

## QSO 500 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

### Overview

The final project for this course is the creation of a research report.

Problem solving is the heart blood of any organization. In today's world, data metrics are used extensively for accountability and performance measures. These demands require a specialized form of problem solving, but there are many ways to approach data-driven problem-solving. Using action research is a very powerful tool for identifying, analyzing, and explaining problems by using the evidence from the data analysis to guide decisions.

In this final project, you will create a research report based on the application of action research processes for developing problem solving strategies. In designing the report, you will follow the best practices for ethical research. You will utilize the research process to inform decisions in your professional life and as a framework for approaching research projects in other courses in your program. The final product will be a comprehensive research report using the five-step research process (identify the problem; understand the theoretical framework of the problem; design the research study; collect, explain, and analyze the data; report the results; and make conclusions and recommendations).

You will refer to the given case study and choose a research problem that has (or could have) real business or organizational applications. You will explore the theoretical foundation of the problem by integrating information from a variety of quality sources. Then you will apply basic quantitative analysis as a part of this process and use this analysis to propose a recommendation for action. The finished research report will serve as a deliverable to a decision maker as seamless and cogent analysis of the research problem, including the evidence for resolution.

The project is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Three, Five, and Seven. The final submission is due in Module Nine.**

**In this assignment you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:**

- Analyze data-driven business problems using action research
- Determine the theoretical foundation of business problems through the analysis of relevant, quality sources
- Analyze qualitative and quantitative data using primary and secondary sources to generate meaningful results
- Apply ethical reasoning that complies with legal and professional standards of practice to the research enterprise
- Present the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of research studies through the effective integration of written and analytical skills

## Prompt

Create a research report based on your application of action research to research a specific business problem present in the given case study Maruti Suzuki India: Defending Market Leadership in the A-Segment.

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed in your research report:

- I. **Business Problem:** Refer to the given case study and select a data-driven business problem that can be addressed using action research to be the basis for your research report.
  - A. Describe the **research problem**, including the context in which it exists. In other words, what caused or precipitated this problem? What has already been done to address it?
  - B. Describe the key **stakeholders** (or potential stakeholders) of your business problem. In other words, who are the people who have the most to gain or lose from a decision?
  - C. Explain the **research objective**. How would it benefit the stakeholder to know the results?
  - D. Develop a **research question** based on the research objective that clearly and concisely articulates in one sentence the purpose of the study.
  - E. Discuss the key real or potential **ethical issues** or challenges of the study. Consider the following: How will data be collected and protected? How will human subjects be used, treated, and protected?
- II. **Literature Review:** Prepare a comprehensive literature review that carefully and thoughtfully examines the research problem from a scholarly perspective using a minimum of seven quality sources. A minimum of three of the sources must be selected from scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. Other quality sources can be professional publications or magazines, internal corporate publications such as annual reports or white papers, or established news sources.
  - A. Explain the **theories** that best ground your organizational problem. Support your explanation with specific examples. These theories might be management, behavioral, social, and/or business related.
  - B. Discuss the **bias and limitations** present in the relevant literature and the potential impact these may have on your research.
  - C. Summarize at least one **other research study** that has faced this challenge that could potentially be replicated and applied to your research study.
  - D. From the literature, analyze at least one **other organization** that has faced similar problems, explaining what they have done to address the problem.
- III. **Research Design:** Explain how you will carry out your research. Remember that your business problem should be able to be addressed using action research.
  - A. Explain the **research design and methods** you will use, justifying why they are appropriate for your research study.
  - B. Describe the key **variables** from primary and/or secondary data sources that you will use to analyze your research problem.
  - C. Explain the key **dependent and independent variables**. In other words, how would the independent variables predict, explain, or prove the dependent variable?
  - D. Explain the key **ethical considerations** for using these data sources, including how they meet legal and professional standards.

- IV. **Data Analysis:** After you have collected your data, analyze it using descriptive and inferential statistics.
- A. Accurately analyze the data using the appropriate **descriptive statistics**.
  - B. Construct appropriate **tables or graphs** to accurately display the results of the data analysis. Include explanations of the meaning of the information presented.
  - C. Accurately analyze the data using the appropriate **inferential statistics**. Be sure to include the output.
  - D. Explain the **meaning of the results** of your data analysis in practical terms (e.g., what were the results? What results were expected? What results were unexpected? What results were unsettling?).
  - E. Discuss the **ethics of analyzing data** to ensure it is fair, objective, and scholarly. What safeguards did you put in place to ensure the integrity of the study?
- V. **Conclusions and Recommendations for Action**
- A. Summarize your **research findings** succinctly for stakeholders.
  - B. Explain how the **research problem** can be addressed by incorporating the results from your literature review and data analysis. In other words, what do you now know about your research problem that you did not know or understand before?
  - C. Based on the conclusion, make **recommendations** to address the research problem that are actionable, feasible, and realistic.
  - D. Recommend appropriate strategies for handling any potential **questions and concerns of stakeholders**.
  - E. Based on your study, make appropriate recommendations for **additional research** that would improve the organization's effectiveness.

