MASTER OF INNOVATION AND TOURISM MARKETING (MIT)
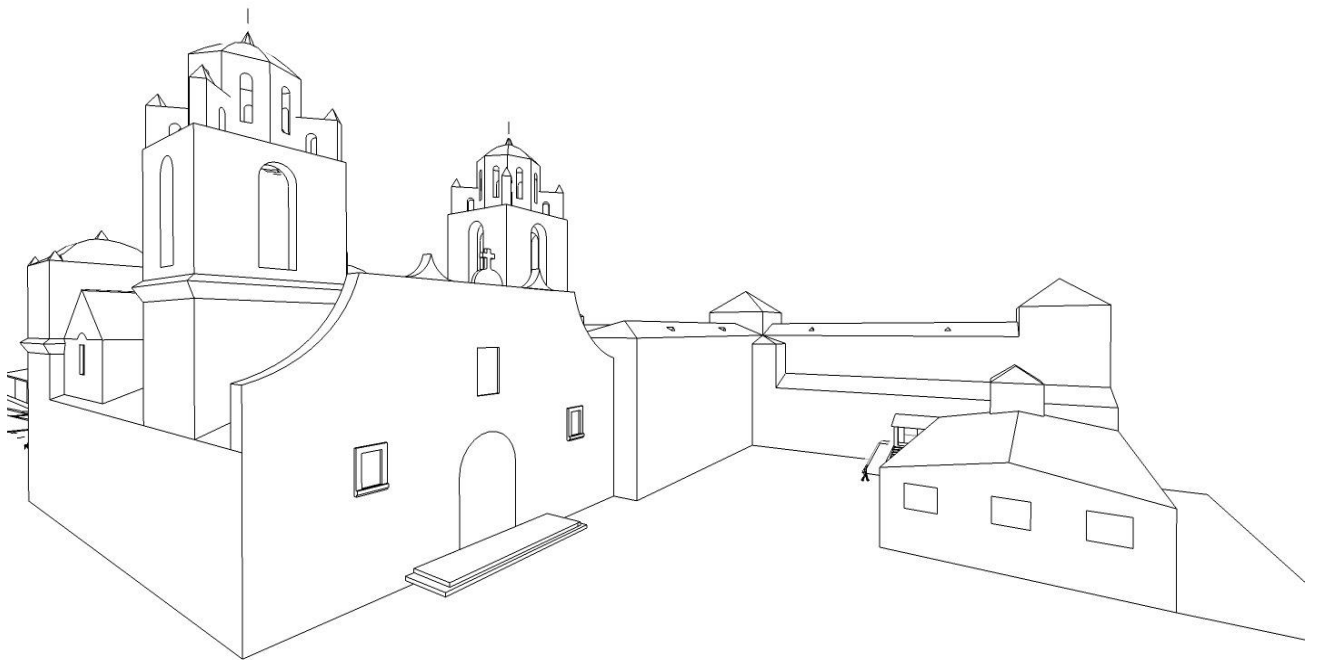
"ORGANISATIONAL GUIDELINES TO THE MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT"

OnCampus Program

Rev. 10

REASONING

Tourism Department has decided that it is necessary to determine the "Organisational Guidelines for the Master's Final Project (FMP) of MIT Students", which will indicate some general guidelines for a proper execution.

Therefore, this document will serve to set guidelines that must be followed mandatorily by all students at all levels of the writing process for their FMP.

It is difficult to give general directions for the structure of an academic document, since a large part of the paper depends on the theme and the preferences of the writer, but also try to give a general outline that can be adapted to fit any of these cases: preliminary sections, the text or body of the paper, and complementary sections.

1. PRELIMINARY SECTIONS

Those that preface the text or body of the paper, and in general terms, give a universal vision of the theme(s) being discussed in the text.

Preliminary sections are the following:

1.1 Cover Page

This is the first page of the paper, and gives information about the content. The rules about the acceptable style of a cover page can be found in the document "Style Guidelines Applied to the MIT".

