

Undergraduate Research Symposiums, Faculty of Business Studies

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

1. Rationale

The Faculty of Business Studies is committed to advancing a culture of inquiry, critical thinking, and scholarly excellence through the active engagement of students in undergraduate research. This SOP outlines the structure and procedures for organizing, conducting, and evaluating Undergraduate research Symposiums across all departments.

The Symposium serves as a platform for students to present their research findings, exchange ideas, and demonstrate academic and professional competence. It further promotes collaboration between departments, faculty members, and external stakeholders, strengthening the faculty's research identity and contribution to knowledge and practice in business studies.

2. Purpose and Scope

Purpose

The purpose of this Statement of Operating Requirements (SOR) is to:

1. Establish a standardized structure and procedure for organizing undergraduate research symposiums across all six departments.
2. Ensure consistency and quality in evaluation, presentation, and academic standards.
3. Promote undergraduate research, creativity, and professional presentation skills among students

Scope:

This policy applies to all undergraduate Symposiums organized by departments under the Faculty of Business studies, namely:

1. Finance and Accountancy
2. Human Resource Management
3. Marketing Management
4. Management and Entrepreneurship
5. Project Management
6. Business Economics

Each department implements this policy through its own Final Year Research Project and Annual Research Symposium, ensuring discipline specific excellence within a unified research culture.

3. Governance and Responsibilities

Faculty Board; Approve symposium plan and schedules, allocate resources, and ensure alignment with institutional academic policies.

Department Symposium Committees (DSC); Plan, organize, and execute the symposium in accordance with this SOR and report outcomes to the faculty.

Student Clubs; Assist in logistics, communication, and participant engagement.

4. Eligibility and Abstract Selection

1. Only currently enrolled undergraduate students of the universities are eligible to submit abstracts. Research must have been conducted during the student's undergraduate studies, whether as an individual or group project.
2. Abstracts may be co-authored with supervisors or mentors; however, the primary author and presenting author must be an undergraduate student.
3. All abstracts should adhere to the official Faculty Abstract Structure and guidelines for preparing Camera Ready Copy as outlined in **Annexures 1 and 2**.
4. The abstract must not exceed 350 words.
5. All submissions must be endorsed by the Research supervisor and the Department Chair (HOD).
6. Late submissions will not be accepted without prior approval from the organizing committee.

5. Screening and Review Process

1. The Departmental Symposium Committee shall conduct an initial review to ensure: Academic relevance, Clarity and completeness of the abstract and Ethical compliance
2. Each abstract reviewed by at least one faculty reviewer.
3. If necessary, abstracts may undergo plagiarism screening as part of quality assurance
4. Only approved abstracts will be included in the Symposium Program and Faculty Abstract Proceedings.

6. Symposium Operations and Financial Arrangements

1. Undergraduate research symposiums are organized and conducted by the relevant student clubs, with academic and administrative support from the respective departments.
2. Symposium-related expenses are covered through funds generated from club earnings, registration fees, and approved sponsorships.
3. All funds raised and expenditures incurred are managed by the relevant student club, subject to prior approval of the Faculty Dean and in full compliance with university financial policies and regulations.
4. Funds should be utilized exclusively for symposium-related purposes, including logistics, publication of proceedings, awards, and guest speaker arrangements etc.

7. Symposium Structure

1. Each department shall conduct its Undergraduate Research Symposium annually, typically during the final semester of the academic year.
2. **Opening Session:** Welcome address, keynote speech, and introduction of panels.
3. **Parallel Presentation Sessions:** Organized by thematic areas or departmental clusters.
4. **Program Structure:** detailed schedule should be prepared by each Departmental Symposium Committee, ensuring sufficient time for all registered participants and reviewers
5. **Awards and Closing Ceremony:** Recognition of best papers and presenters

8. Presentation Structure

Each student or student group shall deliver a formal research presentation adhering to the following standards:

Duration: 10 minutes presentation + 5 minutes Q&A.

Content: Presentation materials (Power Point, Digital Slides) must be original and properly cite sources. Content should be free from plagiarism.

Format Requirements: Power point or digital slides must follow the faculty presentation template (see **Annexure3**). Presenters must maintain professionalism throughout the session.

9. Evaluation Process

The evaluation guidelines aim to provide a standardized approach for assessing research presentations in the symposium. The criteria ensure fairness, academic rigor, and constructive feedback for participants across departments.

Each session will be evaluated by at least two faculty judges independently.

Judges will score presentations using the officially approved evaluation criteria (see **Annexure 4**), with each criterion weighted appropriately.

