n|w University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland
School of Business

Guidelines on Practical Project

BSc in Business Information Technology 2022

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1. Introduction

This Guideline applies to the Bachelor of Science in Business Information Technology (BIT) of the School of Business of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) and governs the various aspects relating to the "Practical Project" of the full-time and part-time students. It applies to the Practical Projects starting in 2022.

The Practical Project is a compulsory module of the Bachelor of Science in Business Information Technology. It is rewarded with 10 ECTS-Credits, which corresponds to 300 working hours for each student in the team. Full-time students work on their Practical Project during the fifth semester, part-time students during the seventh semester.

The successful completion of the module "Project Management" is required for admittance to the Practical Project. The Practical Project is a group work, with an ideal group size of five students (groups with four or three students are also possible). The documentation of the Practical Project in Business Information Technology must be written in English.

2. Learning Objectives

Students successfully completing the module Practical Project demonstrate an ability to apply acquired knowledge and solve practical issues autonomously, methodically and in an appropriate format. At the same time, the Practical Project is intended to achieve the following aims:

- Strengthening of specialist and development competences:
    - Recognizing the interconnectedness of a problem
    - Tackling it in sufficient depth and on a scientific basis
    - Applying and integrating acquired knowledge
    - Filling gaps in knowledge
    - Developing practical and feasible solutions
- Strengthening of social competences:
    - Accomplishing projects autonomously
    - Collaborating closely with the other members of the team and the Client
    - Advancement of team competence
- Strengthening of methodological and problem-solving competences:
    - Applying project-management methods
    - Solving problems using adequate techniques
    - Focus on generating added value for the Client
- Strengthening of personal competences:
    - Setting project management priorities
    - Assuming responsibility
    - Handling pressure

3. Topic selection

The topic shall be restricted to the fields of business and business information technology. The project must have a Client. The Client can be a private company, a non-profit or public organization, an FHNW institute or program, or a private individual. The Client must submit a genuine, specific problem that needs to be investigated or solved.

External partners can submit their topic here: www.fhnw.ch/business/student-project-submission-form.

University staff is also welcomed to submit project topics, either from external contacts or related to their own research.

The Practical Project can also be undertaken on behalf of students' own employers. Further, students are free to acquire a topic generated by an external Client, such as one set by a potential employer or a task of professional interest to the student. Experience has shown that many companies are willing to consider specific proposals. The acquisition of topics must be targeted, i.e., no mass mailing.

A close personal relationship with the Client must be declared by the student when submitting the topic. The Supervising Lecturer together with the responsible person for student-projects decides in this case whether the Client should participate in the assessment and grading of the Practical Project or whether the Client should be replaced in the assessment stage by a second member of the teaching staff.

The topic submission form for topics acquired by students or internal staff can be found under: https://www.fhnw.ch/plattformen/wirtschaft-studierendenprojekte/en/. The completed form should be sent to studierendenprojekte.wirtschaft@fhnw.ch. The students will be informed whether the topic has been accepted.

Before the submission the students should discuss a potential topic upfront with a lecturer of their choice. The topic approval by the lecturer can be indicated on the submission form. A desired Supervising Lecturer can be mentioned on the submission form. (Remarks section and sent by mail to: studierendenprojekte.wirtschaft@fhnw.ch). Otherwise, the school takes care of the allocation of the Supervising Lecturer.

Students who have not submitted a self-acquired topics can choose one from the pool of topics. Students should indicate five different preferred topics in order of preference. The allocation of topics is supported by a software that calculates the optimal allocation. The algorithm aims at allocating the highest possible priority of the students.

Subsequently, the Supervising Lecturers will be assigned. All students will be informed about the topic and which Supervising Lecturer has been assigned.

In case of any questions regarding the submission of potential topics, please consult the contact details at the end of this document.

Confidentiality

Information concerning the Client shall be treated in confidence during the whole project. After the completion of the project, to promote the educational value of knowledge transfer to the public, the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland prefers to make the result publicly available if possible. The School of Business distinguishes the following two categories:

Category	Explanation
Confidential	The assignment is not accessible to the public and is immediately archived by the School of Business.
Public	The assignment is publicly accessible. Assignments awarded grade 5.0 and higher are made available via the library system swisscovery, the Institutional Repository FHNW (https://irf.fhnw.ch/) and under https://studierendenprojekte.wirtschaft.fhnw.ch/.

The confidentiality level is decided by the Client at the end of the Practical Project and needs to be declared in the final assessment form and on the public management summary.