1.2 Blank Page

1.3 Copy of the Cover Page

1.4 Authorisation Page of the Academic Advisor

1.5 Acknowledgements (optional)

1.6 Quotations (optional)

1.7 Index

The index presents the structure and content of the paper.

It lists, numbered and ordered properly with Arabic numerals, the chapter titles, summary titles and subheadings in the same order as seen in the text, indicating the page it is on as a guide for the reader.

The index is a very useful tool, and as such it is convenient to modify this section as you progress in the elaboration of your MFP, which will help us visualise the corrections you have made throughout the writing process.

Example: Index

1.8 Acronyms and Abbreviations (if there are any)

1.9 Specialised Lists (if there are any)

All the tables, graphs, illustrations or annexes that the paper contains should be listed on a separate page, after the index, indicating the titles of each and the page on which they can be found.

Up until now, there should be no page numbers printed on the bottom, although they will be included in the total page count.

Example: Specialised Lists

2. TEXT OR BODY OF THE PAPER

The text or body of the paper, the main section of the document, contains the contribution of the writer, who should demonstrate a complete knowledge of concepts obtained as an undergraduate and can express them correctly, clearly and using business terminology.

2.1 General Rules and Standards

It would be convenient for the student to follow the following recommendations for writing their FMP:

A. Before beginning the writing process:

- When it is required to choose a theme:

  * It is necessary to limit the paper to fit what the student can thoroughly discuss in the selected field. It is important that the theme can be encompassed with the resources available to the student to write their FMP.

For example, it could start with discussing the Spanish wine sector and end writing about the best commercial strategy to apply to a winery in La Rioja before the entrance of new countries to the EU.

  * It could also be interesting to rewrite a similar paper the student has already done but applying it to a different area.

- The first step to obtain information about the selected theme can be done by searching for bibliography in a library:

  * To do this, introduce key words into a search program, or the name of an author we know of.

  * Once we have selected two or three works that interest us, it is very useful to investigate the authors and works cited by what we have found.

  * These writings will give us an idea of how this theme has been talked about previously, and if we can find information that supports the affirmations that we make in our paper.

- Sometimes it is necessary to build our own database because the information we are looking for is not organised.

- After having read and compiled a bibliography about our theme, we should:

* Analyse and reflect upon the obtained information.

* Limit the structure of the paper and the fundamental ideas we want to defend.

B. During the writing process:

- All the text and content should be original, redacted and edited by the student expressly for their FMP. This is shown through the study, analysis, comparison and evaluation of information and data gathered from various sources, both direct and indirect. Citing other texts is allowed, in order to reinforce the student's ideas, but using the citation guidelines previously explained.

- It is good to have one idea per paragraph, with a paragraph generally being ten to twenty lines.

- It is important to support the claims with corroborative information.

For example, if we say that the construction sector suffers from a serious recession in Spain, it is necessary to use data that affirm this, such as annual growth rate, the unemployment rate, etc.

- In order to write a good paper, it is normally necessary to write a few first drafts before writing the final version. In these drafts the student should decide how to organise their information efficiently, changing titles, or even the structure of the paper.

- During this process, the writing will get better until arriving at the best expression of ideas. The words are the vehicles that will carry your ideas, and so it is recommended to spellcheck, although this is not considered a formal aspect of your paper.

- Using a text from another author in your paper without expressly quoting them is plagiarism.

- According to the Oxford English Dictionary, plagiarism is: "the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own", a dishonest intellectual activity that should be avoided. Under no circumstances will plagiarism be accepted. The academic advisor will not accept the FMP defence if it is detected. Using information obtained from another author without specifying the source is considered plagiarism.

2.2 Parts of the text of body of the paper

The text or body of the paper is made up of the introduction, the chapters and the conclusion(s).

2.2.1 Introduction

The introduction should not be confused with a summary of the paper, or a detailed account of the theory, methods, results or conclusions.

The theme that is going to be addressed is mentioned in the introduction, and the following aspects are presented:

- Objectives: clear definition and explanation of what is going to be argued in the paper. Normally there is a main objective and various secondary ones, although it depends on the type of paper.

- Justification: brief summary of the reasons why it is interesting to study the selected theme. This is trying to capture the reader's attention, and make us aware of its importance for academia and the professional world, all while taking into account the scientific state of the study, the social context, etc.

