

Course Guide



HOGESCHOOL
UTRECHT

Postbus 85029
3508 AA
Utrecht

Tel 030 258 62 00
Fax 030 258 62 05
www.hu.nl

MI-CASEWORK-19	Assessment 1	A	30	Assessment 2	A	70
Casework	International Marketing Communication & Sales Plan (Casework 1)			International Marketing Communication & Sales Plan (Casework 2)		
10 EC						

Course guide Institute of International Business Studies: IBS |
International Business Skills Minor

Name of course: Casework
Code: MI-CASEWORK-19
Course of study: International Business / IBS Minor
Year of study: 3rd / 4th year
Number of blocks: Blocks 1,2
ECTS credits: 10

Contents

1	Course Description	3
2	Course Goals and Learning Objectives	5
3	Place in the Curriculum and Related Courses	6
4	Study Burden	7
5	Pre-requisites	8
6	Exemption Possibilities	9
7	Competencies	10
8	Didactic Forms	11
9	Student Activities	13
10	Course objectives	16
11	Course Evaluation	17

1 Course Description

Course Description: International Business Strategy for Royal Ahrend

In today's global business environment, achieving success requires more than just strong sales and profit margins. A well-managed Product Life Cycle, sustainable practices, and effective brand establishment are essential for long-term success in foreign markets. The International Branding and Sales in a B2B Environment course offers students the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world business challenges in a dynamic, international context.

The core objective of this course is to test and refine students' abilities by applying newly acquired theory to a real-life business case. In the IBS Minor, students will work on a practical case for Royal Ahrend, a leading company recognized for its sustainable solutions in office furniture. Through this case, students will address two critical stages of business development:

1. Stage 1: Based on thorough market research, students will develop a new international product concept for Royal Ahrend, integrating innovative design principles and sustainability as a core value.
2. Stage 2: Students will create a comprehensive marketing and sales strategy to successfully commercialize the new product line in international markets, while ensuring sustainability remains central to the value proposition.

These two stages span the first and second terms of the course, with each term focusing on different but complementary aspects of business development.

Term 1: Concept Development and Design Thinking

During the first term, students will focus on the ideation and development of the new product concept. This process will be supported by the application of Design Thinking methodologies, specifically the IDEO mindsets, and principles of concept development. These tools will help students address complex design challenges and innovate with sustainability at the forefront of their strategies. A visit to Royal Ahrend will provide valuable insight into the brand's ethos and sustainable business practices, allowing students to "feel" the brand and understand its commitment to environmentally responsible solutions.

Term 2: Marketing, Sales, and Human Resources Planning

In the second term, the focus shifts to building a comprehensive marketing communication plan for the new product. This will include brand positioning activities, sales strategies, and a detailed lead generation plan. The marketing plan will incorporate sustainability as one of the key selling points, emphasizing how Royal Ahrend's product meets both the functional needs of clients and global environmental demands.

Additionally, students will develop an HR and budget plan in line with the business cycle of the new product line. This will cover human resource requirements, staffing projections, and a detailed financial plan, including out-of-pocket expenses for the marketing campaign. The final deliverable—a comprehensive concept and marketing strategy—will be presented to a professional jury, whose evaluation will significantly impact the final grade.

Intercultural and Multidisciplinary Collaboration

A distinctive feature of this course is the opportunity to work in multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural teams. Students will not only tackle complex business challenges but also navigate the complexities of intercultural communication, leadership, and collaboration. The teams will be

composed based on team roles and results from the Belbin test, ensuring diverse perspectives and skills are represented. This structure reflects the reality of international business environments, where successful outcomes often depend on effective teamwork across cultural boundaries.

Sustainability Focus

Sustainability is a core element of this course, both in the product concept and the marketing strategy. Royal Ahrend is a company deeply committed to sustainable practices, and students will need to align their strategies with the company's sustainability goals. This includes developing solutions that are environmentally responsible, economically viable, and socially beneficial, which are increasingly demanded by global B2B clients.

By the end of the course, students will have gained hands-on experience in applying theory to a real-world case, developing strategies for international business success while emphasizing sustainability. The ability to navigate intercultural dynamics, apply innovative design thinking, and address global market needs will be key learning outcomes, preparing students for careers in international business environments.

