**THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY, Aberdeen Business School**

**BSM 823 CAPSTONE: Rubric for Business Consultancy**

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| **GRADE** | **RATIONALE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES****10%** | **CONCEPTS, PRACTICES AND LITERATURE REVIEW****25%** | **RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES****20%** | **DATA EVALUATION, EVIDENCE AND CRITICAL DISCUSSION****30%** | **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS****15%** |
| **Grade A****Excellent – outstanding performance****70% and above** | The rationale for the business problem is clearly stated and its importance to the key stakeholders is clearly discussed. The aim of the study is extremely well focused, attainable and clearly stated. The objectives are specific and completely aligned to the aim of the study.   | The literature search is very comprehensive with information collated from multiple relevant sources. The discussion of concepts and practices is robust supported by in depth analysis of the key issues. The review is very well organised with a logical and cohesive structure that links to the project aims and objectives in all areas. In text citations and reference citations are consistently correct and in the specified format.  | Appropriate selection and concise description of Information and data gathering techniques. The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are fully described and justified. Reflects a sound understanding of research techniques and ethics.  | Excellent analysis of the data set using a coherent and logically structured argument. Excellent presentation and demonstration of a variety of analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are critically discussed. Attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature. | Recommendations are itemised, all are action-oriented, well organised and prioritised in context to the relevant problem or opportunity. Supported by clear and concise justifications with strong consideration of implications.Conclusions are directly relevant, accurately portray and clearly communicate and support the key findings surfaced within the document. Recommendations/conclusions have a persuasive and logical flow. Arguments are synthesised and summarised in a highly effective manner. Enhances the overall impact of the report.  |
| **Grade B****Commendable: very good performance****60-69%** | The rationale for the business problem is stated. The aim is focused, and clearly stated. The objectives are specific and aligned to the aim of the study.    | The literature search is comprehensive with information collated from many relevant sources. Discussion of concepts and practices is very good supported by some analysis of the key issues. The review is well organised with a logical structure and a clear link to the project aims and objectives in most areas. In text citations and reference citations are mostly all correct and in the specified format.  | Appropriate selection and logical description of Information and data gathering techniques. The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are described and justified. Reflects understanding of research techniques and ethics.   | Very good analysis of the data set using a logically structured argument. Very good presentation and demonstration of a variety of analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are discussed with some criticality. Some attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.  | Recommendations are itemised, most are action-oriented, mostly well organised and prioritised in context to the relevant problem or opportunity. Most supported by clear and concise justifications with consideration of implications. Conclusions are directly relevant, accurately portray and clearly communicate and support the key findings surfaced within the document. Recommendations/conclusions have a logical flow. Arguments are synthesised and summarised in an effective manner.  |
| **Grade C****Good: competent performance****50-59%** | Research problem is briefly stated. The aim of the study needs to be more specific and realistic. The objectives tend to focus on the process rather than the specific attainment of the aim.  | The literature search is reasonable with information collated from some relevant sources but key literature may be missing. There is some general discussion of concepts and practices but analysis of the key issues is limited. The review refers to the project aims and objectives in some areas but lacks cohesion. There are some errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  | Some relevant methods of information and data gathering techniques but limited evidence of justification. Reflects some understanding of research techniques and ethics   | Good analysis of the data set using a structured argument. Good presentation and demonstration of some analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are discussed with adequate criticality. More limited attention drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.   | Recommendations are itemised, most are action-oriented, mostly well organised and prioritised in context to the relevant problem or opportunity. Most supported by clear and concise justifications with consideration of implications. Conclusions are sound but are not always fully supported by the key findings surfaced within the document. Recommendations/conclusions have a logical flow. Arguments by enlarge appear synthesised and summarised in an overall effective manner.   |
| **Grade D****Satisfactory performance****40-49%** | Research problem is not clearly identified. The aim of the study is far too broad and not clearly stated. The objectives are not clearly stated and demonstrate only a marginal link to the achievement of the aim.   | There is some evidence of a literature search but this is limited with information collated from a narrow range of sources or inappropriate sources. Discussion of relevant concepts and practices is limited and the review is descriptive. The structure of the review is disorganised in areas with few references to the project aims and objectives.There are several errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  | Some attempt is made to describe information and data gathering techniques, methods for analysis and interpretation of data Methods selected adequate but not best suited to study aim, some superficial justification of the method. Very limited understanding of research techniques and ethics  | Limited analysis of the data set using argument which may lack structure. Acceptable presentation and demonstration of limited analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are discussed with limited criticality. Limited attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.   | Recommendations are presented in an itemised format and on balance most are clear but some may lack persuasiveness. Some evidence of being backed by some relevant justifications.Conclusions are coherent but not always supported by the earlier content in the document. Recommendations/conclusions perhaps lack some persuasiveness but on balance the content provides clarity on most key issues.   |
| **Grade E****Borderline fail 39-35%** | Research problem is not clearly identified. There are multiple aims and many spurious objectives. The scope of the research was not realistic or the nature of proposed work was not possible within the timeframe.   | There is limited evidence of a literature search with very few sources used to develop a discussion. The discussion fails to identify relevant concepts and practices and there is no analysis of key issues. The review lacks structure and doesn’t link to the project aims and objectives. There are many errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  |  Inappropriate methods selected, with lack of rigour in the application of the methods. No justification. No evidence of understanding of ethics.  | Very limited analysis of the data set using unstructured argument. Poor presentation and demonstration of very limited analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are insufficiently discussed with very limited criticality. Very limited attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.   | Recommendations are not presented in a wholly itemised format and most lack clarity. Tending to lack relevant justifications.Conclusions lack synthesis and persuasiveness and do not consistently flow from earlier content or miss some key findings.Recommendations/conclusions are, overall, not wholly persuasive.   |
| **Grade F****Unsatisfactory fail – 34% or less** | Research problem is not identified. Aim and Objectives are missing.  | There is not enough literature search. There is not enough analysis of key issues. There are many errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  | Lack of structure or logic in the methods selected and weak or unsound methodology. | Inadequate analysis of the data set using very poorly structured argument. Poor presentation and inadequate demonstration of analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are not discussed and no criticality is evident. Inadequate attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.  | Lacking in clear or persuasive recommendations in itemised format. Lacking in relevant justifications. Lacking in clear, meaningful or persuasive conclusions. Recommendations/conclusions do not flow from the earlier content in the document and/or miss key findings. Limited or no attempt to bring the work to a satisfactory conclusion. Significantly detracts from the overall impact of the report. |

**THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY, Aberdeen Business School**

**BSM 823 CAPSTONE: Rubric for Dissertation**

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| **GRADE** | **RATIONALE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES****10%** | **LITERATURE REVIEW****25%** | **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY****20%** | **DATA ANALYSIS, AND CRITICAL DISCUSSION****40%** | **CONCLUSION****5%** |
| **Grade A****Excellent – outstanding performance****70% and above** | The rationale for the research problem is clearly stated and its importance to the key stakeholders is clearly discussed. The aim of the study is extremely well focused, attainable and clearly stated. The objectives are specific and completely aligned to the aim of the study. | The literature search is very comprehensive with information collated from multiple relevant research based sources. Critical analysis of the literature is excellent demonstrated by a rigorous debate of the key issues. The discussion is very well organised with a logical and cohesive structure that links to the research aims and objectives in all areas. In text citations and reference citations are consistently correct and in the specified format | Evidence of a clear understanding of different research methodologies is demonstrated. Information and data gathering techniques, and the methods for analysis and interpretation of data are fully described. A strong theoretical rationale and critique of the proposed method is presented. | Excellent analysis of the data set using a coherent and logically structured argument. Excellent presentation and demonstration of a variety of analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are critically discussed, and used to underpin the conclusions drown. Attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature. | Conclusions are directly relevant, accurately portray and clearly communicate and support the key findings surfaced within the document. A persuasive and logical flow. Arguments are synthesised and summarised in a highly effective manner. Enhances the overall impact of the report. |
| **Grade B****Commendable: very good performance****60-69%** | The rationale for the research problem is stated. The aim is focused, and clearly stated. The objectives are specific and aligned to the aim of the study.    | The literature search is comprehensive with information collated from many relevant research based sources. Critical analysis of the literature is very good demonstrated by a thorough debate of the key issues. The discussion is well organised with a logical structure and a clear link to the research aims and objectives in most areas. In text citations and reference citations are mostly all correct and in the specified format.  | Shows some understanding of different research methods, and includes an adequate rationale for the chosen method. Information and data gathering techniques, and the methods for analysis and interpretation of data are fully described.  | Very good analysis of the data set using a logically structured argument. Very good presentation and demonstration of a variety of analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are discussed with some criticality and used to underpin the conclusions drawn. Some attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.  | Conclusions are directly relevant, accurately portray and clearly communicate and support the key findings surfaced within the document. Conclusions have a logical flow. Arguments are synthesised and summarised in an effective manner.    |

