



Master of Business Administration

LCMB7037 Business Development Proposal

Business Development Proposal Structure

MBA Business Development Proposal Structure

Total Word Count: ~15,000 words

Scope: 16 weeks of research and writing

Section	Word Count	What It Should Include
1. Executive Summary	500 - 700 (Not counted)	• Key theories used. • Concise overview of opportunity, market need, solution, value proposition, financial highlights, feasibility summary. • Written last.
AI use acknowledgement	Not counted	Use the form provided by the university.
2. Introduction	600–700	• Background context (industry, location, macro trends). • Problem/opportunity statement. • Aim, objectives, research questions. • Structure of the report.
3. Company description	500 – 800	• Company description

4. Literature Review	800–1,000	• Key theories relevant to your proposal – what they are and why they are relevant here.
5. Methodology	800–1,000	• Clarification of the process used to develop the proposal. • Discuss limitations + ethics.
6. Market Opportunity Analysis	1,400–1,800	• Demand drivers, market size, segmentation, behavioural trends. • Impact of economic conditions (e.g., inflation). • Customer pain points and unmet needs. • Evidence from datasets + primary insights.
7. Competitive Environment Analysis	1,400–1,800	• Competitor landscape, positioning, strengths/weaknesses. • Porter's Five Forces. • PESTLE (if not in literature review). • Market gaps and strategic implications.
8. Business Strategy	1,800 – 2,200	• External analysis • Internal analysis (VRIO) • SWOT analysis • Strategy selection • Competitive advantages • How key success factors are secured
9. Business Model Canvas	800–1,000	• Narrative explanation of all 9 components. • Emphasis on value proposition, customer segments, revenue model, key resources/activities. • Diagram placed in appendix.
10. Financial, Marketing & Human Capital Management Plan	1,800–2,200	Financial: revenue model, pricing, cost structure, projections, break-even, sensitivity tests. Marketing: positioning, segmentation, messaging, 4Ps/7Ps, customer acquisition

		strategy. Human Capital: staffing model, organisational structure, HR strategy, labour cost estimates.
11. Operations Plan	800–1,000	• Operational workflows, supply chain, logistics. • Location strategy, equipment, technology systems. • Compliance/regulatory considerations.
12. Feasibility Analysis	800–1,000	• Ethical feasibility, market feasibility, operational feasibility, financial feasibility. • Risks + mitigation. • Integration of evidence into a viability judgement.
13. Implementation Plan	600–750	• Launch phases, milestones, timeline (Gantt chart). • KPIs, monitoring, resource allocation, change management.
14. Conclusion & Recommendations	600–750	• The relevance of the theories and frameworks used in this report. • Insights of how to use the theories and framework in a practical project. • Summary of findings. • Strategic recommendations. • Future development options.
15. Reflection	600 - 800	• Describe your experience • What you learned from the experience • How you would do things differently next time
16. References	Not counted	• Full Harvard/APA list. • Should include academic sources + industry reports.

17. Appendices	Not counted	• Surveys/interview prompts. • BMC diagram. • Financial tables. • Detailed analysis outputs. • A Gantt chart of your activities during the process
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Explanation

This gives you structured guidance on what to include in each section and how to write it. Below, each section includes:

- Purpose
- What to include (bullet list)
- Guidance on how to write it

Note:

- A golden thread should connect all the sections together, demonstrating the integration of your plan. If a section is not linked to any other section, that section should be reviewed.

1. Executive Summary (500-700 words)

Purpose:

Provide a concise, persuasive overview of your full proposal.

Include:

- Business opportunity
- Market need
- Proposed solution
- Target customers

- Value proposition
- Competitive advantage
- Operational + financial highlights
- Expected outcomes
- Key success factors

Guidance:

Write last. Keep factual and compelling. Highlight why the venture will succeed.

2. Introduction (600 - 700 words)

Purpose:

Set the foundation for the proposal and define the core problem or opportunity.

