

Frequently asked questions about the Final Year Project

Course: Deadlines

I missed the deadline for the delivery of the final version of the project, I'm working already and I went bonkers, can you overlook this bureaucratic requirement and accept my project?

With all the sorrow of our hearts, and even if this is your last subject to get the degree, we cannot accept a project that is delivered late without telling us in advance.

It is not a bureaucratic requirement, it's part of the competences that you have to acquire in this cruel and competitive world where we live, imagine that you get the job of your life and you miss an important deadline and you are fired. It is part of your education to be very strict with complying with deadlines and if you can't meet them, to tell in advance and get some compromise, or accept the consequences.

I think I need more time to deliver my project. Can I deliver the project in the second (resit) deadline, instead of the initial deadline?

The second deadline (or resit) is for projects which are delivered in the initial period, but are evaluated as needing to improve to get accepted. So you should hand in already a version in the first deadline, and your tutor should tell us that he or she considers that it is incomplete and needs improvement. It would get a "fail" in the first round and it would be graded again in second deadline, as any other exam.

What can't be done is to not deliver anything in the first deadline, in that case the course would be "no show" (no presentat) and the project would not be allowed to be delivered in the second deadline.

I want to advance work, can I do my project during the summer?

Of course you can work in the project any time that you want, but you will have to present the project during the quarter where you are registered. So you will have to present the proposal for the project during the quarter where you registered, and the final version during the corresponding deadline of that quarter, even if your project is almost finish before the quarter starts.

If you are doing the project under the general modality you will have to wait to get advise from the tutor during the registered quarter, and if you have an external tutor you will have to get his or her commitment to sign the proposal and the evaluation form during that quarter.

Course: Library questionnaire

How can I verify if I passed the library questionnaire?

To verify if you have passed the library questionnaire, once the questionnaire has been closed go to the Aula Global where you can see the library material and click over "Grades". A grade larger or equal to 50 is "Pass".

Course: Office hours

We are two students at an Erasmus exchange, and we found two other students at UPF who can do the project under general modality with us, but we won't be able to show up to the required office hours. Can we still do the project under general modality?

As you say, one of the requisites for projects under the general modality is to come to at least one session of office hours (this is not required for projects under the specific modality).

Yes, you can still do it, if the team agrees to work remotely. The team has to hold at least one session of office hours, but not all the members of the team have to come to the office hours, it is fine if one person of the team comes.

Course: Plagiarism

Why do you fail me without right to the resit chance? I cut and pasted external sources but I put those sources in the bibliography!

Cutting and pasting external sources without citing the source is a very serious ethical infraction that cannot be accepted in any academic or professional setting! If you do that we will find out because we have the Turnitin application and it is very powerful checking against journals, web sites and student documents here and all over the world. Putting those sources in the bibliography does not exempt you from plagiarism; you are trying to get credit for text, ideas and results that you did not produce. If you don't cite these sources right at the place where you use them and you indicate clearly that they don't belong to you, you will be incurring in plagiarism.

As a very serious infraction it implies automatic failure of the course without the right to file the document again. You will have to register again for the course and delay one year your graduation.

If the survey of our project has images, should we indicate the source of each (at the actual survey) or is it enough if we just include the source in the references?

Whenever you use a material which is not yours you have to state the appropriate source. This applies to everything: images, graphs, pictures, tables, and also text, propositions or statements, based on something you have read. If you don't state the source right in the place where you used whatever is not yours, you will not avoid plagiarism, even if you include the reference in the reference of bibliography

section.

Nevertheless, you can just put "Source: Coca Cola (2011)" below the image, and at the references:

Coca-Cola (2011), <http://www....>, accessed on March 11, 2014

or whatever other accepted method of citation.

Project: Bibliography

Hi, where can we find information on how to do citations, bibliography etc. , because there are so many ways to do it!

Please check the different formats provided in the on-line training provided by the library, all of the bibliographical systems proposed there are accepted, whenever you are consistent across your document.

How come you ask us for a list of references at the beginning of the project? Shouldn't this be done at the very end?

Performing a bibliographical search and reviewing the list to choose the most appropriate sources and discard others, is something that has to be done at the beginning of the project. It is very important that you have a sufficient support material in order to perform your own creative analysis, which will not come out of the blue but instead will be constructed upon existing knowledge.

