

AGSM MBA Programs 2020

MBAX9101

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

September 14 - December 4, 2020

COURSE OUTLINE



AGSM @
UNSW Business School

Course schedule

Term 3 2020 – Weekly online

MBAX9101 Project Management

Week	Topic	Detail/Engagement	Assessment task
1: 14 September 2020	Unit 1: Introduction to project management	Study content in Unit 1	Assessment 3: Online Participation begins and is assessed throughout the term
2: 21 September 2020	Unit 2: Dealing with uncertainty and risks	Study content in Unit 2	
3: 28 September 2020	Unit 3: Setting up projects for success	Study content in Unit 3	
4: 5 October 2020*	Unit 4: Designing and planning the project	Study content in Unit 4	Assessment 1: Report due on Tuesday 6 October 2020 by 3pm Sydney time
5: 12 October 2020	Unit 5: The project plan	Study content in Unit 5 Harvard simulation	
6: 19 October 2020	Unit 6: Optimising the project schedule and budget	Study content in Unit 6. Harvard simulation	Assessment 2: Team Component 1.1: Project management plan due on Friday 23 October 2020 by 3pm Sydney time
7: 26 October 2020	Unit 7: Managing stakeholders, teams and communications	Simulation debrief webinar: Monday 26 October 2020 at 8pm (recorded for those who cannot attend) Study content in Unit 7	
8: 2 November 2020	Unit 8: Project execution and control	Study content in Unit 8	Assessment 2: Team Component 1.2: Status report 1 due on Thursday 5 November 2020 by 3pm Sydney time
9: 9 November 2020	Unit 9: Project reviews and close out	Study content in Unit 9	
10: 16 November 2020	Unit 10: Uplifting project management capability	Study content in Unit 10	Assessment 2: Team Component 1.2: Status report 2 due on Friday 20 November 2020 by 3pm Sydney time
11: 23 November 2020			Assessment 2: Team Component 2.2: Presentation to be scheduled with Facilitator for Week 11 or 12.
12: 30 November 2020			Assessment 2: Team Component 2.1 due Wednesday 2 December 2020 by 3pm Sydney time Assessment 2: Team Component 2.2: submission of written report and oral presentation as agreed with facilitator (Week 11 or 12) Assessment 2: Individual Component: Reflective report due on Friday 4 December 2020 by 3pm Sydney time

*Monday 5 October is a public holiday in NSW

Staff contact details

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Course details

Summary of course

With the billions being invested in projects around the world, there is a burgeoning need to develop both individual and organisational project-management capabilities. Organisations are no longer debating whether there is value in adopting project management. The question now is how to develop their project-management capabilities in the most efficient, value-producing manner, and how to turn effective project management into key competitive advantage.

Project [noun] a piece of planned work or an activity that is finished over a period of time and intended to achieve a particular purpose (*Cambridge English Dictionary*, n.d.).

Projects are the means by which organisations implement their strategy.

They are ubiquitous across industry and domain: as a manager or leader in any modern organisation, you will be directly involved in projects - as a team member, a project or program manager, a subject-matter expert, a sponsor or owner, or as a client.

As your career progresses, you can expect to face increasingly complex challenges in dealing with larger projects, more demanding stakeholders, tighter constraints on human, financial and other resources, and a rapidly changing environment. You will be expected to improve the efficiency, productivity and performance of your teams, and determine which projects and initiatives will best deliver the organisation's mandate.

An increasing number of organisations are 'projectising' routine work to gain the benefits of project management. At the same time, agile and flexible work practices are blurring the distinction between project and operational work. At the other end of the scale, the increasing number of complex projects and megaprojects require more rigorous approaches to both managing and governing an organisation's project portfolio.

This course provides an introduction to the rapidly growing world of project, program and portfolio management (PPPM or 3PM). The 10 Units address various themes around managing projects in modern organisations, and take you through key processes that contribute to the successful delivery of a project. We start with an introduction to project management, and follow with requisite project-management methodologies and skills, management of the stakeholders and individuals assigned to project teams, project planning and project communications, project execution and control, and project closure. Woven through each Unit are the attributes of responsible leadership underpinning sustainable future organisations.

