

WM9QS-60 Industry Collaboration Project

27/28

Department

WMG

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Ali Ahmad

Credit value

60

Module duration

26 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Overview:

This project's basis lies in work-based learning (WBL) pedagogy, where academic learning is integrated and assimilated through practical experience in a professional setting. It acts as a bridge between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, allowing students to gain competencies and insights that are directly relevant to their future careers. It is designed to facilitate students' transition from in-class learning underpinned by prevalent theory and supporting empirical evidence in the literature to practical application within a business and industrial context. The ambition is to equip students with a systematic understanding of how conceptual knowledge, emerging insights in their academic discipline and an awareness of market or industrial problems could be brought to bear on a particular business problem. Hence, students will engage in a process to critically evaluate, interpret and contextualize academic knowledge to develop working models, prototypes or other representations of solutions that have the potential to solve an extant work-based problem.

In undertaking this project, students, working with their supervisors, will be required to develop solutions to a real-world industry problem set for them in consultation with a partner organisation. They will gain a comprehensive overall experience in the research and analysis techniques

relevant to their own discipline. Their work will rely on originality in the application of knowledge, emphasizing a practical understanding of how established research and enquiry techniques are employed to generate and interpret knowledge within the discipline.

Process, Structure and Learning Approach:

The programme team will source suitably scoped projects from their external industrial contacts. These projects will represent business or technical problems with good alignment with programme aims and learning outcomes, linked to a partner organisation that has a manifest interest in working with and upskilling postgraduate students. For example, on the MSc Innovation & Entrepreneurship, the programme team, who have access to technology entrepreneurs and hi-tech startups, will design work-based problems with their startup contacts on topics taught on the course such as new product development, corporate innovation, market research and business modelling. These problems will represent the extant issues or challenges faced by new startups, and their solutions, if designed well, could have a meaningful impact on such startups' ability to scale or raise investment.

Especially selected project supervisors will be paired with these designed problems, which will be advertised to the entire programme cohort at the beginning of the project selection cycle in the academic year. Students will be able to review information on the set problem and the profile of the linked supervisor and then apply with a covering note and resume. A shortlisting process will then proceed; those students who are shortlisted will be invited to an interview with the linked supervisor who will make the final decision on which student the project and position will be offered to.

Once onboarded, the student will immediately commence work on their project by setting up a timeline to completion with their project supervisor. This timeline will lay down the specific chapter-by-chapter completion plan of their project report, including meetings with company representatives, research methodology with primary and secondary data collection requirements, ethics approval process, solution design and validation, a presentation of draft results and solution plan to the industry partner and then a final submission based on received feedback.

In this manner, students will have exposure to an environment where they can develop a practical understanding of applying critical thinking skills, market-based data collection, and primary research methodology and analysis techniques. Project supervisors will mentor and coach students along in the process and help them to correctly interpret the feedback received from company representatives. This will enable students to critically reflect on their solution design work and further develop their programme-linked competencies.

As part of the project, students are expected to negotiate the specific activities and tasks that align with their overall educational ambitions, as their WMG supervisor may not have complete knowledge of their individual learning goals or skill sets. This requires students to take an active role and ownership in shaping their learning journey.

Student Responsibilities:

Although supported by a WMG supervisor, students will be expected to independently adhere to the set problem brief and their completion timeline to ensure the learning experience is meaningful and aligned with their programme's learning outcomes. Students must take ownership of their learning, demonstrating a proactive attitude and strong work ethic, as the quality of their

experience will depend largely on their personal initiative and effort. In their professional interactions with company representatives, students will be expected to showcase qualities valued by organisations such as enthusiasm, adaptability, reliability, and the ability to work autonomously.

Other Important Details:

Students will be required to engage in self-directed synchronous and asynchronous activities such as research and development of their project ideas, ethical approval, academic integrity and any other activities.

The ICP's report (or project report) is a written document presenting students' independent research on a topic fitting to the requirements of their course. In order to succeed in completing this piece of work, students must apply, synthesise, and evaluate the knowledge of their degree and apply their research skills. The project report is student-led with guidance and feedback provided by a project supervisor. Supervision will include yet will not be limited to: face to face and online meetings, reading and advising on draft chapters.

Module aims

Integration of Theory and Practice:

To enable students to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and its real-world application by applying theoretical frameworks, research, and emerging insights to solve contemporary business or technical problems.

Development of Professional Competence:

To equip students with the competencies, skills, and insights directly relevant to their future careers, including critical thinking, problem solving, innovation, and entrepreneurial mindset, through hands-on engagement with a partner organisation.

Originality in Knowledge Application:

To foster originality in the application of academic knowledge, encouraging students to develop innovative solutions, working models, or prototypes that address real-world industry problems in a meaningful and impactful way.

Critical Reflection and Research Mastery:

To cultivate students' ability to critically evaluate, interpret, and contextualize academic knowledge within a professional context while enhancing their proficiency in research methodologies, primary data collection, and analysis techniques.

Self-Directed Learning and Professional Growth:

To promote student autonomy and ownership of the learning process, encouraging students to actively shape their learning journey by negotiating project activities that align with their educational goals and professional aspirations.

Collaborative Problem Solving with Industry:

To provide students with practical experience in collaborating with industry professionals and

stakeholders, enabling them to gain constructive feedback and refine their solutions based on real-world market or organisational needs.

Professional Readiness and Employability:

To prepare students for the workforce by cultivating essential professional qualities such as adaptability, reliability, enthusiasm, and independent work ethic, ensuring they are well positioned for future roles within their chosen fields.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

In this project, students will be supported by a dedicated supervisor and will receive instruction on how to complete an industry-facing project. This project represents 60 CATS worth of student effort.