Scores from judges are averaged to determine final rankings.

Based on final scores, awards may be presented for best research paper, best Presentation and additional categories as determined by the department (optional)

10. Timeline

Duration & Phase	Activities
Month 1 (Weeks 1-2) – Call for Papers (CFP)	Announce CFP, prepare submission system, and respond to inquiries.
Month 1 – (Weeks 3-4) Abstract Submission	Collect abstracts, provide templates, submission deadline at end of month.
Month 2 (Weeks 1–2) – Review Process	Reviewers evaluate abstracts and provide feedback.
Month 2 (Weeks 3–4) – Student Revisions	Students incorporate reviewer comments and resubmit revised abstracts.
Month 3 (Week 1) – Acceptance & Registration	Send acceptance notifications, request camera-ready copy, open registration.
Month 3 (Weeks 2–3) – Camera-Ready & Scheduling	Finalize abstract booklet, complete agenda, confirm presenters, prepare materials.
Month 3 (Final Week) – Conference	Conduct conference sessions /oral presentations, closing ceremony and awards.

Annexures

Annexure 1: Abstract Structure

Annexure 2: Submission Guidelines.

Annexure 3: Presentation Template

Annexure 4: Evaluation form.

Annexure 1

Abstract Structure

Each abstract should provide a concise summary of the essential elements of the research, written within 300–350 words and structured as outlined below.

Title of the Study: Should be concise, specific, and reflect the research topic and variables studied.

Author(s) and Affiliation: Include name of student, registration number, department, and faculty.

Research Problem / Background: Briefly describe the research context, highlighting the problem statement and the specific gap or issue the study seeks to address.

Objectives / Research Questions: State the main aim of the research and/or key research questions.

Methodology: Summarize the research design, data sources, sampling, and analytical techniques used.

Key Findings / Results: Present the key empirical or theoretical findings in a clear and concise manner.

Conclusion and Implications: Summarize the main conclusions and highlight their practical, managerial, or policy implications.

Keywords (3–5 words): Provide relevant keywords that represent the main themes of the study.

Annexure 2

Guidelines for Preparing Camera-Ready Copy of Abstract

All authors must strictly adhere to the following guidelines when preparing the final (camera-ready) version of their abstract.

General Requirements

- The abstract must fit on a single page.
- All abstracts must be prepared in English, using Microsoft Word (.docx) format.
- **Paper Size:** B5
- **Margins:** Left margin 3.0 cm; top, bottom, and right margins 2.5 cm.
- **Font:** Times New Roman
- **Font Size:** 11
- **Line Spacing:** Single

Formatting Instructions

- **Title:** Font size 11, **Bold**, UPPERCASE
- **Author Name(s):** Font size 11, **Bold**, *Italic*
- **Affiliation(s):** (Department / Faculty / University) — Font size 11, *Italic*
- **Keywords:** Font – Times New Roman, Font size 11 (Place immediately below the abstract text; use 3–5 keywords)
- **Corresponding Author’s Email:** Font size 11, *Italic*

Additional Notes

- Ensure all content fits within the specified margins and page size.
- Avoid inserting tables, figures, or references in the abstract.
- Carefully proofread for grammar, spelling, and formatting consistency before submission.

Research Presentation Template

1. Title of Study and Author Information

Author(s): Name(s) and Affiliation

2. Introduction / Research Problem

- Brief background of the issue
- Statement of the problem
- Purpose of the study

3. Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

- Key ideas/findings from previous studies
- Relevant theories guiding the research

4. Methodology

- Research design
- Sample / Participants
- Data collection methods
- Data analysis approach

5. Key Findings & Discussion

- Major results
- Interpretation of findings
- Connections to literature/theory

6. Conclusion & Recommendations

- Summary of insights
- Practical recommendations

Annexure 4

Research Presentation- Evaluation Form

Criterion	Weight	Marks given
Title ; clearly reflects the research topic and is relevant to business studies.	10	
Research problem, questions and objectives; Research problem is clearly identified; research questions and objectives are clear, focused, and aligned with the topic.	15	
Methodology; research method is suitable for the topic and clearly explained	15	
Data Analysis and Presentation; Data is analyzed correctly and presented clearly using tables, charts, or visuals where appropriate.	15	
Findings and discussion; Findings are clearly explained and discussed in relation to the research objectives or questions.	20	
Conclusions and recommendations; Conclusions are supported by findings, and recommendations are clear, relevant, and practical.	10	
Handling Q & A session; Assesses the presenter's ability to respond accurately and confidently to audience questions.	15	
Total	100	

Signature of the Examiner

Date: