

MODULE SPECIFICATION FORM

Module Title: Fundamentals of Research and Dissertation	Level: 7	Credit Value: 60
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Module code: BUS757	Cost Centre: GAMP	JACS2 code: N213
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Trimester(s) in which to be offered: 1,2,3	With effect from: Sept 2013
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Office use only: To be completed by AQSU:	Date approved: July 2012 Date revised: August 2013 (to include Proj Mgt) Version no: 2
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Existing/New: Existing	Title of module being replaced (if any):
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Originating Academic Department: Business and Management	Module Leader: Dr Jan Green
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Module duration (total hours): 600 Scheduled learning & teaching hours 60 Independent study hours 540 Placement hours N/A	Status: core/option/elective (identify programme where appropriate): Core: MBA Suite of programmes, MSc Management, MSc Project Management.
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Programme(s) in which to be offered: MBA (all routes) MSc Management MSc Project Management	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels): None
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Module Aims: To examine the purpose and methods involved when carrying out academically based management research through the design of a research proposal which will be used as the basis of investigating and resolving management/business problems in the dissertation

To develop a critical understanding of the philosophical, practical and ethical concepts of research within the context of the business and management environment.

To gain a knowledge of the appropriate software available to analyse data

To ensure participants devise and undertake a personal programme of academically based business or management research in order to enhance and utilise independent study skills, develop conceptual thinking and problem-solving abilities to produce practical and applicable conclusions of relevance to business and management.

To present the dissertation in approved format and chapter sequence and provide additional detail through the medium of the dissertation handbook

To allocate academic supervision to ensure relevant support is available throughout the compilation of the dissertation

Expected Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this module, students will be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding:

1. Establish the purpose and context of academic research and select appropriate research methodologies
2. Critically review published academic literature within the body of knowledge relating to the subject areas of business and management
3. Demonstrate a critical insight into the philosophical and conceptual traditions underpinning academic research.
4. Undertake an evaluation of research options and data collection methods
5. Formulate a viable research question with a supporting aim and objectives that complies with academic research ethics and present a solution in a manner that is rigorous, reliable, valid and authentic
6. Analyse empirical data in a critical manner, using appropriate techniques and present conclusions that emerge from the analysis
7. Provide recommendations that are of use to practitioners within a defined business area through the completion of a structured submission that demonstrates the ability to complete a piece of independent research

Transferable/Key Skills and other attributes:

Effective and clear communication
Conduct independent research into business and management issues
Personal time management and sequential planning
Data analysis and critical reasoning
Problem-solving using a range of techniques

Assessment: please indicate the type(s) of assessment (e.g. examination, oral, coursework, project) and the weighting of each (%). ***Details of indicative assessment tasks must be included.***

The proposal provides the student with an opportunity to present a business or management problem that would benefit from research and analysis in order to provide recommendations. The proposal should include specific objectives, a research design and introduction to the supporting conceptual framework and is viewed as an introduction for the dissertation to follow.

The dissertation is widely recognised within academia as being an extended piece of writing based on extended reading and independent research and is characterised by Cameron (2005) as taking the form of a project addressing a real organisational problem or a consultancy-type project provides students with scope to conduct empirical research and rigorous analysis within a framework of chapters to demonstrate their ability to work in an independent manner. This is summarised by Cameron (2005:352):

“Whether you are an MBA student addressing a very practical problem, or on a specialist programme and researching a narrower issue in a more academic fashion you will normally need to find the right balance of theory and practice to satisfy course requirements. Neither pure theory nor theoretic problem solving is likely to be satisfactory.”

Source: Cameron, S. (2005:351-352) The MBA Handbook, Pearson Education, Harlow

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Weighting	Duration (if exam)	Word count (or equivalent if appropriate)
1	1,4,5	Research Proposal	20%	n/a	3,000
2	2,3,5,7	Dissertation	80%	n/a	17,000

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

A core of formal input will be utilized to deliver concepts, information and theory via lectures. Beyond this core students will be encouraged to discuss, explore and question to develop their own personal reflections and gain an appreciation of the links between management and business theory and practice which will involve drawing on their own experiences.

