

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



## Graduation Plan: All tracks

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

<b>Personal information</b>	
Name	Jacqueline Antoinette Nientker
Student number	4139623
Telephone number	+31 6 46 66 48 89
Private e-mail address	tinenientker@gmail.com

<b>Studio</b>	
Name / Theme	Graduation lab: Real estate management: 'Successful corporate real estate strategies in practice.'
Teachers / tutors	1 <sup>st</sup> mentor: Monique Arkesteijn, 2 <sup>nd</sup> mentor: Leentje Volker
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>Ever since the Real Estate Management course in the first semester of the master track Management in the Built Environment, where an accommodation strategy for a multinational had to be designed, I have been interested in how corporate real estate is aligned to the needs of core businesses, in order to obtain added value for the business and to contribute to the overall performance of the corporation.</p> <p>This interest has grown during my internship that I have done since September 2015. The company I have done my internship at is a daycare organization. The department I was interning at, the New Business department, consists of four people. Together this department ensures that the real estate portfolio of the company grows, in order to contribute to the overall performance of our company: running a growing daycare organization. The New Business department has its own strategy and goals, which we might assume of that it adds value to the overall performance of the company.</p>

<b>Graduation project</b>	
Title of the graduation project	Corporate Real Estate Alignment in Practice: A study on how corporate real estate is aligned in practice.
<b>Goal</b>	
Location:	Delft
The posed problem,	Carrying out corporate real estate alignment is very important, because it adds value for the overall business which is why corporations do not need to see it as a cost of doing business. It is however not known how multinational corporations align their corporate real estate portfolio to their business needs and if parts of the alignment models from theory actually are used in practice. Therefore, the main problem to be solved is to find out how multinational corporations align their corporate real estate in practice. After that, it is important to compare the results of

	this with the alignment models that derive from the literature, to see how practice and theory relate to each other.
<b>Research questions and</b>	<p>“How is corporate real estate alignment by multinationals achieved in practice and how does this relate to the models found in theory?”</p> <p>Sub research questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the current state regarding corporate real estate management?</li> <li>• What is the current state regarding corporate real estate alignment models derived from theory?</li> <li>• How do corporations align their corporate real estate and business strategy in practice?</li> <li>• How does the practice of corporate real estate alignment relate to the alignment theories from literature?</li> </ul>
<b>Design assignment in which these result.</b>	Research design will be explained here, in order to see how the research question will be answered in the end.
<p>This graduation project consist of four phases. In the first phase the research problem and research statement are formulated. Also, research questions are set up as a basis. This phase mostly consist of reading lots of literature to understand the research problem.</p> <p>The second phase is the literature review. In this phase the two first sub-research questions will be answered, as the literature gives the current state of theory and the conceptual models are created.</p> <p>In the third phase the conceptual models are used to test how corporate real estate alignment is done in practice. By looking at different components and approaches, the current state of practice will be the result of this phase. In this phase, also a cross-case analysis will be done to compare the different case studies with each other. In this way similarities and differences between alignment in practice can be discovered.</p> <p>The last phase is the synthesis. In this phase everything comes together. By combining the results from the second and the third phase, theory and practice can be compared to each other. By analyzing this, conclusions can be drawn and the main research question can be answered.</p> <p>An overview of how this look like can be found on the next phase, as the figure illustrates what will be done in which phase.</p>	