At the end of the project you will format the list of references that you finally used, but the bibliographic search and revision has to be performed at the beginning of any project.

We don't have many research articles, because we want to do our own investigations. Do we really need to check previous research?

The more own research you do, the more you have to be sure what others have done before you, you will not invent the wheel. On research they say "standing on the shoulders of giants", trying to say that if you get good background you can see much more.

This is true for all type of projects, it doesn't matter if it is a theoretical or empirical piece, or a business or marketing plan. You need to get good references for what you are doing, and not just Internet links, you need work actually published, especially in academic journals, which means checked for validity.

In any case a poorly documented project will not be graded too high no matter how well done is your research. I will not know if it is worth it if you don't compare it with previous research. The quality of your project will be very low if it cannot be compared with previous knowledge, data or cases.

We have something like 40 different Internet links to use as references for our project. Is that not enough?

In order to be accepted as an appropriate project, you have to find references based on rigorous research and having been reviewed for verification. Therefore you have to use research results and case analyses published in known journals and databases.

This is true for all type of projects, not only more research oriented projects but also business or marketing plans, because there you have to provide appropriate background of business strategies of rivals, analysis of the business sector where you are going to operate or other supporting analysis for your business plan. Remember that this is not a business plan exercise as you did during the carerer but an academic project based on a business plan.

In order to perform a good bibliographic research you have to use the databases available at the UPF library. For topics related to economics Econlit is an appropriate database, while for more management oriented topics ABI/INFORM is more appropriate.

Furthermore, if you use statistical information, you have to provide precise references to the data sources that provide these data, as well as variables, periods and individuals in the statistical information that you are going to use.

Project: Deliveries

I missed the regular deadline. Can I submit on the resit date with a penalty?

No, the resit is only for projects which need to be improved, but have been submitted in the regular deadline. If you miss the regular deadline you will get a "No show" (No Presentat).

The information in my project should be kept confidential for the characteristics of the project, are you going to publish it anywhere?

The papers are not published anywhere, so don't worry about the confidentiality. I choose some papers to publish in the e-repository of the library, but the consent of the authors is always asked, and in your case i will remember what you are telling me right now.

Project: Format

Can I use in the project a font of 11 points and 1.5 line spacing?

We have specified in the Syllabus (Pla Docent) that the font to use in the project should be 12 points and that the line spacing should be double. But if you think that it looks nicer if you use an 11 point font and 1.5 line spacing, it can be accepted.

What you shouldn't do is to use line spacing and font size to put more material in the allowed 25 pages of the project.

Take into account that extension is not a synonym of quality. A symptom of a well defined question and topic in your project is that you can answer the stated topic in 25 pages. If you have a lot of additional material that you would like to show you can always cite the sources in the project without adding all this material to the text.

Project: Individual work

I'm doing an Erasmus, can I do the Final Year Project alone, what do I have to do?

Please read all the material in the Aula Global (especially the Syllabus-Pla Docent and Fast Guide), everything is explained there. It is possible to do the Final Year Project while in an Erasmus exchange, the most important thing (and most difficult one) is to find a tutor for your project. The professors assigned to the Final Year Project this quarter only guide projects done in teams of 4 students, if you want to do the project alone (or in a team of 2 or 3 students), you need to find a tutor who is another professor at UPF or another university, or a qualified professional (provide a CV in this case). Once somebody has agreed to tutor your project, fill up the form that you can find in Aula Global or in the School Intranet, let the tutor sign it and turn it in Thursday of the second week of the course or before. Remember also to work out the material in "Information Search and Management Methodologies" and don't forget to do the questionnaire during the third week of the course.

Project: Length

Can the project exceed 25 pages plus 10 pages of annexes?

No, the Final Year Project has to be a paper which could be published and long papers are not admitted for publication.

My tutor under specific modality says the project needs to be longer, can it be accepted?

If your tutor asks you for a longer project, the professors of the Final Year Project course will accept it. Please tell the tutor to state clearly in his/her evaluation that the length of the project is fine

Project: Material

What is considered relevant material and what is considered irrelevant material for the final document of the project?

Relevant material: motivating introduction, brief summary of the main background needed for the project, description of the methodology used in the project, owned analysis and synthesis of the main results, conclusions, bibliographic references.