Include:

- Problem / Opportunity Statement: What is happening in the market? Why does it matter?
- Background / Context: Industry overview, Key trends (technology, policy, customer behaviour), External drivers (e.g. regulation, geopolitics)
- Initial Observation of Demand: What customer needs are emerging or changing? Early signals of opportunity?
- Scope of Analysis: What market or segment is being studied? What is excluded?
- Objective of the Study: What decision or insight should come out of the analysis?
- Structure of the report

Guidance:

Keep it clear and informative. Establish why this proposal matters and what the proposal seeks to achieve.

3. Company description (500 – 800 words)

Purpose:

Explains what the business is, what it stands for and the problem it solves.

Include:

- Details about the business name, legal structure, Location, mission, vision, and values.
- Explanation of what product or service is offered and the problem it solves.
- Brief history founder and founding idea.
- Business objectives and goals (SMART format is recommended)
- Core values and principles
- Alignment with current trends or opportunities (use academic sources to justify need)

Guidance:

Make it short and simple. It should be linked well with the other part of the proposal

4. Literature Review (800 - 1,000 words)

Purpose:

Demonstrate understanding of academic theories and how they inform your business proposal.

Include:

- Identification of theoretical frameworks to be used by the proposal (e.g., JTBD, PESTLE, Porter's Five Forces, Value Proposition Canvas, business model canvas, etc.).
- A brief explanation of what they are and why they are suitable to your need.
- Note: ALL theories, frameworks, and concepts used by your proposal must be included here.

Guidance:

Be practical and critical. Justify your decisions with evidence and show how your decisions are relevant to the purpose of the proposal.

5. Methodology (800 - 1,000 words)

Purpose:

Explain the structured and practical approach you will use to identify, validate, and develop the business opportunity. The methodology should demonstrate that your investigation is theoretically systematic, commercially grounded, and appropriate for business development rather than purely academic research. This section is different from the Literature Review, which explains and justifies the tools used; it focuses on how the business proposal is developed in practice.

Include:

The details of your methodology are explained in this section. The reader should be able to replicate the process by following it.

A. Approach to Opportunity Identification

Explain how you identified and defined the opportunity. This section should clearly describe the techniques you used to collect and analyse data. It should also explain how the data were collected—what was collected, when, where, and how.

B. Market Insight Collection

Describe the practical research activities you carried out, such as customer conversations, store visits, mystery shopping, competitor benchmarking, expert consultations, and the review of industry reports. You should clearly explain how you collected these data to demonstrate that the research was conducted ethically and to ensure that the process can be replicated if needed.

C. Market Data Gathering

Describe the quantitative and qualitative evidence you used, such as market-size estimates, secondary datasets (e.g., ONS, Mintel, Statista), pricing comparisons, market sentiment, and demand indicators.

D. Data Analysis

Describe how you analysed the collected data. Examples include demographic analysis, regression analysis, sentiment analysis, and thematic analysis. You should define each analytical approach, justify why it was appropriate for your study, and explain how you applied it in practice.

E. Models and Frameworks

Explain how you applied the models and frameworks introduced in the Literature Review. Describe how each tool was used in your analysis and, where relevant, how different models were connected or combined to generate deeper insight.

F. Limitations and Ethical Considerations

Discuss the limitations you encountered, such as restricted access to accurate data, reliance on secondary sources, or constraints in primary research. You should also address ethical considerations, including responsible handling of customer insights, data privacy, and potential biases in data collection or interpretation.

Guidance:

Show clear logic and structure. Be realistic and actionable. Ensure this section is consistent with actual implementation. **The purpose of the methodology is to clearly justify your process and choices so that the reader can understand and replicate your approach.**

6. Market Opportunity Analysis (1,400 - 1,800 words)

Purpose:

Assess whether a real and attractive market opportunity exists.

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Market size and growth trends
- Market segmentation
- Customer demographics and behaviours
- Consumer pain points or unmet needs
- Demand analysis (e.g., trading down, price sensitivity)
- Impact of economic conditions (e.g., inflation, cost of living)
- Geographic factors (e.g., if Bristol is your market)
- Primary research findings (if any)

Guidance:

Use evidence (data, surveys, reports). Present charts or tables in appendices.

7. Competitive Environment Analysis (1,400 - 1,800 words)

Purpose:

Evaluate the competition and external forces shaping the business environment.