Learning Resources (available on this project-type's Moodle page):

1. Relevant texts on work-based learning, industry problem-solving, and research methodology.
2. Case studies: examples of successful industry projects and their impact on partner organisations.
3. Links to online databases: access to industry reports, academic journals, and market analysis tools.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Formulate practical objectives derived from the assigned industry problem, ensuring alignment between project scope, available time, and resources for effective execution
- Select, justify and apply research and analytical methods tailored to solving specific work-based challenges, ensuring they meet real-world organisational needs
- Critically evaluate academic literature and empirical evidence, synthesising insights to inform the development of practical solutions and produce a contextual review relevant to the industry problem
- Design and execute an investigation that adheres to ethical and professional standards, utilising theoretical frameworks and industry partner feedback to effectively address the identified problem
- Critically assess the impact of the proposed solution on relevant sustainability challenges within the partner organisation and its wider industrial, social and environmental context
- Communicate findings and recommendations effectively on complex professional matters to technical and non-technical audiences, evaluating the effectiveness of the methods used
- Demonstrate a well-developed ability to critically reflect on the development of programme-linked competencies through the completion and presentation of an industry-facing project

Research element

The Industry Collaboration Project is an opportunity for students to conduct highly specific research to guide solution design for a company partner based on a programme-linked and defined business problem.

Interdisciplinary

Student projects such as this Industry Collaboration Project inherently offer a multi-disciplinary learning experience for students by providing exposure to real-world scenarios. In professional settings, work-based projects often require a blend of skills and knowledge from different disciplines. For instance, data analysis might intersect with marketing, project management may involve elements of economics, and technology solutions often incorporate principles from engineering and innovation. As students engage with company professionals on developing specific solutions to set business problems, they may be a strong need to integrate perspectives from other disciplines such as social sciences, law, or the health sciences. Such a multi-disciplinary approach would enable students to develop a holistic skill set, honing not only their specialised knowledge but also their ability to navigate complex, interdisciplinary challenges, reflecting the interconnected nature of the modern workplace.

International

This project offers students a chance to engage with diverse business practices within an international context. It will require them to navigate different industrial, market and regulatory contexts when developing solutions that are innovative, contextualized and sustainable on an international scale. Students will also develop industry contacts, some of which might be global.

Subject specific skills

This project aims to build Warwick's 12 Core Skills as students undertake an investigation based in and drawing from their academic discipline, with its relevance and usefulness geared towards a particular company partner in the form of a practical solution to a defined problem. Considering the project's structure, learning outcomes, and assessment products, students will develop the following subject-specific skills:

The need for industry-specific problem solving will develop problem solving, critical thinking, and organisational awareness to address and resolve real-world industry challenges effectively.

The industry and market research requirement will develop information literacy for gathering data, critical thinking for analysis, and digital literacy for employing research tools.

The requirement to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world business problems necessitates critical thinking to adapt theories, problem solving to implement solutions, and organisational awareness to ensure relevance.

When students engage in solution design and prototyping, this will employ problem solving for developing solutions, digital literacy for creating prototypes, and professionalism for maintaining

high standards.

Ethical and professional decision making, an essential learning element, will develop ethical values, professionalism, and organisational awareness to ensure ethical and professional standards are upheld.

The need for reflection will develop self awareness to assess personal development, critical thinking to evaluate experiences, and professionalism to ensure constructive reflection.

Finally, as students engage with company partners and work with their supervisors, they will develop information literacy for trend analysis, critical thinking to assess impact, and intercultural awareness to understand wider implications.

Transferable skills

The project is an opportunity for students to develop and practice the Warwick Core Skills. These transferable skills include communication, ethical values, digital literacy, information literacy, problem solving, professionalism, and self-awareness. In addition, owing to the hands-on nature of this work-based learning experience, students are expected to develop the following additional transferable skills:

1. Initiative and creativity
 2. Insight into the functioning of another organisation
 3. Adaptation
 4. Commitment and perseverance
 5. Independence
 6. Handling supervisors' comments and development skills
 7. Time management
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	3 sessions of 1 hour (0%)
Project supervision	7 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Online learning (independent)	3 sessions of 1 hour (0%)
Other activity	17 hours (3%)
Private study	370 hours (62%)
Assessment	200 hours (33%)
Total	600 hours

Private study description

Students will manage with independent learning by keeping themselves updated on their role requirement, engaging with the work assigned to a very high standard, working with their WMG supervisor on any challenges faced and preparing for their assessments.

Other activity description

These would include supervisor-guided tasks including (but not limited to) ethics training, applying for ethics approval, securing access to case organizations for the purposes of data collection and so on.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Background Research, Context Setting & Problem Definition	30%	60 hours	No
Conduct a critical analysis of the problem set by the company by reviewing relevant literature, industry reports, and market data. Understand the company's environment, including its market position and challenges, and define the specific problem the project will address.			
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Solution Design, Validation & Implementation	40%	80 hours	No
Develop and validate a practical solution to the company's problem, ensuring it is effective and feasible. Create a plan for implementation, including testing, feedback, and strategies for integration within the company.			

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Present Outcomes of Your Project Report	30%	60 hours	No
Prepare and present the outcomes of your main project report's findings to the company partner and WMG supervisor. For further detail, seek guidance from your supervisor.			

Reassessment component

Present Outcomes of Your Project Report		No
A professionally recorded presentation covering the outcomes from your company project. Consider your audience, ensure that you speak clearly, cite all your sources and adopt an easy-to-follow structure.		

Feedback on assessment

Students will receive written feedback and feed-forward on their submissions.

Availability

Anti-requisite modules

If you take this module, you cannot also take:

- WM9J7-60 MSc Project for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of TWMS-H1S6 Postgraduate Taught Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Full-time)