2 Course Goals and Learning Objectives

Course objectives

- The student knows the fundamentals of the MC and Sales theory by heart (see courses IBBBE and International Sales)
- The student is capable of connecting “marketing” with marketing communication and sales.
- The student is capable to contribute to the development of a new concept by applying Design Thinking and Concepting with a solid Business Model
- The student knows to apply the theory of international marketing communication, sales and HRM as taught in this Minor in practice.
- The student is able to define aims for marketing communication campaigns
- The student is able to apply Market segmentation in B-to-B environment
- The student is able to make an analysis of the positioning of competing brands.
- The student is capable to develop a campaign including a creative concept, integrated media plan and realistic budget.

3 Place in the Curriculum and Related Courses

The “Casework” course is offered as a part of the International Business Skills Minor to exchange students from abroad, Kies op Maat (KOM) students and to third and fourth-year students at Utrecht University of Applied Sciences.

Related courses: all other IBS courses

4 Study Burden

Fourteen (supervised) 90 minutes lessons		
presenting and feedback sessions	: 21 hours	
Group work	: 230 hours	½ research; new concept. ½ country marcom/sales plan.
Preparation Conference	: 27 hours	
Team Assessment	: <u>2 hours</u>	
total	280 hours	

5 Pre-requisites

Same as for the whole IBS Minor

6 Exemption Possibilities

None.

7 Competencies

Generic Competencies: general description

<i>Interpersonal competencies</i>	
1. Co-operation	The ability to actively contribute to a group product or result.
2. Research	Finding insights to solve an existential problem in shared company aims and company vision. Defining the dimensions of the problem and finding the right methodology to solve the problem before implementation
3. IDEO mindset Design Thinking/ Concepting	Be capable to come from data to a new concept in the form of new product line for Royal Ahrend.
4. Communication (oral and written).	The ability to express himself fluently and correctly in English, both in speech and writing.
<i>Intra-personal competencies</i>	
5. Learning and self-development	The ability to know his strengths and weaknesses and to indicate how and when he intends to improve his weaknesses; he knows the limits of his competencies and can critically evaluate and account for his own actions; he can take criticism and put it to good use. Takes initiative and works independently.

Level specification: Professional Competencies

Intercultural adaptability

International Business and Management Studies		
International Business Competencies	<i>Intercultural adaptability</i>	The ability to explain the differences between national, organisational and occupational cultures and to outline strategies for adapting to these differences in e.g. human resources management, marketing and intercultural communication. The student can identify the relevant dimensions of cultures and has developed self-awareness of his own cultural background. He is able to adapt his behaviour to the standards in other cultures and can maintain an international network essential to his tasks.

8 Didactic Forms

- Workshops

Workshops are interactive sessions where students engage in hands-on activities designed to enhance their understanding of specific topics or skills. In the context of a course, workshops often complement theoretical learning by allowing students to apply concepts in practice, the Royal Ahrend case. This experiential learning fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter and helps students develop practical skills that are directly applicable to their future careers.

- Giving and Receiving Feedback Sessions during the workshops.

Feedback sessions are crucial for personal and professional growth. In these sessions, students practice providing constructive criticism and receiving feedback from peers and instructors. This process enhances their ability to reflect on their work, identify areas for improvement, and build on their strengths. For instance, after presenting a project, students may engage in a feedback session where they discuss what went well and what could be improved. This not only helps students refine their work but also cultivates a supportive learning environment where open communication and collaboration are encouraged.

- Presentation Skills

Presentation skills are essential for effective communication in any professional field. In this course, students will learn how to organize and deliver presentations that convey their ideas clearly and persuasively. Training in presentation skills may include techniques for engaging an audience, using visual aids effectively, and managing nerves. Opportunities for practice can be integrated throughout the course, allowing students to present their findings from case studies or workshops. Mastering these skills is vital, as the ability to present ideas confidently and coherently is crucial in professional settings.

- Coaching (True Feedback)

Coaching involves providing guidance and support to help students achieve their learning goals. In the context of "true feedback," coaching emphasizes honest, constructive criticism that encourages growth and development. Instructors or peers may engage in coaching sessions where they discuss specific challenges students face in their projects or studies. The focus is on developing solutions and strategies for improvement, rather than merely identifying problems. This approach fosters a culture of continuous improvement and empowers students to take ownership of their learning process.

- Self-Study

Self-study is an essential component of the learning process, particularly in a course where students are expected to go beyond the provided materials. While mini-lectures provide foundational knowledge, success in the course requires students to take the initiative to research models and theories independently. This self-directed learning helps students develop critical thinking skills and encourages them to explore diverse perspectives on the subject matter. For example, in a case study, students may need to find relevant theoretical frameworks that can be applied to analyze the situation effectively.