## Milestones

### Milestone One: Draft of Business Problem and Literature Review

In **Module Three**, you will submit a draft of your business problem and literature review. Using the problem you identified in your Module One journal and the feedback you received, describe the research problem including the context in which it exists. Using the problem statement, describe the stakeholders and research objective. Based on the research objective, develop a research question that clearly and concisely articulates in one sentence the purpose of the study. Consider the key real or potential ethical issues or challenges of the study.

After describing your business problem and research question, prepare a comprehensive literature review that carefully and thoughtfully examines the research problem from a scholarly perspective using a minimum of seven quality sources. A minimum of three of the sources must be selected from scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. Other quality sources can be professional publications or magazines, internal corporate publications such as annual reports or white papers, or established news sources. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

### Milestone Two: Draft of Research Design

In **Module Five**, you will submit a draft of your research design. Explain the research design and methods that will be used to address the business problem you identified in Milestone One, justifying why they are appropriate for your research study. To support your research design, describe the methods you will use, the key variables, and ethical considerations involved in using the research design. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

Milestone Three: Draft of Data Analysis and Conclusions and Recommendations for Action

In **Module Seven**, you will submit a draft of your data analysis and conclusions and recommendations for action. Analyze the data provided for your problem using descriptive and inferential statistics. You will explain the meaning of the results of your data analysis in practical terms and consider the ethics of analyzing data to ensure it is fair, objective, and scholarly. Using all of your research and your data analysis, you will develop the concluding section of your research report: conclusions and recommendations for action. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Final Submission: Research Report

In **Module Nine**, you will submit your research report. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final project. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. **This final submission will be graded using the Final Project Rubric.**

## Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Draft of Business Problem and Literature Review	Three	Graded separately; Milestone One Rubric
Two	Draft of Research Design	Five	Graded separately; Milestone Two Rubric
Three	Draft of Data Analysis and Conclusions and Recommendations for Action	Seven	Graded separately; Milestone Three Rubric
	Final Submission: Research Report	Nine	Graded separately; Final Project Rubric

## Final Project Rubric

**Guidelines for Submission:** Submit an APA-formatted report that is 15–20 pages in length.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (90%)	Needs Improvement (70%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
<b>Business Problem: Research Problem</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and research problem is exceptionally clear and contextualized	Describes the research problem, including the context in which it exists	Describes the research problem, but description is cursory or does not include the context in which the problem exists	Does not describe the research problem	3.8
<b>Business Problem: Stakeholders</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and description is exceptionally clear and contextualized	Describes all key stakeholders of the business problem	Describes the stakeholders of the business problem, but description is cursory or neglects to address all key stakeholders	Does not describe the stakeholders of the business problem	3.8

<b>Business Problem: Research Objective</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and provides keen insight into how research would benefit the stakeholder	Explains the research objective, including how this research would benefit the stakeholder	Explains the research objective, but explanation is cursory or does not show how this research would benefit the stakeholder	Does not explain the research objective	3.8
<b>Business Problem: Research Question</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and question is exceptionally clear and concise	Develops a research question based on the research objective that clearly and concisely articulates in one sentence the purpose of the study	Develops a research question based on the research objective, but it does not clearly or concisely articulate in one sentence the purpose of the study	Does not develop a research question based on the research objective	3.8
<b>Business Problem: Ethical Issues</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the ethical issues present in the study	Discusses all key real or potential ethical issues or challenges of the study	Discusses real or potential ethical issues or challenges of the study, but discussion is cursory, contains issues of clarity, or neglects to address key ethical issues	Does not discuss real or potential ethical issues or challenges of the study	6.34
<b>Literature Review: Theories</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and examples make cogent connections between the theories and the organizational problem	Explains the theories that best ground the organizational problem with support from specific examples	Explains the theories that best ground the organizational problem, but explanation is cursory or not supported with specific examples	Does not explain the theories that best ground the organizational problem	4.76
<b>Literature Review: Bias and Limitations</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and is exceptionally insightful about the potential impact the bias and limitations may have on research	Discusses the bias and limitations present in the relevant literature, including the potential impact on research	Discusses the bias and limitations present in the relevant literature, but discussion contains issues of clarity or does not address the potential impact on research	Does not discuss the bias and limitations present in the relevant literature	4.76
<b>Literature Review: Other Research Study</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into how other research studies could inform your research	Summarizes another research study that has faced this challenge that could potentially be replicated and applied to your research study	Summarizes another research study that has faced this challenge that could potentially be replicated and applied to your research study, but summary is cursory or contains inaccuracies	Does not summarize another research study that has faced this challenge that could potentially be replicated	4.76
<b>Literature Review: Other Organization</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and makes cogent connections between other organizations and own organization	Analyzes another organization that has faced similar problems, including an explanation of what was done to address the problem	Analyzes another organization that has faced similar problems, but analysis is cursory or does not explain what was done to address the problem	Does not analyze another organization that has faced similar problems	4.76