However, we can only scratch the surface of what is an ever-expanding field of study. Every project is, by definition, unique: there is no one-size-fits-all approach to project management. While we present a simple framework for project management, and assessments and a simulation against which to apply it, our real objective is to challenge your thinking about project management, and how it can be exploited to deliver value to your organisations and stakeholders.

Whether you contribute to projects, manage multiple small projects or a single large one, or are responsible for a project portfolio or a team of project managers, we trust you will find this course challenges your thinking and equips you to improve your own and your organisation's project delivery capabilities.

Course aims and relationship to other courses

This course can be taken early in your degree program, and will help you develop a range of skills such as managing project teams, managing project schedules and managing budgets. Not only will the skills be helpful as a complement to other courses in the program, but also in helping you successfully undertake your studies as a series of projects.

Approach to learning and teaching in the course

The course is designed to be very practical. The study guide addresses core theoretical concepts and provides practical exercises to illustrate understanding of specific concepts and tools. These are supplemented by weekly online/classroom discussions through which broader themes can be explored.

The assessments test students' understanding of the concepts, but also require them to demonstrate their ability to practically apply the principles of project management.

Learning activities and teaching strategies

The best way of learning project management is to do it. This course includes practical project-management application as a core part of the delivery and assessment criteria. The extensive use of case discussion, a project-management exercise and the delivery of a group project will provide you with a practical context within which to apply the skills and techniques covered.

The first activity is an online project simulation that will run in Weeks 5 and 6 of the term, and will require you to undertake several iterations of a product development project, reflect on the experience, and discuss your findings. A debriefing webinar will be conducted in Week 7 to provide you with feedback on the simulation results (the webinar will be recorded for those not able to attend in person).

The second practical application is the completion of a group project (Assessment 2). In this project, you will be assessed on both the content and the project management process used to produce the content.

Program learning outcomes

The Business School places knowledge and capabilities at the core of its curriculum via seven Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). These PLOs are systematically embedded and developed across the duration of all coursework programs in the Business School. PLOs embody the knowledge, skills and capabilities that are taught, practised and assessed within each Business School program. They articulate what you should know and be able to do upon successful completion of your degree.

Upon graduation, you should have a high level of specialised business knowledge and capacity for responsible business thinking, underpinned by ethical professional practice. You should be able to harness, manage and communicate business information effectively and work collaboratively with others. You should be an experienced problem-solver and critical thinker, with a global perspective, cultural competence and the potential for innovative leadership.

All UNSW programs and courses are designed to assess the attainment of program and/or course level learning outcomes, as required by the [UNSW Assessment Design Procedure](#). It is important that you become familiar with the Business School PLOs, as they constitute the framework which informs and shapes the components and assessments of the courses within your program of study.

PLO 1: Business knowledge

Students will make informed and effective selection and application of knowledge in a discipline or profession, in the contexts of local and global business.

PLO 2: Problem solving

Students will define and address business problems, and propose effective evidence-based solutions, through the application of rigorous analysis and critical thinking.

PLO 3: Business communication

Students will harness, manage and communicate business information effectively using multiple forms of communication across different channels.

PLO 4: Teamwork

Students will interact and collaborate effectively with others to achieve a common business purpose or fulfil a common business project, and reflect critically on the process and the outcomes.

PLO 5: Responsible business practice

Students will develop and be committed to responsible business thinking and approaches, which are underpinned by ethical professional practice and sustainability considerations.

PLO 6: Global and cultural competence

Students will be aware of business systems in the wider world and actively committed to recognise and respect the cultural norms, beliefs and values of others, and will apply this knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively in diverse environments.

PLO 7: Leadership development

Students will develop the capacity to take initiative, encourage forward thinking and bring about innovation, while effectively influencing others to achieve desired results.

Course learning outcomes

After completing this course, you should be able to:

1. select and apply fit-for-purpose project-management tools and techniques to manage a project through its entire life cycle
2. make recommendations on how best to select, structure and resource projects for success
3. identify and apply 'lesson learned' from past projects and apply them to future projects.