Case studies, numerical activities and practical computing exercises, using software packages will be integrated into the module to enable students to experience and work with various research methodologies and techniques. Students will be encouraged to search the internet to source additional relevant material and identify the most suitable research methods for their personal research question. Through the adoption of these strategies an active learning environment will be created to provide a rich and meaningful learning experience for all module participants.

Contemporary strategic and business problems will be evaluated to provide a foundation for specialist research proposals that reflect the individual pathways that contribute to the Masters Suite and ensure they are linked to and derived from the bodies of knowledge that students have studied during the taught elements of the programme.

Academic supervision on a group and individual basis will be provided via a sequence of pre-arranged appointments following the submission of the proposal. Supervision will encompass monitoring student progression, feedback, support and discussion.

Syllabus outline:

The research question and hypotheses, justification, aim and objectives
Research methodology, concepts, definitions
Inductive and deductive concepts
Qualitative and quantitative methods
Inferential statistical analysis
Application of analytical tools using relevant and appropriate software packages
Research design and ethics
Objectives, content and structure of the dissertation
The research proposal as a distinct framework and foundation for the dissertation
The research plan
The role of the supervisor

Bibliography:

Essential reading

Cameron, S. (2005), *The MBA Handbook*. 5thed. Harlow: Prentice Hall

Masters Dissertation Handbook (2013), *Management*. Glyndŵr Univeristy

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009), *Research Methods for Business Students*. 5thed. Harlow: Prentice Hall

Other indicative reading

Anderson, V. (2009), *Research Methods in Human Resource Management*. 2ndEd. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

Binsardi, A. and Green, J. (2012), *Research Methods for Management, Pedagogic Teaching Series*, Vol. 2, London: Northwest Academic Publications ISBN: 978-1-78233-003-5.

Booth, A., Papaioannou, D. and Sutton, A. (2012), *Systematic Approaches to a Successful Literature Review*. London: Sage Publications

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011) *Business Research Methods*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press

Burns, R.P. and Burns, R. (2008), *Business Research Methods and Statistics Using SPSS*. London: Sage Publications

Cooper, D.R. and Schindler, P.S. (2006), *Business Research Methods*. Boston: McGraw Hill

Deniels, P. and Becker, L. (2012), *Developing Research Proposals*. London: Sage Publications

Denscombe, M. (2007), *The Good Research Guide*. 3rded. Maidenhead: Open University Press

Denicolo, P. and Becker, L. (2012), *Developing Research Proposals*. London: Sage Publications

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P. (2012), *Management Research*. 4th ed. London: Sage Publications

Field, A. (2009), *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. 3rd ed. London: Sage Publications

Fink, A. (2009), *Conducting Research Literature Reviews*. London: Sage Publications

Fisher, M. (2004), *Researching and Writing a Dissertation for Business Students*. Harlow: Prentice Hall

Flick, U. (2011), *Your Research Project*. 3rd ed. London: Sage Publications

Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (2010), *Research Methods for Managers*. 4th ed. London: Sage Publications

Jankowicz, A.D. (2005), *Business Research Projects*. 4th ed. London: Thomson Learning

Jesson, J.K., Matheson, L. and Lacey, F.M. (2011), *Doing Your Literature Review*. London: Sage Publications

Keleman, M.L. and Rumens, N. (2008), *An Introduction to Critical Management Research*. London: Sage Publications

Malhatra, N.K. (2007), *Marketing Research: an Applied Orientation*. New Jersey: Pearson

Moutinho, L. and Hutcheson, G.D. (2011), *The Sage Dictionary of Quantitative Management*

Research. London: Sage Publications

Journals

Journal of Advances in Management Research

Journal of Mixed Methods Research

Management Research Review

Organizational Research Methods

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative Research

Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal

Websites

Not applicable.