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| **Grade C****Good: competent performance****50-59%** | Research problem is briefly stated. The aim of the study needs to be more specific and realistic. The objectives tend to focus on the process rather than the specific attainment of the aim.  | The literature search is reasonable with information collated from some relevant sources. Critical analysis of the literature is reasonable but the debate of key issues is limited. The discussion demonstrates some logical structure and occasionally refers to the research aims and objectives but lacks cohesion. There are some errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list  | Shows some understanding of different research methods. Information and data gathering techniques, and the methods for analysis and interpretation of data are generally described, but the chapter does not provide a theoretical rationale or critique of the method adopted.   | Good analysis of the data set using a structured argument. Good presentation and demonstration of some analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are discussed with adequate criticality and used to underpin the conclusions drawn. More limited attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.   | Conclusions are sound but are not always fully supported by the key findings surfaced within the document. Conclusions have a logical flow. Arguments by enlarge appear synthesised and summarised in an overall effective manner.   |
| **Grade D****Satisfactory performance****40-49%** | Research problem is not clearly identified. The aim of the study is far too broad and not clearly stated. The objectives are not clearly stated and demonstrate only a marginal link to the achievement of the aim.   | There is some evidence of a literature search but this is limited with information collated from a narrow range of sources or inappropriate sources.There is limited analysis of the literature and the discussion of issues tends to be descriptive or vague. The structure of the discussion is disorganised in areas with limited reference to the research aims and objectives.There are several errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  |  A limited understanding of research methods is indicated. Some attempt is made to describe information and data gathering techniques, and the methods for analysis and interpretation of data, but there is no argument supporting the choice of method adopted.  | Limited analysis of the data set using argument which may lack structure. Acceptable presentation and demonstration of limited analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are discussed with limited criticality and do not fully underpin the conclusions drawn. Limited attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.   | Conclusions are coherent but not always supported by the earlier content in the document. Conclusions perhaps lack some persuasiveness but on balance the content provides clarity on most key issues.   |
| **Grade E****Borderline fail 39-35%** | Research problem is not clearly identified. There are multiple aims and many spurious objectives. The scope of the research was not realistic or the nature of proposed work was not possible within the timeframe.   | There is limited evidence of a literature search with very few sources used to develop a discussion. The discussion is very basic with no analysis of key issues. The discussion lacks structure and doesn’t link to the research aims and objectives. There are many errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  |  Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of research methodology. No attempt is made to describe techniques for information and data gathering, and the choice of methods is basically flawed.  | Very limited analysis of the data set using unstructured argument. Poor presentation and demonstration of very limited analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are insufficiently discussed with very limited criticality and do not underpin the conclusions drawn. Very limited attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.   | .Conclusions lack synthesis and persuasiveness and do not consistently flow from earlier content or miss some key findings.Conclusions are, overall, not wholly persuasive.   |
| **Grade F****Unsatisfactory fail – 34% or less** | Research problem is not identified. Aim and Objectives are missing.  | There is not enough literature search. There is not enough analysis of key issues. There are many errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  | No attempt to demonstrate understanding of research methodology.  | Inadequate analysis of the data set using very poorly structured argument. Poor presentation and inadequate demonstration of analytical techniques. The results and significance of the research are not discussed and no criticality is evident. Results do not underpin the conclusions drawn. Inadequate attention is drawn to comparable and contrasting opinion and research results found in the literature.  |  Lacking in clear, meaningful or persuasive conclusions. Conclusions do not flow from the earlier content in the document and/or miss key findings. Limited or no attempt to bring the work to a satisfactory conclusion. Significantly detracts from the overall impact of the report.  |

**THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY, Aberdeen Business School**

**BSM 823 CAPSTONE: Extended Research Proposal**

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| **GRADE** | **RATIONALE, AIM AND OBJECTIVES****15%** | **CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW****40%** | **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PLAN OF INVESTIGATION****35%** | **COHERENCE AND CONTRIBUTION****10%** |
| **Grade A****Excellent – outstanding performance****70% and above** | The rationale for the research problem is clearly stated and its importance is clearly discussed withappropriate and persuasive consideration of relevant context and theory. The aim of the study follows from the rationale presented, is extremely well focused, attainable and specific. The objectives are clearly defined and completely aligned to the aim of the study. | The literature search is well structured and very comprehensive with information collated from multiple contemporary research-based sources relevant to the subject of investigation. Critical analysis of the literature is excellent and offers a rigorous debate of the key issues presented in a reasoned argument relating to the research topic aim and objectives. In text citations and referencing are consistently complete and presented in the specified format. | Evidence of a clear understanding of different research philosophies is correctly demonstrated and the chosen methodology justified. There is a fully considered, detailed plan of investigation including an overview of the research design, specific context and participant organisation(s).There is an achievable and replicable plan for data collection, including a detailed review of relevant possible secondary data sources, primary data collection methods and relevant instruments (e.g. topic guides, participant survey) with a realistic and detailed project timescale.Ethical issues have been fully considered, including the recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent.The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are fully described. Strengths and limitations of the approach suggested have been identified and critically evaluated.There is strong evidence of reference to and analysis of wide-ranging methodological sources. | The argument presented is synthesised and summarised in a highly effective manner. The proposal presents a coherent, persuasive and logical justification for the research and plan of investigation. The potential contribution and significance of the investigation to contemporary debate and organisational practice in the field of study are clearly articulated and justified. Detailed potential means of dissemination and application of the research to be conducted are clearly identified with relevant detail.  |
| **Grade B****Commendable: very good performance****60-69%** | The rationale for the research problem is stated and its importance is discussed with interesting consideration of relevant context and theory. The aim of the study follows from the rationale presented, is focused, attainable and specific. The objectives are defined and aligned to the aim of the study. | The literature search is structured and comprehensive with information collated from multiple research-based sources relevant to the subject of investigation. Critical analysis of the literature offers a debate of the key issues presented in a reasoned argument relating to the research topic, aim and objectives. In text citations and referencing are mostly complete and presented in the specified format. | Evidence of understanding of different research philosophies is demonstrated and the chosen methodology justified. There is a detailed plan of investigation including an overview of the research design, specific context and participant organisation(s).There is an achievable plan for data collection, including a review of relevant possible secondary data sources, primary data collection methods and relevant instruments (e.g. topic guides, participant survey) with a project timescale.Ethical issues have been considered, including the recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent.The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are described in detail. Strengths and limitations of the approach suggested have been identified and evaluated.There is evidence of reference to and analysis of wide-ranging methodological sources. | The argument presented is synthesised and summarised in an effective manner. The proposal presents a coherent and logical justification for the research and plan of investigation. The potential contribution and significance of the investigation to contemporary debate and organisational practice in the field of study are clearly articulated. Some potential means of dissemination and application of the research to be conducted are identified with relevant detail.  |
| **Grade C****Good: competent performance****50-59%** | The rationale for the research problem is briefly stated and its importance is discussed with some consideration of relevant context and theory. The aim of the study to some extent follows from the rationale presented but should be more focused and specific. The objectives tend to focus on the process rather than the specific attainment of the aim. | The literature search is structured with information collated from some relevant sources. Critical analysis of the literature offers some debate of the key issues presented in an argument relating to the research topic, aim and objectives but lacks cohesion. There are some errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list | There is some evidence of understanding of different research philosophies and justification of the chosen methodology. The plan of investigation, overview of the research design, context and participant organisation(s) should be more detailed and specific.There is a good plan for data collection, including a review of relevant possible secondary data sources, primary data collection methods and relevant instruments (e.g. topic guides, participant survey) with a project timescale.Ethical issues have been shown some consideration, including the recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent.The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are described. Strengths and limitations of the approach suggested have been considered.There is some evidence of reference to and analysis of wide-ranging methodological sources. | The argument presented is synthesised and summarised. The proposal presents a good justification for the research and plan of investigation. The potential contribution of the investigation to contemporary debate and/or organisational practice in the field of study are articulated. Some potential means of dissemination and application of the research to be conducted are identified with some details.  |