4. discuss the value of, and challenges and constraints in, utilising project management in the modern business environment
5. assess the impact of risk and uncertainty in a project, and recommend alternative courses of action
6. provide constructive feedback to improve team-member performance
7. analyse and evaluate your own and your team's performance in achieving project outcomes
8. demonstrate team-leadership and communication skills to achieve project outcomes
9. consider ethical dilemmas project managers face, and evaluate alternative courses of action
10. demonstrate tolerance and acceptance of the diversity of people and skills in any project
11. assess the role and responsibilities of a project manager in different types of projects

Link between assessment and learning goals and outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes	Program Learning Goals and Outcomes	Course Assessment Item
<i>On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:</i>	<i>This course helps you to achieve the following postgraduate learning goals:</i>	<i>This learning outcome will be assessed in the following items:</i>
1	Business knowledge	Assessments 1, 2 & 3
2, 3, 4, 5	Problem solving	Assessments 1, 2 & 3
6	Business communication	Assessment 2
7, 8	Teamwork	Assessment 2
9	Responsible business practice	Assessments 2 & 3
10	Global and cultural competence	Assessments 2 & 3
11	Leadership development	Assessments 1, 2 & 3

Structure

Unit 1 *Introduction to project management* introduces you to projects and project management. We define the concepts, terminology and types of projects, and the role they play in a variety of organisations. We will also consider the key challenges in the successful delivery of projects, and introduce common project-management methodologies and a generic life cycle, with its associated artefacts and processes.

Unit 2 *Dealing with uncertainty and risks* considers the impact of uncertainty and risk on projects. We discuss the overall approach to projects to address uncertainty and introduce a risk-management framework that can help reduce the level of risk on projects.

Unit 3 *Setting up projects for success* presents the critical success factors required for successful project delivery. We consider a range of environmental and organisational factors (including culture, structure and governance) that underpin success. We also address the need for clear, measurable objectives.

Unit 4 *Designing and planning the project* addresses key planning concepts in projects, including defining an approach and determining the project scope. We differentiate between agile and predictive approaches and outline the fundamental planning steps of both.

Unit 5 *The project plan* explores the heart of the technical elements of project management, namely estimating the project, and producing the preliminary project schedule, budget and resourcing plan.

Unit 6 *Optimising the project schedule and budget* addresses a range of techniques and tools to optimise project schedules and budgets to fit project constraints. We also review techniques such as fast-tracking and crashing projects to accelerate projects.

Unit 7 *Managing stakeholders, teams and communications* identifies the project manager's interaction with project stakeholders and team members. We consider how to define, engage and influence stakeholders, supported by an effective communication management plan. We also consider the role of team members, and how to effectively lead and motivate high-performance teams.

Unit 8 *Project execution and control* outlines the fundamental purposes and methods of project control. We assess the use of performance measurement and reporting systems, in particular earned value management and status reports, in analysing progress and predicting future performance. We also address implementation challenges such as scope creep and related control issues.

Unit 9 *Project reviews and close out* introduces the project audit and health check to ensure the ongoing viability and health of the project. We then turn to the termination of projects and describe different types of closure and the essential activities underpinning each to close out the project and prepare for benefits realisation. We discuss the need for, and content of a final project report and lessons learned, as a driver for improvements in project delivery.

Unit 10 *Uplifting project management capability* considers a framework against which organisations can uplift their organisational and individual project delivery capabilities, and provides you with an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned in the course and how this can be applied to improve your own management and leadership skills, as well as the project management maturity of your organisation.

Course resources

Learning resources

You have four major resources to help you learn:

The course materials, comprising the weekly study units with readings, references, insights and commentary. You will do much of your learning outside the classroom by working through the course materials, and by completing the exercises as they arise.

Your online classes with your facilitator. The facilitator's job is to guide your learning by conducting class discussion, answering questions that might arise after you have done the week's work, providing insights from his or her practical experience and understanding of theory, providing you with feedback on your assignments, and directing discussions and debates that will occur between you and your co-participants in the classroom.

Your fellow students. Your colleagues are an invaluable potential source of learning for you. Their work and life, and their willingness to question and argue with the course materials, the facilitator and your views, represent a great learning opportunity. They bring much valuable insight to the learning experience.