Irrelevant material: detail exposition of textbook concepts and definitions (based on textbooks or class notes, look for the appropriate sources and direct the reader who does not know the basic concepts to

the appropriate sources, but the reader is supposed to be a specialist in your project who doesn't need to be explained basic concepts); raw data (own survey or data collected from statistical sources or other, you only have to include a summary and the data analysis); journalistic or anecdotal material (this is only useful to motivate briefly some aspect, but it cannot be part of the substance of your project): and any other material not directly related with your main question or objective, which has to be very well defined and bounded.

Should we include the survey we did in the final document we deliver?

I would never include the actual questions and survey in the final document, this is unnecessary material. You have to just include a technical description of the survey (sample, survey method, target population, and so on), and an analysis of the data, which can include summary statistics. But the actual survey will increase unnecessarily the length of the document, and it will not be useful at all for the reader, who just wants to know your methodology and your results.

Project: Methodology

What do you mean by methodology, I already explained all the steps I did to prepare my project, is that not enough?

Explaining the methodology is not the same as explaining the working plan of your project. It means what type of theories, general concepts or tools you used for your project. Remember that the goal of the Final Year Project is to show that you can use what you learned during your degree in dealing with a specific question or problem, so you have to show what type of knowledge and tools from the degree you are using in preparing your economic analysis, data analysis, business plan or anything else you are working on. Be explicit on this, you should have a section in your document explaining it.

Project: Proposal

Do we need to fill up one online form for each member of the team, or with just one online form there is enough?

Just one member of the team has to fill up the form, with one form there is enough.

When are you going to let us know about the approval of the tutor for the specific modality projects?

Possibly at the beginning of the third week after the course has started, that is four or five days after the deadline for the delivery of the proposal (Thursday of the second week), we will communicate the approval of the tutor. But you can start working already because if the tutor is a qualified professor or professional it is very unlikely that we don't approve the project.

I will do the project individually, do I also need to fill up the online form? It looks like it is oriented only for teams.

Yes, you also have to fill it up. For the names of course you only have to fill "First member".

Project: Topic

Can I change the title and summary of the final version of the project with respect to what I proposed originally?

Yes, you can adjust the title and even the initial focus of the project as you work along. Of course you can't change the topic completely without agreeing it with us, but it is fine to adapt the final title and summary to your results.

I'm a student in the Economics degree. Can I choose a Business Plan as the topic for my Final Year Project? Somebody told me that being an economics student I can't choose that.

"Somebody" is mistaken, you can choose any of the allowed topics. Of course you can't do a Final Year Project about the life of Mozart, for instance, but you can choose any of the topics suggested in the Syllabus, be it more economics or business oriented.

When are we going to know if the topic that we have proposed is approved?

At the beginning of the third week after the course has started, that is 4 or 5 days after the deadline for the presentation of the proposals (Thursday of the second week of the course).

Unless the topic in the proposal is very strange, we will approve it for sure, and at most we will ask for some adjustment, normally to focus the topic since very often it is very general and wide for a Final Year Project.

Therefore you can start working before receiving the approval of the topic because it is very unlikely that we will ask for a radical change of the topic.

Can the project be a business or marketing plan?

Yes, but it has to have the format of an academic project, that is, there has to be an explanation on the methodological aspects involved, what knowledge has been used to do the project and references have to be provided for all the material used. In other words, it cannot be simply a business plan as you would show to an investor, presenting only the validity of the proposal. A motivating introduction has to be prepared, the methodological framework has to be shown and the novel elements of the project have to be highlighted, apart of following the usual requisites for this type of document.

Can the project be based on a paper I wrote for another course?

Yes, but it has to be an extension or an application to another case, and you have to cite the initial paper (no need to hand it in unless required by the tutor)

This summer I'm doing an internship at a bank, can I use the report of the internship as my End of Year Project?

Yes, it's possible, but the project cannot be simply the report, that is just a description of the internship tasks and experience. It has to be some specific topic within the activity that you are going to do in the internship. You will have to document the chosen topic appropriately, and you will have to format it as an academic project (check the material in Aula Global and the Intranet for a description of this format).

Furthermore you will have to convince somebody from the firm to tutor your project.

Lastly, if you prepare the project during the summer, you have to take into account the answer of another frequently asked question: You will have to complete all the process for the End of Year Project during the quarter where you are registered, consequently you will have to get a commitment of your external tutor to keep in contact and be ready to sign the proposal and the evaluation form during the quarter where you are registered.

Teams: Composition

I'm under the general modality but I was not able to be part of a group of 4 student to form a team, what can I do?

If you haven't been able to form a team of 4 students, which is the only way of doing the project under the general modality, that is without an external tutor, post a message in the Support forum asking for students in the same situation to see if you can form a team.

In case you reach the deadline and you still haven't been able to form a team, just enter the proposal with your name (or names if you are a team of 2 or 3 and you lack one or more components for your team) telling that you haven't been able to form a team and the professors assigned to the Final Year Project course will tell you what to do.

Can the teams be formed by students from different degrees/class groups?

Yes, whenever all of them are enrolled in the same quarter for the Final Year Project and the language requirement of the project is honored. That is, if all the students belong to class groups which have been announced as Spanish/Catalan groups then they can choose to make the project in Catalan, Spanish or English, but if any of the students in the team belongs to a class group where English is required to do the project, then this student will have to prepare the project in English, despite the other

students can choose to present the project in any of the three other languages.

Can a student at an international exchange do the Final Year Project under the general modality?

Yes, if the other members of the team agree that this student can work remotely, then he or she will be able to do the project under the general modality in a team.

We are a group of 5 students who have worked together since we started school, can we present the Final Year Project together?

Unfortunately not, we can't make exceptions, under the general modality only teams of 4 members are accepted, while under the specific modality only individual, or 2, 3 or 4 member teams are accepted, and in no circumstances teams of 5 students are admitted.

What other options are there?:

- 1. Form 2 two teams with 2 and 3 members each, for instance. Get an external tutor, and prepare a project around the same subject but each team focuses on a different aspect, and what you deliver has to be sufficiently different. For instance, the subject you have chosen is a Business Plan for a new banking product, the 2 member team works on the operative and human resources aspects, while the 3 member teams works out the Marketing Plan.*
- 2. Get 3 more members and form 2 teams under the general modality, and you present 2 related projects as explained in point 1.*
- 3. Get an external tutor, and one of the members of the team presents the project under the specific modality while the other 4 present under the general modality, and you present related but sufficiently different projects. This option has the advantage that you will have two different advisors.*

In all these suggestions the group of 5 students will be able to keep working together in a lot of aspects of the project, despite the fact that they will present different projects in different teams.

Specific modality: Deliveries

Students under the specific modality of the FYP have to deliver also the work plan and progress reports?

No, you only have to deliver the initial proposal (Thursday of the second week of the course) and the final project (Thursday of the last week of the course).

For a team project, is it necessary that each member of the team uploads the final version of the project, or is it enough that just one member of the team does it?

Just one member of the team has to upload the final version of the project

I'm doing a specific modality project, but I forgot to fill up the online form for the proposal. Is this very serious?

Well, it is, next year you may have a job and if you forget to do something you may get fired. This will just affect your grade in the part corresponding to "Work methodology: timeliness and delivery rigor".

Once we have the final version, apart from sending it to the tutor, do we have to upload it in the Turnitin link? Do we have to do anything else to deliver the project?

Yes, you have to upload the final document to the Turnitin link. Furthermore you have to ask the tutor to fill the evaluation form and to send it following the instructions written in the form, and there is a deadline to deliver the evaluation form which is 10 days after the deadline to deliver the project (which is Thursday of the last week of the course)

The evaluation form of the tutor has to be also turned in before the deadline? I ask because I want to work until the last minute, and my tutor needs some days to read and evaluate the project.

This is answered in the Fast Guide of the End of Degree Paper: The tutor will have ten additional days after the project delivery deadline to read and evaluate your project.

Specific modality: Documents

I have found a tutor, but he is not in town this week to sign the form, and the deadline is Thursday. What can I do?

Just turn in the form with all the information and put a note "Signature pending", and when you get the signature turn in the form again with the signature. Don't forget to fill also the online form at Aula Global.

I've been reading the frequently asked questions and I've seen that for external tutors that are professionals you require a CV, but I can't get it on time for the deadline, same thing with the signature. Can I bring it with the signed form?

Yes, the idea is to register the proposal on time and if anything is missing, like signature, CV or other things, you hand it later.

At the form to ask for the specific modality, where it says "COMMITMENT TO TUTOR THE FINAL YEAR PROJECT", do we have to fill the tutor's personal information or do you (professors) in charge of the FYP fill it up?

This is to be filled by the tutor of the specific modality project, and most importantly, to be signed. In other words, you can fill the data and let him or her sign it, so that we know that he or she commits to tutor the project.

I cannot get the signature of the external tutor before the deadline to turn in the proposal, what can I do?

If you cannot get the signature, turn in the form with all the information and bring the form with the actual signature as soon as you can.

If you cannot bring the printed copy but you can send a scanned copy of the form, you can also do that to meet the deadline and bring the actual form later when you can.

Is it sufficient to hand in the proposal form to apply for the specific modality or do I need to do something else?

As it is stated in various places, apart from turning in the form with the project proposal signed by the external tutor (deadline: Thursday of the second week of the course) you have to enter the information in the online form that you can find in Aula Global.

Specific modality: Evaluation

Should the tutor fill up one evaluation form for each member if the specific project was done in a team?

No, just one form is enough, unless the tutor wants to evaluate each member of the team differently.

If you do the specific modality whoever tutors your project does not do the final evaluation, right?

The project is co-directed between the external tutor and the professor assigned within the Final Year Project course to manage it. The final evaluation is based strongly in the report filled by the external tutor, but the final grade is the responsibility of the professor assigned within the Final Year Project course, based on his or her own reading of the project.

My external tutor has to send you the evaluation of my project, does she need to send it to some specific email or upload it somewhere?

The way to send the evaluation of the project is specified right in the evaluation form for external tutors.

Specific modality: Tutors

Can you as professor assigned to the FYP help me in finding an external tutor for my project or tell me who to contact?

No, this is something that you have to do by yourself if you want to do the project under specific modality. Take into account that professors not assigned to the FYP don't have any obligation to guide projects. They will do it if they know you from previous courses, where you got for instance a high grade, or if he or she gets very interested in your proposal. But in general they are very busy, and not being part of their job, it is not easy to convince them to act as an external advisor.

You can also check the research fields of professors at UPF on the Department of Economics and Business web page (Research → Fields) and you can also find in the web page the CVs of professors.

I have found a tutor, but it is a family member of mine. Can this person be my tutor?

In case that you think a family member is the best tutor you can find and it is justified, you have to state clearly in the application form that the proposed tutor is a family member, justify why you think the proposed tutor is qualified to guide your project, and attach a CV.

Take into account that the final version of the project will also be read by one of the professors assigned to the FYP, and if it is not of appropriate quality it will be reflected in your final grade.

I'd like to know if my tutor can have a collaborator?

Yes, of course, you can get advise from as many people as you want or can, the more the better.

I have sent email to 10 professors but none of them has agreed to be my tutor, what can I do?

Professors not assigned to the FYP course don't have an obligation to be a tutor, so it is not surprising that if you contact them by email they will not agree to be your tutor. For a professor to be your tutor, he or she has to know you from a previous course, or may have graded a term paper. Otherwise it is hard that they will agree to tutor your project, even if your project is extremely interesting.

I wanted to do the project under the specific modality, but all the tutors have turned me down, can you as FYP professor tutor me (or a team of two or three students)?

No, the professors of the FYP can only tutor teams of 4 students. If you haven't found a tutor, first post a message in the Support form asking for partners, and if the deadline arrives and you don't have a tutor, register your proposal writing a note that you don't have a tutor and we will assign you to a team or get you the extra team member that you need.

Of course the topic of the project will have to be agreed by the members of the resulting team.

Who can be a tutor in the specific modality?

Anybody qualified can be a tutor of the specific modality. Qualified persons include professors at UPF not directly assigned to the Final Year Project course, professors of other universities and professionals related to the subject of the project. In this last case you have to provide a Curriculum Vitae of the person, showing that he or she has the appropriate university degree to tutor a Final Year Project.

If we decide to take the specific modality, do we have to find our own tutor for the project?

Yes, the professors assigned to the Final Year Project course, or anybody else, are not responsible of finding a tutor for you. Also take into account that other professors at UPF do not have any obligation to tutor Final Year Projects, in order to do it you will have to convince them, either because your project is very interesting or because they know you from previous courses. Finally, don't wait until the last minute to contact professors and do not contact professors just by email because if you do it like that most likely they will turn you down.