4. Deliverables of the Practical Project

The deliverables of the Practical Project should provide insight into:

a. the solution regarding the problem at hand ("**content**"),
b. the "endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service or result" ("**project management documentation**"), and,
c. should be summarized for public purposes ("**public management summary**").

a. Content

The content of the Practical Project is driven by the requirements of the Client assignment. The report for the Client and the Supervising Lecturer should follow the following typical structure:

- Background information about the Client, the problem at hand, and the goals and objectives of the project
- Environment and general conditions of the specific situation at the Client's company
- Agreed way of solution, methodology
- Brief presentation of the knowledge relevant for the solution of the problem
- Presentation of the (a) concrete requirements of the Client and (b) possibly included evaluation criteria for the problem solution
- Presentation of the developed problem solution or the artifact that was developed by applying the knowledge to the concrete requirements
- Evaluation of the problem solution or the artifact by applying the relevant criteria
- Summary and hints for the further use of the project result by the Client.

The size of the report and the detailed structure should be negotiated with the Supervising Lecturer. The final presentation to the Client and the Supervising Lecturer should adapt a similar structure as the report.

The report has to be submitted until submission date on Moodle.
(Specific Moodle-course see under section "platforms" at the end of the guidelines)

The deliverances of the other content parts as e.g., prototype, piece of software and so on can be submitted directly to the Client and Supervising Lecturer.

For all project deliverables, please refer to the «**Guide to the formal presentation of scientific papers**» concerning academic writing standards:

https://www.fhnw.ch/plattformen/wirtschaft-studierendenprojekte/en/

When submitting the project deliverables, the students must assure - in writing - that they have created it independently and only with the stated sources, aids and assistance, and that citations have been marked accordingly.

b. Project management documentation

In principle, the project management documentation requirements relate to the content of the "Project Management" module. The project management documentation should follow the instructions which will be provided to the students at the beginning of the semester in which the module Practical Project takes place (i.e., September) by the Project Management Coaches.

The size of the project management documentation is not directly related to the quality of the work. The challenge lies in not omitting what is important and leaving out what is unimportant, as well as avoiding duplication. The final project management documentation must consist of a single PDF and must be uploaded on the according Moodle platform:

- For BIT Basel: https://moodle.fhnw.ch/course/view.php?id=51738

- For BIT Brugg-Windisch: https://moodle.fhnw.ch/course/view.php?id=51756

Key objective of the project management documentation is, that the project team explicitly shows how they deal with their responsibility to bring the project to a success. As there will be no specific template to be followed, the documentation should clarify:

a) how you are actively managing your project
(to be shared with the Project Management Coaches in the midterm coaching session)

b) how successful you have been in the delivery of your project goals as a reflection on the aforementioned point a)
(to be documented and submitted as part of the project management documentation and to be shared with the Project Management Coaches during the internal final presentation)

Further details on the requirements for the project management documentation will be provided at the beginning of the semester.

c. Public management summary

The public management summaries are published online for further reference. They serve as example topics for later generations of students as well as companies or institutions, who might be interested to submit their own topics.

The link to the public summary submission platform can be found under the section platforms.

Together with the public management summary, an image or chart should be made available. Instead, a short video clip of about 1:30 minutes may be provided.

The following aspects are relevant for the formal publication of the public management summary:

- Students wishing to use copyrighted material, such as pictures, images, etc. must obtain reproduction rights from an author in order to use this material in the Practical Project. It is not sufficient to simply cite this material. Citation of material without reproduction rights will result in copyright infringement.

The Supervising Lecturer and the Client have to agree on the public management summary. Their approval is part of the submission process. Even if the Practical Project is confidential, a public management summary is required. It is the task of the students to discuss with the Client whether his/her name and the concrete results may be mentioned in the public management summary. Otherwise, the description has to be sufficiently generalized (e.g., "a well-known financial institution" instead of "UBS"). The work itself, of course, remains confidential.

A frequently asked question section (FAQ's) and examples of summaries can be found under: https://www.fhnw.ch/plattformen/wirtschaft-studierendenprojekte/en/

5. Presentations

After about half of the project time, the students present their intermediate results to the Client and Supervising Lecturer ("**midterm status update**").

At the end of the project, i.e., immediately before or no later than two weeks after the submission deadline, the **final presentation** is held in presence of the Client and the Supervising Lecturer. The students hand over the agreed number of documents and deliverables to the Client, ideally before the final presentation.

Next to these compulsory presentations in presence of the Client and Supervising Lecturer, also internal coaching sessions are required. This regards a "**midterm coaching session**" and a "**internal final presentation**". These sessions take place at the FHNW in presence of the Project Management Coaches.

Further details on these coaching sessions, as well as the requirements for the project management documentation will be provided by the project management coaches at the beginning of the semester.