In addition to course-based resources, please also refer to the *AGSM Learning Toolkit* (available in Moodle) for tutorials and guides that will help you learn more about effective study practices and techniques.

The course references list provides an extensive range of additional books and articles on project-management topics.

Recommended textbooks

The course does not require a textbook. However, we do highly recommend the following books, which provide more detail on many of the technical concepts we touch on in this course.

Larson, E W & Gray, C F 2018, *Project Management: The Managerial Process*, 7th edn, McGraw-Hill Education.
ISBN: 9781259924484

Meredith, J R, Shafer, S M & Mantel, S J 2019, *Project Management: A Strategic Managerial Approach*, 10th edn, Wiley.
ISBN: 9781119369097

Harvard simulation

During the term you will complete a [project management simulation](#) from Harvard Business School. The online simulation is accessed through any web browser. You will receive a link to the simulation one week before the simulation begins, and will be required to complete a free online registration form with Harvard before you can access the simulation.

At the end of the simulation, you will have the option of participating in a one-hour webinar in which the results will be debriefed or to watch a recording of the webinar at your leisure. The webinar date is provided in the Course Schedule.

Project-management software (optional)

The course does not require you to purchase project-management software. However, you will be required to manage a group project with a small team, and will need to utilise project tools to this end. The Assessment Details document provides some input options for discussion with your team.

You may also wish to utilise a scheduling tool to assist with Unit 6 *Optimising the project schedule and budget*. The recommended tools are:

MS Project (version 2013 or later; from 2018 trial versions are only available for the [Project Online Professional](#) edition).

FastTrack (version 10 or later; available on Windows or Mac platform), 21-day free trial available from [link](#); educational licences available).

Other resources

BusinessThink

BusinessThink is UNSW's free, online business publication. It is a platform for business research, analysis and opinion. If you would like to subscribe to BusinessThink, and receive the free monthly e-newsletter with the latest in research, opinion and business then go to <http://www.businessthink.unsw.edu.au>.

Course evaluation and development

AGSM courses are revised each time they run, with updated course outlines and assessment tasks developed. Changes relating to any industry developments will also be included.

Additionally, the AGSM surveys students each time a course is offered. The data collected provides anonymous feedback from students on the quality of course content and materials, class facilitation, student support services and the program in general. This student feedback is considered during all course revisions.

Student response

Feedback on the revised Project Management course was largely positive, with students complimenting the balance of theory and practical application, and the level at which material was pitched. The course catered for people new to project management, while also offering insights and stimulation to most students who had considerable practical experience in the subject matter.

Particular highlights in the course included the practical experience of managing projects that was provided through the Harvard simulation.

As usual, the focus on group work attracted mixed responses, with many students appreciating the opportunity to practically apply the principles of project management through the way in which the assessment was structured. However, there was also a concern that it took up more time than expected, which impacted upon overall study time.

Response to student feedback

The Project Management course underwent a major revision recently, and is still being bedded down. It has now undergone another significant restructure to improve the flow of content, as well as a reweighting of assessment criteria.

A major implication of this has been the need to move the simulation to later in the material (and thus no longer form part of the formal written assessment component). It now forms part of the general participation assessment.

The group assessment remains a major component of this course, given that the course is an integral part of assessing the program's teamwork under the University's Assurance of Learning commitments. However, we have reworded elements of the assessment instructions to improve the clarity of what is required, and hopefully to reduce confusion or ambiguity.

We trust the restructured course will continue to provide students with the key insights required to deliver projects effectively, and to think about the role of the project management function within organisations.

Assessment

Formal requirements

Students are expected to attempt all assessment requirements, and must achieve a composite mark of at least 50% to pass the course. Students are also expected to actively engage in course learning activities. Failure to engage in assessment tasks that are integrated into learning activities (e.g. class discussion, presentations) will be reflected in the marks for these assessable activities.

Referencing standards

Please ensure that you reference sources appropriately in all assessments, using Harvard referencing, unless explicitly instructed that referencing is not required.