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| **GRADE** | **RATIONALE, AIM AND OBJECTIVES****15%** | **CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW****40%** | **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PLAN OF INVESTIGATION****35%** | **COHERENCE AND CONTRIBUTION****10%** |
| **Grade D****Satisfactory performance****40-49%** | The rationale for the research problem is not clear and there is limited consideration of relevant context and theory . The aim of the study to some limited extent follows from the rationale presented but should be more focused and specific. The objectives focus on the process rather than the specific attainment of the aim. | The literature search is structured with information collated from a limited number of relevant sources. The descriptive analysis of the literature offers some debate of the key issues presented in an argument relating to the research topic, aim and objectives but lacks cohesion.There are many errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list | There is some evidence of understanding of different research philosophies and justification of the chosen methodology. The plan of investigation, overview of the research design, context and participant organisation(s) should be more detailed.There is a limited plan for data collection, including a review of relevant possible secondary data sources, primary data collection methods and relevant instruments (e.g. topic guides, participant survey) with a project timescale.Ethical considerations have been shown adequate consideration, including the recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent.The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are described. Strengths and limitations of the approach suggested have been considered.There is limited evidence of reference to and analysis of wide-ranging methodological sources. | The argument presented is summarised. The proposal presents some justification for the research and plan of investigation. The potential contribution of the investigation to contemporary debate and/or organisational practice in the field of study are articulated. Some potential means of dissemination and application of the research to be conducted are identified but details are limited.  |
| **Grade E****Borderline fail 39-35%** | The research problem is not clearly identified and discussed with very limited consideration of relevant context and theory. The aim of the study lacks focus and is not supported by the objectives. The objectives describe the process rather than attainment of the aim. | There is limited evidence of a literature search with very few sources used to develop a discussion. The discussion offers a limited descriptive analysis of key issues. The discussion lacks structure and is not related to the research topic, aim and objectives. There are many errors with the inclusion and presentation of citations, both in text and in the reference list.  | There is very limited understanding of research philosophies and justification of the chosen methodology. The plan of investigation, overview of the research design, context and participant organisation(s) are inappropriate. The plan for data collection, including a review of relevant possible secondary data sources, primary data collection methods and relevant instruments (e.g. topic guides, participant survey) may be technically incorrect. The project timescale requires further consideration.Ethical considerations have not been shown adequate consideration and more detail should be paid to the recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent.The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are insufficiently described. Strengths and limitations of the approach suggested have not been sufficiently considered.There is insufficient evidence of reference to and analysis of wide-ranging methodological sources. | The argument presented is difficult to follow. The proposal presents only very limited justification for the research and plan of investigation. The potential contribution of the investigation to contemporary debate and/or organisational practice in the field of study are articulated. Some limited consideration of potential means of dissemination and application of the research to be conducted is presented.  |
| **Grade F****Unsatisfactory fail – 34% or less** | The research problem is not identified. The aim and objectives are incomplete and/or poorly defined. | There is limited evidence of a literature search with only a very limited number of sources described. The descriptive discussion lacks structure, is not related to the research topic and does not link to the research aim and objectives. There are many errors and omissions with citations, both in text and in the reference list.  | There is no evidence of understanding of research philosophies and justification of the chosen methodology. The plan of investigation, overview of the research design, context and participant organisation(s) are not sufficient.The plan for data collection, including a review of relevant possible secondary data sources, primary data collection methods and relevant instruments (e.g. topic guides, participant survey) is incomplete and incorrect. The project timescale is not shown.Ethical considerations have not been considered.The methods for analysis and interpretation of data are not described. Strengths and limitations of the approach suggested have not been considered.There is no evidence of reference to and analysis of wide-ranging methodological sources. | No argument is presented. The proposal presents no justification for the research and plan of investigation. The potential contribution of the investigation to contemporary debate and/or organisational practice in the field of study have not been considered. Dissemination and application of the research is not considered.  |