ENVS8544

Sustainability Consultancy Work Practice

Session 2, Weekday attendance, North Ryde 2020

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences

Contents

Notice

As part of Phase 3 of our return to campus plan, most units will now run tutorials, seminars and ot her small group learning activities on campus for the second half-year, while keeping an online ver sion available for those students unable to return or those who choose to continue their studies onli ne.

To check the availability of face-to-face and onlin e activities for your unit, please go to timetable vi ewer. To check detailed information on unit asses sments visit your unit's iLearn space or consult yo ur unit convenor.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Scott Wilson scott.p.wilson@mq.edu.au Room 438, 12 Wally's Walk
Credit points 10
Prerequisites (80cp at 8000 level and admission to MEnv or MSusDev or MEnvEd or MEnvMgt or MEnvStud or MEnvPlan or MPlan or MSocEntre) or (40cp at 8000 level and admission to MSc)
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description This unit provides students the opportunity to bring together what they have learned in other units through working in small teams to undertake environmental and sustainability consultancy projects for real clients. The real-life problems requested by clients are chosen to represent typical situations likely to confront graduates from our programs. The final report of each group will be expected to be of a high quality and equivalent to a consultant's report to a client. Students will learn to define and scope a project, understand the context, prepare a project proposal for a client, work with colleagues to complete the project, prepare a written report for the client, and present the group's findings in person to the client. The unit is of value to students in environmental management, environmental planning, sustainable and sustainable development.

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:

ULO1: Apply broad environmental/sustainability knowledge to respond effectively to a client's project brief with a clearly defined and manageable project proposal.

ULO2: Demonstrate an ability to work cooperatively and professionally in a team to plan and manage an environmental/sustainability reporting project.

ULO3: Produce a professional quality environmental/sustainability consultancy written report relevant to the client's situation and specifications.

ULO4: Prepare and present a professional quality oral and visual presentation and respond effectively to questions.

General Assessment Information

Assessment 1 **PROJECT PROPOSAL**

Due: 21st August

Weighting: 25%

The Project Proposal is developed in response to the client's project brief. A group meeting is held with the client which will enable each group to define and scope the consultancy project. Your team then prepares a project proposal to the client and for submission to the unit convenor. Each team member will provide a peer assessment of their fellow group members using SparkPlus and a weighted scale will influence the final assessment score. The project proposal must have at least the following features included within the page limit of 2000 words or approximately 5 pages.

• Cover page/ or introductory letter

• Introduction on the context for the project review by group members.

• Objectives: A clear statement of the project objectives.

• Methods: A clear statement of the way in which the group intends to carry out the project; with a method to achieve each objective.

• Milestones: A work plan showing the milestones to be achieved during the project.

• Deliverables: A summary of the outputs to be delivered to the client.

• Budget: A notional business plan and schedule of putative progress payments. These should be linked to the milestones.

• Summary of the team members' expertise.

An assessment rubric will be provided on the Unit;s iLearn site.

Each group will also be required to give a 15-minute presentation of its Project Proposal to the class. The purposes of this are to: a) provide initial practice in presentation skills to prepare for the final presentations to each group's client at the end of the unit, and b) to receive feedback from other groups on the communication and feasibility of the project. This presentation will not receive marks, though feedback will be given by mentors and students in class.

Students will also create a logbook. The logbook is a detailed list of what you have done on the project and the time spent doing it. The log book enables you to assess the real time each section of the work took, so that when preparing future budgets you have a more realistic appreciation of where time is spent. You use the logbook to assist in your reflections on practice.

Assessment 2 **FINAL REPORT**

Due: 30th October

Weighting: 60%

A draft Final Report is submitted two weeks prior to the Final due date for the unit convenor to review. Note your marks are based on the final submission. This Final Report should be at the quality that you intend to send to the client. The convenor reviews and advises on the clarity of the report and its relevance to the client's expectations. You will likely have to undertake further work based on feedback, as only reports of the highest standard are to be released to the client. More information on the expectations for the final report are on the ilearn site. NOTE: The report must be spell checked, well laid out, edited and in final form.

Assessment 3 **PRESENTATION**

Due: Week ending 6th November

Weighting: 15%

Each group will be required to give a professional presentation of their main findings to the client at a time to be arranged. The format for the session to present the final report will be:

• a 20-minute presentation by the group

• 10 minutes for questions and discussion with the client.

However the client might choose to ask questions during the presentation. The presentation may be extended to discuss the findings, recommendations and their implications. Guidelines for the presentation are provided on the ilearn site.

The log-book and a final peer assessment using SparkPlus will also be completed.

On successful completion of these tasks you will be able to:

• Demonstrate an ability to work cooperatively in a team to organise an environmental/ sustainability reporting project including 1) allocating tasks among team members; 2) setting an appropriate work program to meet deadlines; 3) Identifying the resources necessary for completion.

• Professionally and responsibly carry out allocated tasks at all stages to develop the environmental/ sustainability reports (proposal, context report and final report) so that the individual contributions can be integrated into the final project report and presentation for the client.

• Prepare a professional quality written environmental/sustainability consultancy report relevant to the client's situation and specifications.

•Prepare and present a professional quality oral and visual presentation to the client and respond effectively to the client's questions

• Track "chargeable time" through the maintenance of a log book

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Project Proposal and Context	25%	No	21st August 2020
Project Report	60%	No	30th October 2020
Presentation of Report	15%	No	6th November 2020

Project Proposal and Context

Assessment Type [1]: Work-integrated task
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 30 hours
Due: **21st August 2020**
Weighting: **25%**

Respond to client brief with a scoped project proposal, work plan and notional budget with context outlined

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply broad environmental/sustainability knowledge to respond effectively to a client's project brief with a clearly defined and manageable project proposal.
- Demonstrate an ability to work cooperatively and professionally in a team to plan and manage an environmental/sustainability reporting project.

Project Report

Assessment Type [1]: Professional writing
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 70 hours
Due: **30th October 2020**
Weighting: **60%**

Produce a professional quality written environmental/sustainability consultancy report relevant to the client's situation and specifications

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to work cooperatively and professionally in a team to plan and manage an environmental/sustainability reporting project.
- Produce a professional quality environmental/sustainability consultancy written report relevant to the client's situation and specifications.

Presentation of Report

Assessment Type [1]: Presentation
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 15 hours
Due: **6th November 2020**
Weighting: **15%**

A summary of the report is presented orally with visual means; questions are answered

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Prepare and present a professional quality oral and visual presentation and respond effectively to questions.

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[1] If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

[2] Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Teaching and Learning Strategy

Each student group is responsible for the delivery of a Consultancy Report on an environmental/ planning or sustainability project for a client. The client may be either inside or outside the University.

The projects prepared by each client are an example of work practice - they are real projects that the client wants done to advance their environmental or sustainability practice in one way or another.

Each student group will act like a real consultant in all of their relations with the client and in all activities undertaken on their behalf. The teaching and learning strategy includes:

• three skills workshops (1.Information session on the unit expectations and key considerations in undertaking a consultancy; 2.Successfully managing a consultancy project; 3. Report writing for clients and ethical behaviour in the commercial world) ;

• self learning resources on handling group work and consultancies;

• regular group mentoring meetings on managing team processes, project management, and substantive components of the task with the convenor/ mentor;

• group interaction, dialogue and problem solving in a participative way;

• through class interaction, practice of presentations;

• learning to give and receive professional feedback from peers and mentors;

• reflection on your own professional practice;

• feedback from clients.

As students are involved in a real life situation it is valuable to keep an individual log of hours and task completed. Also there is an expectation of self reflection to assess own performance in client and team interaction and to assist in writing the final professional reflection on experience. Some guidelines are set out below to help student groups in their relations with, and activities for their client organisation.

Relations with the client

Whenever the group meets with the client, each member should be appropriately dressed (smart casual) as becomes professional consultants; the client management team who meet with you will be similarly attired.

In order to manage the client-consultant relation it is advised to schedule at least four formal contacts between the group and the client representative or representatives. These should be planned and agreed upon with the client at the first meeting.

1. Client Briefing: An initial meeting to define and scope the project. The unit staff will have already met with all clients to do preliminary work towards this and will accompany each group at the first meeting to give advice as necessary.

2. A progress meeting (or report without meeting) in about the sixth week of semester. At this point the group should indicate clearly to the client whether all planned outputs will be achieved and any necessary modifications to the contract put forward for agreement by both parties.

3. A findings meeting (draft report) to the client before the presentation and formal submission of the final report to foreshadow the key findings.

4. A final reporting meeting at the end of semester for the group to present their final report to the client.

Some clients will only be prepared to commit to these four meetings, but others will welcome additional contact.

One of the first tasks for each group after the first meeting with the client will be to determine exactly what information they, as the consultants, will require from the client. A consolidated list should be prepared and communicated to the client representative by the nominated group leader. This sort of contact with the client should be limited to ONE group member whose responsibility it is to keep the rest of the group informed.

The group should not treat the client organisation, or their representative(s), like another tutor or member of the university teaching staff. The client has 'contracted' the group to do the work and research necessary to complete the project. Your feedback sessions with the client are to see that you are on track to deliver what the client wants.

In between the agreed formal meetings the group representative should provide a monthly or fortnightly email update on progress - this too should be agreed at the first meeting. In the course of their work the group may be made privy to commercially, or otherwise sensitive material, and there may be a requirement to sign a confidentiality clause. In any case all members of every group are to respect the confidentiality of information or knowledge they acquire from the client in the course of completing their contract with them.

SOME PROJECTS MAY REQUIRE ETHICS APPROVAL. The time involved in achieving these approvals may restrict what activities can be undertaken.

Activities on behalf of the client

Group members must remember that when doing anything on behalf of the client, the reputation of the client will be affected by their behaviour and actions. So any survey or similar actions must also be cleared by the client.

Technology

There is an ilearn site associated with this unit. This will be the main form of communication for detailed information and updates. Students must be able to access the internet to research background for these projects.

Changes to this unit

The projects proposed for each semester are original projects negotiated each semester

Unit Schedule

Week	Class (Thursdays 11 am – 1 pm)	Task
1	Workshop 1 - Introduction and overview of the unit	Review and select project
2*	Group meetings with clients - opportunity to clarify client requirements and ask questions	
3	Workshop 2 - Successful project management	
4	Group presentations on project proposals (5-10 mins per group) (feedback on the proposals; not marked)	End Wk 4: Project proposals due (25%) Complete initial SparkPlus peer reviews

5	Work in groups (address proposal feedback from client)	
6	Work in groups (group mentoring)	
7	Group presentations on progress (5-10 mins per group) (for feedback; not marked)	Wk 7 class: Log-books and short reflection of progress due (progress check)
BREAK		
8	Workshop 3 – Writing client reports and ethics in the workplace	
9	Work in groups (group mentoring)	
10	Work in groups (group mentoring)	Submit draft reports for feedback
11	Work in groups (address report feedback)	
12	Work in groups (finalise report)	End Wk 12: Final reports due (60%)
13/exam period*	Group presentations to clients (20 mins per group)	Give final presentation (15%), Log-books due; complete final SparkPlus peer reviews and final reflection.

*dates and times to be determined depending on client availability

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.)*

Students seeking more policy resources can visit the Student Policy Gateway (https://students.m q.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 help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Getting help with your assignment
- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

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.