Details of this referencing method are given in the UNSW 'Current Students' portal here: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/harvard-referencing>

Assessment structure

Assessment	Task	Weighting (%)	Length	Due Date	Individual / Group
Assessment 1	Report	30	1,500 words (excluding appendices)	Tuesday 6 October 2020 (Week 4) by 3pm Sydney time	Individual
Assessment 2	Team component 1.1: Project Management Plan	3	A 2-5 page project management plan	Assessment 2: Team Component 1.1: Project management plan due on Friday 23 October 2020 (Week 6) by 3pm Sydney time	Group
	Team component 1.2: Status reports: PSR1, PSR2	3	2 reports of 1-2 pages each	Friday 6 November 2020 (Week 8) and Friday 20 November 2020 (Week 10)	Group
	Team Component 2.1: Report	18	Report: 3,000 words (excluding appendices)	Wednesday 2 December 2020 (Week 12)	Group
	Team Component 2.2: Presentation	6	A 15-20 minute team presentation + Q&A	During Week 11 or 12, by arrangement with facilitator	Group
	Individual Reflection: Peer Evaluation/Reflective report	20	An individual close-out report (1,000-1,500 words)	Friday 4 December 2020 (Week 12) by 3pm Sydney time	Individual
Assessment 3	Participation (Intensives, weekly quizzes, and simulation in Weeks 5-6)	20	N/A	Assessed throughout	Individual

UNIT 1

INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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Projects, megaprojects and programs	1–10
Organisations representing project management	1–12
Classifying project types ...	1–14
Classification methods	1–14
Project types by level of clarity	1–15
Applying the model	1–17
The project life span	1–18
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Project selection	1–18
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Project success and failure	1–25
Prioritising the triple constraint	1–25
Beyond the triple constraint	1–27
Small projects, big problems	1–28
Conclusion	1–29
Unit 1 reading summary	1–30

UNIT 1 READING SUMMARY

Readings are available via active hyperlinks. Please note that you may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access hyperlinked readings. You may also receive a message advising that you are 'Leaving Box' or that the bookmark will open in another table – in which case, please click 'Continue'.



Reading 1.1 Oschadleus, H J 2020, 'A summary of project management associations'.

UNIT 2

DEALING WITH UNCERTAINTY AND RISK

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Project contingencies	2–20
The contingency fund	2–20
Management reserves	2–21
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UNIT 2 READING SUMMARY

Readings are available via active hyperlinks. Please note that you may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access hyperlinked readings. You may also receive a message advising that you are 'Leaving Box' or that the bookmark will open in another table – in which case, please click 'Continue'.



Reading 2.1

Optional

De Meyer, A, Loch, C H & Pich, M T 2002, 'Managing project uncertainty: From variation to chaos', *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Winter, pp. 60–67.

UNIT 3

SETTING UP PROJECTS FOR SUCCESS

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The project environment	3–6
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UNIT 3 READING SUMMARY

Readings are available via active hyperlinks. Please note that you may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access hyperlinked readings. You may also receive a message advising that you are 'Leaving Box' or that the bookmark will open in another table – in which case, please click 'Continue'.



Reading 3.1

Optional, but
recommended

Buell, R W & Otazo, A 2016, Case: *IDEO: Human-centered service design*, Harvard Business School, 29 January, pp. 1–20.

UNIT 4

DESIGNING AND PLANNING THE PROJECT

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UNIT 4 READING SUMMARY

Readings are available via active hyperlinks. Please note that you may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access hyperlinked readings. You may also receive a message advising that you are 'Leaving Box' or that the bookmark will open in another tab – in which case, please click 'Continue'.



Reading 4.1 Oschadleus, H J, 2018, *Agile myths*.

UNIT 5

THE PROJECT PLAN

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UNIT 7 READING SUMMARY

Readings are available via active hyperlinks. Please note that you may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access hyperlinked readings. You may also receive a message advising that you are 'Leaving Box' or that the bookmark will open in another table – in which case, please click 'Continue'.