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Key success factors
- Analysis of main competitors
- Market share estimates
- Competitor strengths and weaknesses
- Strategic positioning (e.g., value vs. price)
- Porter's Five Forces analysis
- PESTLE analysis
- Industry attractiveness assessment
- Market gaps and opportunities

Guidance:

Use analytical frameworks systematically. End with insights that justify your business opportunity.

8. Business Strategy (1,800 - 2,200 words + diagram)

Purpose:

Identify the strategic situation and identify the most appropriate business strategy to follow

Include

1. A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
2. External analysis (linked with section 6 above)
3. Internal analysis (VRIO)
4. SWOT analysis
5. Strategy, unique selling point (USP), and value proposition
6. Competitive advantages
7. How key success factors are secured

Guidance:

This is the central piece of your work. It should link with every other sections of your proposal.

9. Business Model Canvas (800 - 1,000 words + diagram)

Purpose:

Describe how the business creates, delivers, and captures value.

Include (all 9 components):

1. Customer Segments
2. Value Proposition
3. Channels
4. Customer Relationships
5. Revenue Streams
6. Key Resources
7. Key Activities
8. Key Partnerships
9. Cost Structure

Guidance:

Clarify clearly what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.

Accompany the written analysis with a visual canvas (move full diagram to Appendices). A standard canvas diagram is provided in figure 1 below.

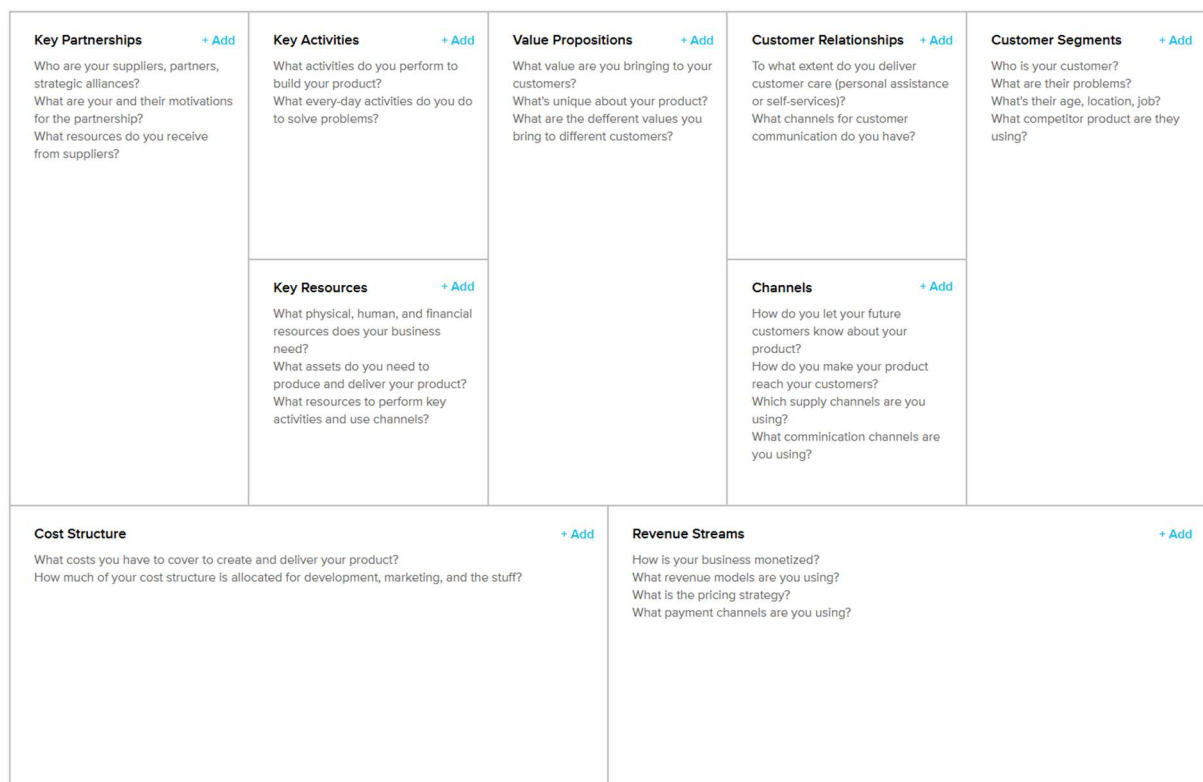


Figure 1 - Business Model Canvas

10. Financial, Marketing and Sales, and Human Capital Management Plan (1,800 - 2,200 words)

Purpose:

Demonstrate the viability, attractiveness, and scalability of your business.