During the semester, individual group coaching and support, e.g., via video conferencing, can be pragmatically organized upon request.

6. Timetable Practical Project 2022

Eligibility	Module "Project Management" completed successfully	
Kick-Off-Event	**BIT Basel**: June 22, 2022, 14:00-15:00 hrs. (MS Teams)	**BIT Brugg-Windisch**: Beginning of Autumn Semester – date to be announced by Christina Loosli
Group formation recorded on Moodle	By Friday July 4, 2022	
Topic submission (self-acquired topics)	From June until August 15, 2022	
Self-acquired topics: Formal admission and allocation of Supervising Lecturer	Until Wednesday, 6 July and from Tuesday, August 9, 2022	
Release of topic pool to students	Friday, August 12, 2022	
Selection of topics from the pool (students with no topic of their own)	Wednesday, August 17, 2022	
Allocation of topics and Supervising Lecturers (applies to students who have chosen a topic from the topic pool)	Friday, August 26, 2022	
Initial meeting with Client (Participants: student group, Client and Supervising Lecturer)	ASAP	
Project charter signed-off by Client and Supervising Lecturer (upload on Moodle)	**By September 30, 2022**	
Midterm status update with Client	October / November 2022	
Midterm coaching sessions (with Project Management Coaches – focus: *"how are you managing your project"*)	**Oct / Nov 2022** (exact dates to be announced)	
Internal final presentation (with Project Management Coaches – focus: *"reflection on your project delivery"* as well as doing a "dry-run" of the client presentation)	**January 2023**	
Final presentation to Client and Supervising Lecturer *(should take place after the "internal final presentation" with Project Management Coaches)*	January 2023	
Submission of content results and report as well as final project management documentation	**Friday, January 13, 2023, 1 pm**	
Public management summary approved by Client and Supervising Lecturer	Friday, January 20, 2023 or on agreement with the involved persons	
Grade information	February 2023	
Duration:	300 hours per student (10 ECTS)	

Further details to the 'Timetable Practical Project':

Initial meeting with Client	The formal process starts with an initial meeting attended by the students, the Client, and the Supervising Lecturer. The meeting has the following objectives: • Agreement on the problem at hand, tasks, goals, deliverables and results • Explanation of relevant aspects of the Client organization • Alignment of collaboration setup (e.g., frequency of interaction, on-site presence, flow of information, handling of confidential information, etc.) • Scheduling of next meetings, especially midterm status update and final presentation • Handling of potential expenses by students • Clarification of availabilities/absences Kick-off meeting minutes are to be submitted to the Supervising Lecturer and Client for their approval within one week.
Project charter	The setup for the project charter can be found in the project management documentation template. • The project charter is to be signed-off by the Client and Supervising Lecturer. • It must be uploaded to Moodle.
Midterm status update with Client	At about half of the project time, an intermediate presentation must be given to the Client and the Supervising Lecturer. The date should be defined at the initial meeting with the Client.
Midterm coaching session with Project Management Coaches	A coaching session with all project groups/students will be held at FHNW. All students will participate and give a brief presentation on their projects. Focus of the sessions: "how are you managing your project". Further requirements will be announced by the Project Management Coaches.
Internal final presentation to Project Management Coaches	Each group will present their project outcomes to the Project Management Coaches. Next to offering a stage for a "dry-run" of the final client presentation, focus of the session is to reflect on the success of the delivery of your project goals.
Final presentation to Client and Supervising Lecturer	Students present their content results to the Client and the Supervising Lecturer. The content report for the Client is ideally handed over in advance of the final presentation. The date of the final presentation should be set at the initial meeting.
Submission of content and project management documentation	The report and final project management documentation must be uploaded to Moodle. Additional deliverables (prototype, software) are to be shared with the Client and Supervising Lecturer directly.
Public management summary approved by Client and Supervisor	The link for the public management summary submission can be found on Moodle. Final submission is subject to approval by the Supervising Lecturer and Client.
Notification of grades	The final grades (consisting of 50% content and 50% project management) are communicated by the Student Administration.

7. FHNW roles and assessment

From FHNW-side, the students are supported by a Supervising Lecturer regarding the content of the Practical Project and by Project Management Coaches with respect to the project management methodology.

- The **Supervising Lecturer** advises the students regarding the project content and assesses and evaluates the Practical Project together with the Client in terms of content results *(**50% of the final grade**)*.
- The **Project Management Coaches** support the students in terms of project management matters. They assess the performance in terms of the project management principles applied *(**50% of the final grade,** with 20%-points related to the midterm coaching session, and 30%-points related to the project management documentation)*.