Reading 7.1

Highly
recommended

O'Neill, T A, Lewis, R J & Hambley, L A 2008, Chapter 9: 'Leading virtual teams: Potential problems and simple solutions', in Nemiro, J, Beyerlein, M M, Bradley, L & Beyerlein, S (eds), *The handbook of high-performance virtual teams: A toolkit for collaborating across boundaries*, pp. 213–238.

UNIT 8

PROJECT EXECUTION AND CONTROL

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Assessment feedback

Feedback on student performance from formative and summative assessment tasks will be provided to students in a timely manner. Assessment tasks completed within the teaching period of a course will be assessed and students provided with feedback, with or without a provisional result, within 10 working days of submission, under normal circumstances. Feedback on continuous assessment tasks (e.g. participation) will be provided prior to the midpoint of the course.

Assessment submission procedure

Submission details for Assessment 2 Team Components

Each group will have a Moodle team area with a folder for project deliverables. The project documentation (project management plan and status reports) must be uploaded to this area by the required date.

The report must be submitted via Turnitin prior to your presentation. A copy of any presentation materials must be submitted via Turnitin before the start of the presentation.

Note: The individual component of the assessment includes a peer assessment of each team member's performance. This may result in the team portion of the mark being adjusted for individual team members. The process is explained in the Peer Evaluation section.

Submission details for other assessment items

Unless otherwise stipulated in the specific details for each of your assessments, please prepare and submit your assessments in accordance with the following.

Assessment length

What is **included** in the word count?

- Executive Summary (if required), all text, tables, figures, diagrams and charts, appendices and table of contents (if required)

What is **excluded** from the word count?

- Reference list or bibliography

Any text (including appendices) that goes beyond the word count will not be read in grading the assessment.

Assessment format

For consistency across all assessments, students are required to supply assessments in a standard format, which is detailed below. Assessments should always be submitted in Word format.

Headings

Font: Arial or Helvetica

Font size: 12 points

Line spacing: Double

Text style: Bold

Body text

Font: Arial or Helvetica

Font size: 12 point

Line spacing: Double

Text style: Normal

Page setup

Top: 2.54 cm

Bottom: 2.54 cm

Left: 2.54 cm

Right: 2.54 cm

Header: 1.25 cm

Footer: 1.25 cm

Paragraph breaks

First line indent: 1.27cm

Diagrams and tables

Students are encouraged to include diagrams and tables in their assessments, but must ensure they do not take up more than 20% of the assessment.

Diagrams and tables must:

- be formatted with single line spacing
- be formatted with a minimum font size of 8 points
- be positioned vertically in between paragraphs.

Assessment file name

Please use the following file naming convention for each assessment.

z999999_surname_[XXXX1111]_20T3_Asst1

where:

- z999999 is your student ID
- surname is your family name
- XXXX1111 is the course code
- 20T3 is the term name (2020, Term 3)
- Asst1 is the Assessment number (Asst2 for Assessment 2)

Assessment submission

1. You must submit your assessment through your online classroom as per the instructions in your LMS User Manual.
2. Assessment submission in your LMS is performed via Turnitin, the similarity detection software used by UNSW students and teaching staff to prevent plagiarism by ensuring referencing is correct and that work has not been inadvertently copied from elsewhere. You can access Turnitin under the 'Assessments' section in your Moodle course site.
3. You are able to submit a draft version of your assessment prior to the due date. This enables you to view the Turnitin similarity report on your work and decide whether it complies with the guidelines regarding referencing and plagiarism, before you submit your final version for marking. More information about plagiarism can be found here: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism>
4. Please note that draft assessments submitted in this way will be regarded as the final version at the due date if you have not uploaded a subsequent, finalised version (each file uploaded overwrites the previous version).
5. Late submissions are possible but will be marked as such and will be subject to late penalties of 5% of the assessment weighting for each day late. If for any reason you are unable to submit a late submission via Turnitin please contact your Facilitator or the AGSM Student Experience team.
6. Extensions to assessment deadlines will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and where adequate supporting documentation can be provided. Please note that work commitments **do not** constitute grounds for an extension. Requests must be made through the special consideration process. For details about this process, see: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>
7. Assessment tasks will normally be reviewed, and feedback provided, within 10 working days of submission.
8. Please keep a copy of your assessments.