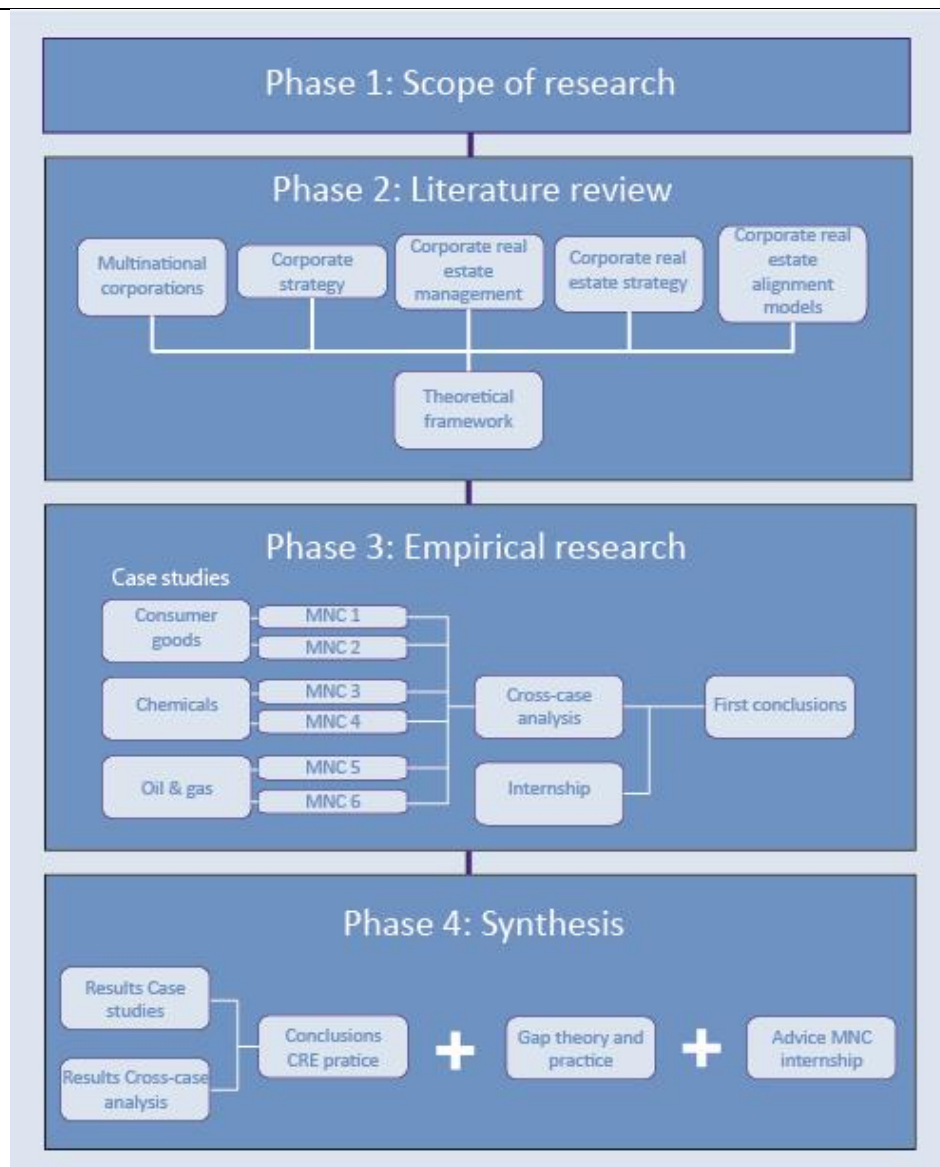


Figure x: research design of graduation (own figure)

## Process

### Method description

To continue with this graduation research, a theoretical framework is created which gives an overview of the current state of theory and the conceptual models that derive from conclusions of the literature review. The conceptual models are the basis for conducting the case studies, which aim at exploring and analysing corporate real estate alignment in practice.

The case studies that will be conducted at six different multinational corporations in different industries, consist of semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The importance of a semi-structured interview is that it shows what the interviewee's perception is on the topic and what the interviewee thinks that is important (Bryman, 2012, p.471). For the semi-structured interviews, an interview protocol has been developed, which shows the introduction, main questions to be asked and some follow up questions. The questions in the interview protocol are based on the conclusions of the theoretical framework and the conceptual model, which

shows what will be tested during the case studies. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix 1 of the graduation research proposal.

Semi-structured interviews and document analysis are research methods that are used to collect the data, which is needed to come to the current state of theory. The semi-structured interviews are recorded and subsequently fully transcribed. Together with the transcriptions, the documents for document analysis are analysed in Atlas.ti. After all case studies have been conducted, a cross-case analysis will be done. Cross-case analysis entails the collection of data on more than one case, which afterwards are compared to each other to detect patterns of association (Bryman, 2012). In this way the different case studies can be compared to each other to find similarities and differences. Therefore, the same structure will be used to analyse the different case studies, since this makes it easier to compare the case studies, which will lead to the current state of practice.

The current state of theory and the current state of practice will be compared to each other, to find out if there are differences of similarities between the two and to define and explain the gap between theory and practice. Also, recommendations on how to further close the gap between theory and practice will be given, as it can help to an increased understanding of corporate real estate alignment for both researchers and corporations from practice.

## **Literature and general practical preference**

Most of the literature will result out of the research database Scopus. Based on different search queries, the theoretical framework can be created. Also, literature from the repository of Delft University of Technology will be used. At last, the literature review matrix of other graduation students in the same graduation lab will be used as a reference, in order to get a complete overview on what has been researched in the graduation lab.

## **Reflection**

### **Scientific relevance**

This graduation research falls under the domain of Real Estate Management. Within this chair, one of the focus points is corporate real estate portfolios, for example the portfolios of education institutions, or government institutions, but also the portfolio of multinational corporations. The aim of corporate real estate alignment is to manage the real estate portfolio of a corporation by aligning the portfolio and services to the needs of the core business, in order to maximize the added value for the business and to optimally contribute to the overall performance of the corporation' (Dewulf et al., 2000). Examples of added value are profitability, productivity and competitive advantage (De Vries, 2007). However, corporate real estate management is not only focussing on integrating different points of view of involved stakeholders when matching the supply and demand on portfolio level, but also on building- and workplace level (De Jonge et al., 2009).

Since this research specifically about corporate real estate strategies in practice, the main scientific domain is Real Estate Management. One of the graduation research labs within the department of Management in the Built and Environment is 'Successful corporate real estate strategies in practice'. Since the aim of graduation research is about finding out how corporate

real estate alignment is done by multinationals in practice, which is related to corporate real estate strategies, this graduation project suits within the above mentioned graduation research lab.

However, the knowledge gained in this research project is also applicable to be used within the domain of Design & Construction Management. If for example a multinational corporation is building a new office building for their own portfolio or refurbishing an office building, the multinational corporations can use the knowledge on corporate real estate alignment. In designing that new office building, knowledge of building technology, maintenance, use and management is involved at an early stage. The office building has to meet certain requirements so that the building will have a long lifespan, will satisfy its own employees and will contribute to the overall performance of the corporation. Therefore, the knowledge gained in this graduation research can be also be applicable in the domain of Design & Construction management.

### **Societal relevance**

The literature on corporate real estate management prescribes different approaches on how corporations could or should align their corporate real estate. Corporate real estate managers can most of the time say whether their corporate real estate portfolio is aligned with their business strategy, but at the same time corporate real estate alignment can be very complex. This aim of this research project is to find out how corporate real estate alignment is done by multinationals in practice. It summarizes the current state of theory and practice and afterwards aims to find out the relation between practice and theory. How does the theory relate to practice? What differences or similarities are present? By exploring this, a first explanation could be given on why there are differences or similarities between practice and theory. Both researchers and practioners can learn from each other. The outcome of the research might affect the understanding on corporate real estate alignment, by both parties. It can improve the practice of corporate real estate alignment and increase the understanding of theories by practioners. Researchers on the other hand can reflect on the results of corporate real estate alignment in practice and use this for further research.

**Time planning – continues on next page**

Q3 (feb - apr 2016)	Q4 (apr - jun 2016)	Summer (jul - aug 2016)	Q1 (sep - nov 2016)	Q2 (nov- jan 2017)
Ethics & Engineering (3 ECTS)				
Operation research methods (3ECTS)				
	Case study methods (3ECTS)			
	Organisation & management (3ECTS)			
	Oral presentations (2ECTS)			
Committee member BOSS Study Trip				
Graduation P1	Graduation P2	Graduation P3	Graduation P3	Graduation P4/P5

Figure X; General planning of the graduation project and other courses that have and will be taken.

Scope of Research	Literature review: theoretical framework	Searching for case studies	Conducting case studies + cross case analysis + internship	Cross-case analysis, conclusions, intern- ship
2 weeks: defining scope 6 weeks: literature review + writing concept research proposal	6 weeks: critical literature review + constructing theoretical framework 2 weeks: writing final research proposal	July and August: contact multinational corporations for participation in case studies	12 weeks: case studies, per case study approximately 2 weeks 4 months at least: internship	3 weeks: cross-case analysis 3 weeks: conclusions 2 weeks: advice internship

Figure X; more detailed planning. Time division per quarter.