<b>Research Design: Research Design and Methods</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates sophisticated understanding of applying research design and methods	Explains the research design and methods that will be used, including justification of why this is appropriate for the study	Explains the research design and methods that will be used, but explanation is cursory, contains issues of clarity, or does not justify why this is appropriate for the study	Does not explain the research design and methods that will be used	3.8
<b>Research Design: Variables</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and makes cogent connections between the variables and research problem	Describes all key variables from the primary/secondary data sources that will be used to analyze the research problem	Describes the variables from the primary/secondary data sources, but description contains issues of clarity or does not address all key variables	Does not describe the variables from primary/secondary data sources	4.76
<b>Research Design: Dependent and Independent Variables</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and explanation is exceptionally clear and contextualized	Explains the dependent and independent variables	Explains the dependent and independent variables, but explanation contains inaccuracies or neglects key variables	Does not explain the dependent and independent variables	4.76
<b>Research Design: Ethical Considerations</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of ethical considerations when using data sources	Explains the key ethical considerations for using the data sources, including how they meet legal and professional standards	Explains the ethical considerations for using the data sources, including how they meet legal and professional standards, but explanation is cursory or neglects key ethical considerations	Does not explain the ethical considerations for using the data sources	6.34
<b>Data Analysis: Descriptive Statistics</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates masterful application of descriptive statistics	Accurately analyzes the data using appropriate descriptive statistics	Analyzes the data using appropriate descriptive statistics, but analysis is cursory or contains inaccuracies	Does not analyze the data using appropriate descriptive statistics	4.76
<b>Data Analysis: Tables or Graphs</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and explanations demonstrate keen insight into the meaning of the information presented	Constructs appropriate tables or graphs that accurately display the noteworthy variables with explanations of the meaning of the information presented	Constructs appropriate tables or graphs to display the results of the data analysis, but some tables or graphs are unclear or contain inaccuracies or lack explanation of the meaning of the information presented	Does not construct appropriate tables or graphs to display the results of the data analysis	2.72

<b>Data Analysis: Inferential Statistics</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates masterful application of inferential statistics	Accurately analyzes the data using appropriate inferential statistics, including the output	Analyzes the data using appropriate inferential statistics, but analysis is cursory, contains inaccuracies, or does not include the output	Does not analyze the data using appropriate inferential statistics	4.76
<b>Data Analysis: Meaning of the Results</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and explanation is exceptionally clear and contextualized	Explains the meaning of the results of the data analysis in practical terms	Explains the meaning of the results of the data analysis, but explanation is cursory, contains inaccuracies, or is not in practical terms	Does not explain the meaning of the results of the data analysis	2.72
<b>Data Analysis: Ethics of Analyzing Data</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and safeguards put in place demonstrate keen insight into the ethics involved in data analysis	Discusses the ethics of analyzing data to ensure it is fair, objective, and scholarly as well as safeguards put in place to ensure the integrity of the study	Discusses the ethics of analyzing data to ensure it is fair, objective, and scholarly, but discussion is cursory, contains inaccuracies, or does not include safeguards put in place to ensure the integrity of the study	Does not discuss the ethics of analyzing data to ensure it is fair, objective, and scholarly	6.34
<b>Conclusions and Recommendations for Action: Research Findings</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and summary is exceptionally concise and contextualized	Summarizes research findings succinctly for stakeholders	Summarizes research findings for stakeholders, but summary is too comprehensive or lacks clarity	Does not summarize research findings for stakeholders	2.72
<b>Conclusions and Recommendations for Action: Research Problem</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and makes cogent connections between the literature review, data analysis, and research problem	Explains how the research problem can be addressed by incorporating results from the literature review and data analysis	Explains how the research problem can be addressed by incorporating results from the literature review and data analysis, but explanation is cursory or illogical	Does not explain how the research problem can be addressed	2.72
<b>Conclusions and Recommendations for Action: Recommendations</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates sophisticated understanding of how to address the research problem	Makes recommendations to address the research problem that are actionable, feasible, and realistic based on the conclusion	Makes recommendations to address the research problem, but they are not all actionable, feasible, and/or realistic or based on the conclusion	Does not make recommendations to address the research problem	2.72
<b>Conclusions and Recommendations for Action: Questions and Concerns of Stakeholders</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and recommendations demonstrate a keen awareness of the intended audience	Recommends appropriate strategies for handling any potential questions and concerns of stakeholders	Recommends strategies for handling any potential questions and concerns of stakeholders, but not all recommendations are appropriate	Does not recommend strategies for handling any potential questions and concerns of stakeholders	2.72

<b>Conclusions and Recommendations for Action: Additional Research</b>	Meets "Proficient" criteria and demonstrates sophisticated understanding of how additional research would improve the organization's effectiveness	Makes appropriate recommendations for additional research that would improve the organization's effectiveness	Makes recommendations for additional research that would improve the organization's effectiveness, but not all recommendations are appropriate	Does not make recommendations for additional research that would improve the organization's effectiveness	2.72
<b>Articulation of Response</b>	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	4.86
<b>Total</b>					<b>100%</b>