A. Financial Plan

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Start-up costs
- Operating costs
- Revenue model
- Pricing strategy
- Three to five-year financial projections
- Profit and loss forecast
- Cash flow forecast
- Break-even analysis
- Sensitivity analysis (best/worst case)
- Justification of your numbers

B. Marketing Plan

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Target audience
- Brand positioning
- Marketing mix (4Ps or 7Ps)
- Customer acquisition strategy
- Digital and offline marketing tactics
- Sales strategy
- Marketing budget
- Justification of your

C. Human Capital / HR Management Plan

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Organisational structure
- Staffing requirements
- Recruitment strategy
- Training and development
- Compensation and benefits
- Labour cost estimates
- HR policies and compliance considerations

Guidance:

Ensure internal consistency between these plan, and highlight any strategic fit among them.

11. Operations Plan (800 - 1,000 words)

Purpose:

Explain how the business will run operationally.

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Operational workflow
- Location strategy
- Supply chain and procurement
- Inventory management
- Quality control
- Technology and systems
- Logistics and distribution
- Legal and regulatory considerations (e.g., retail compliance, licensing)

Guidance:

Use diagrams or process maps for clarity.

12. Feasibility Analysis (800 - 1,000 words)

Purpose:

Evaluate if the proposed business is practical and sustainable.

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Ethical feasibility: assessing whether the proposed product/service is socially responsible, legally compliant, and acceptable to stakeholders.
- Market feasibility
- Technical/operational feasibility
- Financial feasibility
- Strategic fit
- Opportunity risks
- Risk mitigation strategies

Guidance:

Use evidence to support claims. Show why the business is achievable.

13. Implementation Plan (600 - 750 words)

Purpose:

Outline the timeline and steps for launching the business.

Include:

- A clear clarification of what theories/frameworks are used and how they are used.
- Phased implementation timeline
- Gantt chart (or milestone table)
- Short-term vs. long-term priorities
- Resource allocation
- Key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Monitoring and control mechanisms

Guidance:

Be specific and realistic. Illustrate how the plan will be executed.

14. Conclusion and Recommendations (600 - 750 words)

Purpose:

Have a brief discussion of the theories used and how effective they are in helping you to develop the proposal. After that, summarise findings and state whether the business should proceed.

Include:

- Evaluation of the relevance of the theories and frameworks used in the report
- Key insights on how these theories and frameworks can be applied in practice
- Summary of the identified market opportunity
- Summary of the strategic and financial viability of the proposal
- Overall evaluation of feasibility
- Clear recommendation (go / no-go decision), including conditions for success
- Suggestions for further research or additional insights that could strengthen the proposal

Guidance:

Tie back to your research questions and objectives.

15. Reflection (600 - 800 words)

Purpose:

Reflect on your journey and highlight the lessons learned throughout the process.

Include:

- Describe your experience
- What you learned from the experience
- How you would do things differently next time

Guidance:

Be specific. Link your reflection to your methodology chapter and other actual activities conducted in the proposal.

16. References

Purpose:

Give academic credibility and avoid plagiarism.

Include:

- All sources cited in the required referencing style.
- Academic journals
- Industry reports
- Market datasets
- Government statistics

Guidance:

Be consistent. Use citation tools if needed.

17. Appendices

Purpose:

Provide supplementary materials supporting the main text.

Include:

- Survey or interview instruments
- Raw data tables
- Financial statements
- Business Model Canvas visual
- Charts and graphs
- Maps, diagrams, operational flowcharts
- Ethical clearance documents (if required)
- A Gantt chart of your activities during the process

Guidance:

Label all appendices clearly and reference them in the main text.