- Methodology: a brief peek at the methodological system used throughout the paper, especially if there was field work performed.

- Structure: The distinct parts explain what they have been divided into and the content of each one.

The first numbered page that appears is the introduction.

Example: Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the XXI century has been characterised for its easy access to a large and growing volume of information, an element necessary to maintain human activity.

The objective of this paper is to present a brief analysis of Information Societies (IS) from social, cultural and technological perspectives, emphasising the impact it has on individual, organisational and national life.

The first section analyses the conceptual setting of information, like its architecture and elements, as well as the role that communication plays as a fundamental process that makes a circulation of information possible.

The second section contains a study about subjects that form a part of the information process: transmitters and receivers, identifying their mutual psycho-sociological relationships and characteristics.

2.2.2 THE CHAPTERS

They are the divisions and subdivisions of the paper that give structure to the document as it unfolds.

Each chapter corresponds to a specific theme, along with a title that indicates its content, as shown in the index.

Example:

Chapter Title: 1. INFORMATION

Summary Title: (1.1) CONCEPT

Subheading: **(1.1.1) Architecture**

Subheading: *(1.1.1.1) Structure of this architecture*

-Information

-Data analysis

(1.1.1.2) Product information with tax

The summary titles and subheadings, illustrations, citations and footnotes constitute the chapters.

- **Summary titles and subheadings**

As we advance writing a chapter, we can decide which aspects are the most relevant, which will become our summary titles and subheadings.

In order to facilitate identification for a smooth reading, the number of subheadings should be limited to four. Each new division will be signalled with the use of bullet points, whether they are dashes, periods, or other alternative that your word processing software provides:

- **Illustrations**:

Illustrations are understood as any graphic materials (maps, tables, graphs, logos, photos and figures) that, in order to communicate essential information, appear in the chapters.

It is obligatory to reference, throughout the text, the illustrations inserted into the body of the paper. The most common are graphs and tables.

The graphs show relationships, comparisons and distributions, in a combination of data and can exhibit, for example, absolute values, percentages or indexes.

Presenting information in the vertical and horizontal axes should be done in an organised manner (for example, from smallest to biggest) and consistent (in units of measurable quantity).

There are various types:

1. **Line graphs** are used to show the relationship between two quantitative variables. The independent variable is placed on the horizontal axis, and the dependent variable on the vertical axis.

Example: Line graph

Graph 1. Evolution of the proportion of new centres opened by new businesses and previously established businesses in the zone. 1995-2001
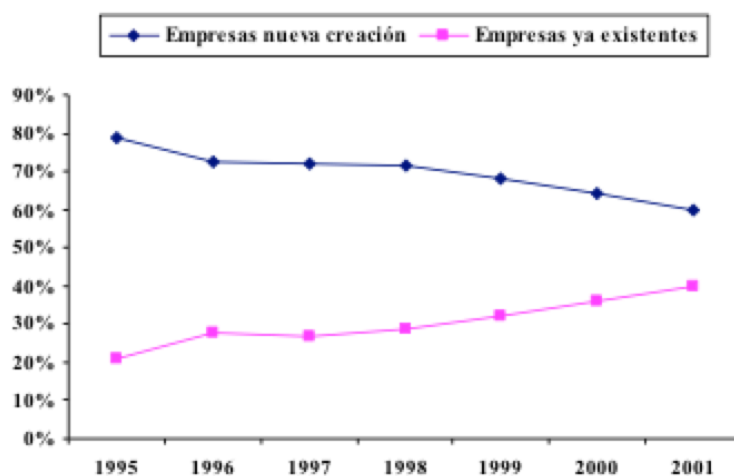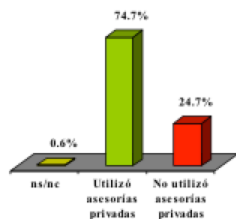

Source: Dirección General de Trabajo de Murcia y elaboración propia. (Consulted in May 2005).

Note: 1995 marks the beginning of an expansive economic period.