Performance assessment grid

The students can find the performance assessment grid under: https://www.fhnw.ch/plattformen/wirtschaft-studierendenprojekte/en/. The lecturers use this grid for their marks and grades.

Grading system

Half-grades shall be awarded for the Practical Project.

Consequences of late submissions

Late uploads onto Moodle carry the following consequences:

- Up to 24 hours after the official submission time: Grade 4.0 (or less if the contents are deemed unsatisfactory)
- Over 24 hours after the official submission time: Grade 1.0

Appeals procedure

The appeals procedure is set out in the Study and Examination Regulations relating to the Practical Project at the School of Business.

8. Other considerations

Extraordinary start/submission date

The Dean of Studies may, in consultation with the Supervising Lecturers and / or Project Management Coaches, grant another start and submission dates. A request for approval must be sent to studierendenprojekte.wirtschaft@fhnw.ch.

Unforeseen situations

In case of unforeseen situations that seriously compromise the progress or timely completion of the Practical Project (e.g., illness, death of a family member and so on), the Dean of Studies may, in consultation with the Supervising Lecturer and the Project Management Coach(es), grant an extension period or present the students an alternative topic.

Use of the FHNW's name

For any external communication, the students must declare that they are working on a student project. The special "Student Project" logo is designated for that purpose. The student must obtain the consent of their supervisor and Client prior to conducting surveys or publishing any related information.

Surveys

In the case of surveys, the rights of the interviewees must be respected, i.e., they have to be informed about the objectives and purpose of the survey.

Surveys outside FHNW

The Client can only claim the results of the survey for itself if the Client and the purpose of the survey are mentioned. Text example: "The survey takes place within the framework of a student project on behalf of company X. Company X wants to better understand the customer needs."

The Client loses the right to use the results solely if he/she does not wish to be named. The survey participants are also entitled to the results. Text example: "The survey takes place within a student project. If desired, the results of the survey will be made available to you. Please contact hans.muster@students.fhnw.ch "

The disclosure of the Client is the normal case.

Surveys within the FHNW

Surveys to FHNW students must be sent ready to dispatch to Pavel Somogyi (pavel.somogyi@fhnw.ch) with an indication to which student groups the survey should be sent to. The surveys are then sent via the central address umfragen.wirtschaft@fhnw.ch.

In addition, it must be confirmed that the Supervising Lecturer has reviewed and released the survey for publication. The Supervising Lecturer is to be integrated into the mail cc.

Client responsibilities

The Client is responsible for ensuring the flow of information during the assignment. The Client must name a contact person and, ideally, a deputy for that person. The Client assigns the task, designates the objectives, supplies the necessary information, monitors the progress made and assesses/grades the results in cooperation with the Supervising Lecturer.

Workspace

Where necessary or applicable, the Client should provide the student with an appropriate workspace on its premises.

Costs, expenses, reimbursements

On completion of the Practical Project, the FHNW School of Business presents the Client with an invoice for a flat-rate charge of CHF 2'000 (excl. 7,7 % VAT).

This charge does not apply in the case of a Practical Project undertaken on behalf of a Client that employs a student of the group on a part-time, minimum 50% basis.

Expenses (e.g. printing costs, travel costs, postage/shipping, survey telephone charges) incurred in connection with the Practical Project shall be borne by the Client. The student must agree at the outset of the Practical Project on the expenses with the Client and furnish the Client with evidence of such expenses. The Client shall reimburse the student directly.

Use of the infrastructure of FHNW

Neither the infrastructure of the student's secretariat nor that of the lecturers will be available for the creation and completion of the documentation of the Practical Project.

9. Contact information and platforms

Platforms

Information for Clients: www.fhnw.ch/business/student-projects

Information for students and Supervising Lecturers:
https://www.fhnw.ch/plattformen/wirtschaft-studierendenprojekte/en/

Submission of the report (content) and Public Management Summary:
https://moodle.fhnw.ch/course/view.php?id=50267, Access code: STUDPROJ22EN

For any questions regarding topic submission please contact:

Anke Kundert, Prof. Dr.
Responsible for student-projects
University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland
School of Business
Riggenbachstrasse 16
4600 Olten

T +41 62 957 22 48
anke.kundert@fhnw.ch

http://www.fhnw.ch/wirtschaft

Or you can contact studierendenprojekte.wirtschaft@fhnw.ch

For any questions regarding project management and the Practical Project in general please contact the Project Management Coaches:

BIT Basel:

Michael Pülz, Prof. Dr.	Frank Grimberg
Program Head BSc BIT Basel	Institute for Information Systems
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Project management, submission of the project charter and project management documentation: https://moodle.fhnw.ch/course/view.php?id=51738

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