or part thereof that the submission is late (for example, 25 hours late in submission – 20% penalty). This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for special consideration is made and approved. No submission will be accepted after solutions have been posted.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Assess, reflect and respond appropriately to a wide range of personalities, attitudes and perceptions with a view to influencing people with views that may be different to their own

Class Contribution

Due: **Session 10**
Weighting: **10%**

Each group will need to prepare a short **(1 to 2 pages) Project Status Report (PSR)** to be

submitted at each scheduled lecture. The PSR will be written with the client as the target audience. It should discuss the group's progress with the consulting project, including elements such as a list of key milestone dates, an outline of the group's approach to the consulting problem, and preliminary findings. Issues regarding scope, key risks being managed, critical inputs / information required and any resource constraints, should also be flagged.

Class participation will be assessed by the lecturer based off your Project Status Reports.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Delivery and Resources

Required Text

There is no set text. Recommended readings on selected topics on management consulting are listed at the end of this Unit Guide.

MGSM iLearn

The web page for this unit can be found at: https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/MGSM

Unit Schedule

Students are highly recommended to attend all classes starting 9 January, and every Wednesday evening 6pm-10pm at the CBD campus . The course will be presented over 10 weeks, it is a highly intensive and demanding course that will provide a unique experience for the appropriately qualified and experienced students.

The unit will be driven by the steps in conducting the living case study, as follows:

Session	Topic
1	Course Introduction, overview of the client issue, meeting with client
2	Defining/framing the business issue

Session	Topic
3	Creative team dynamics
4 & 5	The consulting process and hypothesis building
6	Developing insights and options
7	Drawing conclusions and making recommendations
8	Communicating and presenting
9	Dress rehearsals
10	Final presentation to the client and delivery of the consulting report

Each group will need to prepare a short (1 to 2 pages) Project Status Report (PSR) to be submitted at each scheduled lecture. The PSR will be written with the client as the target audience. It should discuss the group's progress with the consulting project, including elements such as a list of key milestone dates, an outline of the group's approach to the consulting problem, and preliminary findings. Issues regarding scope, key risks being managed, critical inputs / information required and any resource constraints, should also be flagged. Each group may also bring along work papers and analyses for discussion with the lecturer.

Should there be more immediate concerns group members are expected to escalate these matters immediately to the lecturer.

By Week 2 each group needs to have developed a comprehensive project plan showing roles, responsibilities, accountabilities, milestones, deliverables and key dates.

By week 3 each group should have prepared an engagement contract to be shared with the client that defines more clearly the direction of your research and scope your potential hypotheses/recommendations.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure

- Grade Appeal Policy
- Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy *(**Note:** The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.)*

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the Student Policy Gateway (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit Policy Central (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Comprehensively research and synthesise complex business data in reference to the identified business problem, to develop commercially sound and ethically responsible recommendations to the client.
- Apply relevant frameworks and models to analyse key data and produce multiple perspectives that address the client's engagement brief.
- Assess, reflect and respond appropriately to a wide range of personalities, attitudes and perceptions with a view to influencing people with views that may be different to their own
- Integrate and address ethical, social and environmental responsibilities into recommendations submitted to the client.
- Develop recommendations for the client that create sustainable value for clients by ensuring the client's organisational resilience and adaptability

Assessment tasks

- Client Presentations
- Consulting Report
- Individual Reflections Report
- Class Contribution

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of

knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Comprehensively research and synthesise complex business data in reference to the identified business problem, to develop commercially sound and ethically responsible recommendations to the client.

- Apply relevant frameworks and models to analyse key data and produce multiple perspectives that address the client's engagement brief.

- Develop recommendations for the client that create sustainable value for clients by ensuring the client's organisational resilience and adaptability

Assessment tasks

- Consulting Report
- Individual Reflections Report
- Class Contribution

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Comprehensively research and synthesise complex business data in reference to the identified business problem, to develop commercially sound and ethically responsible recommendations to the client.

- Apply relevant frameworks and models to analyse key data and produce multiple perspectives that address the client's engagement brief.

- Develop recommendations for the client that create sustainable value for clients by ensuring the client's organisational resilience and adaptability

Assessment tasks

- Client Presentations
- Consulting Report
- Individual Reflections Report

- Class Contribution

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Comprehensively research and synthesise complex business data in reference to the identified business problem, to develop commercially sound and ethically responsible recommendations to the client.
- Apply relevant frameworks and models to analyse key data and produce multiple perspectives that address the client's engagement brief.
- Develop recommendations for the client that create sustainable value for clients by ensuring the client's organisational resilience and adaptability

Assessment tasks

- Consulting Report
- Individual Reflections Report
- Class Contribution

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Assess, reflect and respond appropriately to a wide range of personalities, attitudes and perceptions with a view to influencing people with views that may be different to their own
- Integrate and address ethical, social and environmental responsibilities into recommendations submitted to the client.

Assessment tasks

- Client Presentations

- Consulting Report
- Individual Reflections Report
- Class Contribution

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Assess, reflect and respond appropriately to a wide range of personalities, attitudes and perceptions with a view to influencing people with views that may be different to their own
- Integrate and address ethical, social and environmental responsibilities into recommendations submitted to the client.

Assessment tasks

- Client Presentations
- Individual Reflections Report
- Class Contribution

Alignment with MGSM's mission-driven attributes

Leadership: Develop the skills required of leading consultants with respect to the synthesis of comprehensive business data in order to make well-informed and strategically sound decisions.

Global mindset: Assessment of the implications of strategic decisions from a whole of entity perspective, across of a wide spectrum of stakeholders

Citizenship: Submit recommendations (to clients) that are consistent with the principles of corporate social responsibility and community ethics

Creating sustainable value: Development of recommendations that create value for clients over the short and longer-terms by ensuring organisational resilience and adaptability

Attendance Policy (MGSM)

The interactive environment of the classroom is central to the MGSM experience. Students are required to attend the full duration of all classes for the units in which they are enrolled. We recognise that exceptional circumstances may occur, such as unavoidable travel on behalf of your organization or the serious illness or injury of you or a close family member.

Special consideration may be given for a maximum of 20% non-attendance for such circumstances as long as lecturers are contacted in advance, and supporting documentation provided, to request exemption from attendance. Failure to abide by these conditions may result in automatic withdrawal, with academic and/or financial penalty. The full Student Attendance Policy is published in the MGSM Student Handbook at https://students.mgsm.edu.au/handbook.

Content Disclaimer

These unit materials and the content of this unit are provided for educational purposes only and no decision should be made based on the material without obtaining independent professional advice relating to the particular circumstances involved.