- Team Performance

Team performance plays a significant role in collaborative learning environments. Students often work in groups to tackle case studies, projects, or presentations, and the effectiveness of these teams can greatly influence learning outcomes. Emphasizing team performance encourages students to develop skills such as collaboration, conflict resolution, and effective communication. Clear roles and responsibilities within teams, coupled with regular assessments of team dynamics, can enhance overall performance and ensure that each member contributes to the group's success.

- (Digital) Research Skills

Digital research skills are increasingly important in today's information-rich environment. Students must be equipped to navigate various online resources, evaluate the credibility of sources, and synthesize information effectively. In this course, students will be encouraged to engage in digital research to gather relevant data and insights for their case studies. This may involve using academic databases, industry reports, and online journals. Proficiency in digital research not only supports academic success but also prepares students for the demands of the modern workplace, where information retrieval and analysis are vital.

9 Student Activities

See [Canvas site](#)

On the site you will see the three courses. Click on Casework and you will see a tile for each week with everything that has been planned within this week.

Assessment

Type of Assessment	Weighting	Min. Mark
Assessment report part 1	30%	5.5
Assessment report part 2	70%	5.5
Registered in Osiris as one final	mark (100%)	

Fraud/ plagiarism

Cases of fraud (e.g. plagiarism) are treated with the utmost seriousness. Lecturers and examiners refer all cases to the Exam Board.

If the use of generative AI, by you the student, is not explicitly mentioned and/or if instructors suspect its use, we are obliged to report this to the examination committee. They will determine whether fraud has occurred.

1. The use of AI is at the student's own risk. The students must ensure to critically assess AI-generated content. If it turns out that the content is factually incorrect/contains falsehoods/is based on unverified sources, this can lead to a "fail" evaluation.
2. To properly cite a URL in APA format, student includes both the source citation for in the bibliography and its use in the running text in the work.

In APA format example for the bibliography:

- Microsoft Copilot. (2024, Aug. 27). Key pillars of marketing communications. <https://copilot.microsoft.com/sl/elhs6lbZ2Vo>

In APA Example in running text: when referring to this source in the running text, the student could write something like:

- "According to Microsoft Copilot (2024), the key pillars of marketing communications are essential to achieving an effective marketing strategy."
- Or: "The key pillars of marketing communications are essential to achieving an effective strategy (Microsoft Copilot, 2024)."

Pass / fail

- Students with marks lower than 5.5 will fail. Students that infringe upon copyrights or and paste the work of other authors without reference are disqualified. The team working paper will be graded. Individual marks will be given in accordance with team contributions, self-assessment and class attendance.

Re-sit

- In accordance with art 24 part 3 of the UBS 'Education and Examination Rules and Regulations' **two test moments will be offered**. The first moment is at the end of the block and the second moment immediately afterwards. Dates will be announced at the end of the block.
- A student is entitled to only one re-sit for an exam, in this case a team working paper. Resit teams will be formed by the lecturer of this module. In case **the team working paper is delivered after the indicated due date** the team will automatically receive a 'failed' (f) mark. There will be no re-sit in such cases. If it concerns the late delivery for a re-sit you will be given a 3 (three).
- After the grading of the team working papers a particular day for **exam inspection** will be set and announced. During the exam inspection team working papers will be distributed and the deadline for the re-sit made public. Students need to register with the lecturer for a re-sit. In case of failure to do so no other re-sit will be offered. There will be no exam inspection following the re-sit unless a particular team voices such a request.
- In case of **litigation** students and teams are themselves responsible for proving delivery

- dates, and for reproducing the team working paper as marked by the lecturer.
- All **administrative matters** will be handled through the school administration.

Name of the course: Casework code MI-Casework-19

10 Course objectives

After the course:

- The student is capable to create in a multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural team to develop a new business concept for an international operating B2B company
- The student is capable to design a good research plan to gather all relevant data to get immersed in the business of the company
- The student can work in line with the step of Design Thinking
- The student is capable to work successfully on the creative jump necessary for the new concept
- The student is capable to make a plan to commercialize the concept in designated countries
- The student is capable to present the concept and the plan to a professional jury to get adherence for the plan.

11 Course Evaluation

Evaluation of the course and exam will take place at the end of the block on the authority of the Institute.