2. **Bar graphs** are used when the independent variable is categorised. Each solid bar, horizontal or vertical, represents a type of data.

Example: Bar graph
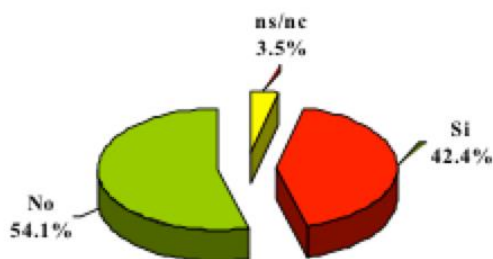
Graph 5. Have you ever used private consultant services?

74.7%

24.7%

0.6%

ns/nc   Utilizó   No utilizó
            asesorías   asesorías
            privadas   privadas

Source: Self-produced

3. **Pie charts** are used to show percentages and proportions.

Example: Pie chart

Graph 12. Did you have problems finding the proper funding?

ns/nc
3.5%

Si
42.4%

No
54.1%

Source: Self-produced

4. **Tables:** If tables are included within the text, they should be referenced. Comment on the information they contain, if they are considered so important that they must be included in the body of the text. Tables should be adjusted to the normal margins, if possible.

If the information is contextual, or complementary, it might not be necessary to comment on it. If this is so, the tables should be placed in an annex of the paper.

Example: Table

Table 2. Proportion of job centres opened by new businesses and by previously established businesses in Murcia. 1995-2001

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
New businesses	79%	72.5%	72%	71.5%	68%	64%	60%
Previously established businesses	21%	27.5%	27%	28.5%	32%	36%	40%

Source: Dirección General Trabajo de Murcia 2003 (consulted: May 2005) and self-produced.

5. **Citations**: Citations are understood as passages, paragraphs, propositions, data, information, or ideas that come from the works of another author to reinforce or confer, what is expressed in the paper.

They can be inserted into the paper as long as they are always interspersed throughout the student's own writing and complete the guidelines of formal presentation. In any case, they should not be overly abundant, since the student's original writing is what should make up the main part of the chapter.

Each and every time an idea is taken from elsewhere, its source must be cited. This is essential and fundamental for two reasons:

An honest student recognises ideas that are not their own.

It offers the readers the possibility to discover the original works to compare and contrast the information found there.

6. Footnotes

Footnotes should be used to make comments or clear up information, introduce anything additional that is not considered indispensable, or that would cause the body of the text to become too wordy.

As such, the paper should be a smooth read without having to stop to look at footnotes to understand the main ideas.

2.2.3 CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the paper is fundamental, since it logically presents the deductions from the investigated theme.

It is not a summary of the ideas of the cited authors, but a summary of the main points found in the paper.

The conclusion(s) should highlight- this is the main idea- the original contributions of the paper (be concrete) inside the context of the general research in the field. It should not take up more than 10% of your paper as a whole, and its redaction and unity of ideas should be exact. The conclusions should be the most carefully written part of the paper.

Both the conclusion and introduction should be directly related: the conclusion responds to the questions and objectives initially proposed.

Some reflections on the most relevant points can also be made, which can constitute a motive for future research.

3. COMPLEMENTARY SECTIONS

In all MFP, the bibliography and annexes are considered complementary sections.

3.1 Bibliography

It is the list, in alphabetical order starting with the surname of the authors, of all sources consulted by the student to write their paper.

It is highly recommended to use the Ebsco database "Business Source Premier (BSP)", available in the UCAM library, with around 3.627 indexed magazines with all the text intact. This includes the database Datamonitor with information about some 10.000 businesses.

In the case that more bibliography was consulted than cited within the text, it is necessary to create two subsections:

A. **Bibliography cited:** This is what was explicitly mentioned in the body of the paper with APA citation style. It should be varied and oriented toward the theme of the paper.

In general, APA guidelines should be followed in the bibliography.

3.2 Annexes

If it is necessary, an annex can be included at the end to present details or concrete aspects of the techniques used, a table of data, surveys, statistics, etc.

The end of the paper, a white sheet of paper should be inserted between the final sections of the paper and the back cover.