



WARWICK BUSINESS SCHOOL
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

MBA and Specialist Masters Consultancy Projects Frequently Asked Questions

Is sponsoring a student project like hiring an intern?

No. A WBS consultancy project is a summer engagement between a student, Warwick Business School and a corporate client. Students undertake a project do so as part of their Academic Programme with each project requiring clear, specific objectives and a strategy focused outcome in order for the student to deliver a specific piece of work of value to the organisation. The research conducted forms the basis of a student's academic dissertation which is completed and submitted early September.

An internship by contrast is usually designed to give a student an insight into a particular organisation or career, rather than focused on an individual project, although a project may subsequently arise through the internship.

What is the difference between an MBA and a Masters student in regards to consultancy projects?

The Warwick MBA is a broad-based management qualification, attracting experienced managers with typically seven years' work experience.

Masters students tend to be postgraduates with limited professional work experience, focusing on very specific and detailed areas of academic study. The following Masters courses offer students consultancy projects;

- MSc Business Analytics
- MSc Finance
- MSc Information Systems Management & Innovation
- MSc Marketing & Strategy

What are the benefits to my organisation of sponsoring a student project?

- Access to an international talent pool of high quality experience and expertise individuals.
- Fulfilment and delivery of business projects for which there may be limited internal resource.
- Cutting-edge management thinking and fresh perspective.
- Project outcomes can result in cost savings, improved systems or processes, suggestions for subsequent revenue generation or new market entry.
- Projects can be viewed as a three month 'interview' for potential employees.
- Increase your organisation's profile at the University of Warwick.

Is there much documentation to complete?

No. The process is designed to be as easy as possible for you to recruit a student for your project. There are only three key forms which you will be required to complete/sign at various points in the process:

1. Project Brief
2. Project Agreement Form
3. Non-Disclosure Agreement

What are the costs involved?

There are no fees payable to WBS for MSc or MBA Consultancy Projects. However, all sponsoring organisations are expected to fully reimburse student expenses incurred to undertake the project (usually travel and subsistence).

What are the key dates in the projects process?

The process takes around ten weeks from the point the project is approved to the date students begin the project. Key dates for Project Sponsors are:

	MSc Projects	MBA Projects
Final Date for Submission of Projects	Wednesday 31 st January	Wednesday 31 st January
Projects advertised to students	Monday 12 th to Sunday 25 th February	Friday 9 th March to Sunday 1 st April
Deadline for signing of NDA's by companies	Monday 12 th February	Friday 9 th March
Applications forwarded for review and shortlisting	Monday 5 th March	Monday 16 th April
Deadline for shortlisting	Wednesday 7 th March	Wednesday 18 th April
Interview Dates	Wednesday 14 th to Friday 16 th March	Wednesday 25 th to Friday 27 th April
Deadline for initial meeting between student, client and academic supervisor to agree final project	Friday 25 th May	Friday 25 th May
Deadline for company to provide any agreed data sources to student for analysis	Thursday 31 st May	Friday 1 st June
Student start dates	Monday 4 th June	Monday 2 nd July

We aim to have students matched to projects around one month before the start date, to allow for preparations to be made and for background work to start.

Please note that we are happy to work with you flexibly, but due to projects forming part of students' academic programmes, these dates are fixed.

How much support do I need to provide?

Sponsoring organisations will need to allocate an employee as a mentor or point of contact for the student. Contact time depends on the nature of the project, but access to data, people and office space (if required) for the student needs to be made a priority and agreed at the outset of the project.

Can I specify certain skills or experience?

Yes. Please provide as much information as possible in the project brief to ensure you receive applications from suitably qualified candidates. As with a job advert, you can request that a student has experience in a certain area, define skills required to successfully complete the project or you could also request that students have covered an academic module directly relevant to your project area.

What is the duration of a student project?

Projects typically last between 10 to 12 weeks. We do not recommend that projects start earlier than the stated date, as in the interests of fairness, all students should have the same amount of time to complete their projects.

Where is the student expected to be based?

Students can be based either at the client's site, on campus or a combination of both. Location, working hours and expected attendance pattern should be discussed, agreed and documented in the Project Agreement Form to ensure expectations are clear for both the student and the client.

What can I expect at the end of a project?

The WBS project process is very much a mutually beneficial partnership between WBS, the company and the student. While the consultancy project underpins the student's academic dissertation, dependent on the nature of the project, you may wish to specify a separate organisational deliverable as part of the Project Agreement (e.g. management report, a formal presentation for your staff, a simulation model, or perhaps a marketing or strategy implementation plan). This will need to be scoped out at the very beginning of the project so all parties are aware of the final deliverable.

How much student interest can I expect?

In previous years, typical numbers of applicants for a project have ranged between two and ten. This will vary depending on the subject area and level of specialism of the project focus. While our objective is for all sponsors to successfully recruit students into their projects, this is a competitive process and many students will have multiple project offers, so we cannot guarantee you will have a student for your project.

How do I select a student?

Student selection operates in the same way as a recruitment process. The Corporate Relations Team at WBS will manage the application process from beginning to end; advertising the projects, coordinating student applications and scheduling interviews. Most companies come on campus to hold interviews (for which we can provide meeting rooms) and others conduct phone/online interviews. Some sponsors invite students to their site, but we recommend interviews at WBS or online for ease. WBS will not pre-screen or recommend candidates for projects.

How will confidentiality be maintained?

Dissertations produced as a result of the projects process, must be marked internally by two WBS Academics and a sample of these projects will also be subject to review by our External Examiners. However, data can be anonymised, and we have a standard Non-Disclosure Agreement that can be issued (if necessary) to give you peace of mind regarding the handling of business critical or sensitive data.

Is the student adequately insured when on company premises?

As the student is on a three-month placement and not officially employed by the sponsoring organisation, they should be covered in the same way you would any other visitor or consultant on your premises. The sponsoring company will need to ensure they are covered by [Employers' Liability Insurance](#).

If I am interested how do I proceed?

If you have a specific project already in mind, or would like to organise an exploratory discussion please contact the Corporate Relations Team at WBS (02476 574 862) who will take you through the next steps.

Thank you for your interest in WBS Student Consultancy Projects.

We look forward to working with you!