

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

Academic School:	Business and Economics
Programme:	Masters of Business Administration
FHEQ Level:	7
Course Title:	Dissertation
Course Code:	MGT 7500
Course Leader:	Parviz Dabir-Alai
Student Engagement Hours:	400
Lectures:	30
Seminar / Tutorials:	15
Independent / Guided Learning:	355
Semester:	Summer
Credits:	40 UK CATS credits 20 ECTS credits 8 US credits

Course Description:

This course will provide students with the learning opportunity of performing multidisciplinary research in business and management. Students will initiate, plan and execute an individually constructed piece of research and are expected to report on their findings. Students will identify issues within their programme, and specifically within their pathway, to investigate with the use of appropriate research methods, either theoretical or applied, and participate in research activities which will include a literature search, the collection and analysis of data, (either primary or secondary data) and the preparation of a dissertation.

Prerequisites: ECN 7100, MGT 7101, FNN 7102, MGT 7110, MKT 7100

Aims and Objectives:

- For the supervisor to guide the student, as a junior research colleague, through drafting of a 1500-2000 word written research proposal and the research, writing and production of a Master's level dissertation of 10-12,000 words.

- For the student to undertake independent/autonomous research on a topic which makes a valuable contribution to the field.
- To develop skills and experience which can be applied in work placements or further graduate work.

Programme Outcomes:

A1, A2, A3, A4, A5

B1, B2, B3, B4

C1, C2, C3, C4

D1, D2, D3, D4

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by the Academic Registry and found at:

<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-schools/academic-registry/program-and-course-specifications.aspx>

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, a successful student should be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding (A)

- Demonstrate a high level of theoretical and applied knowledge of business research
- Critically discuss, select and justify research approaches and research methods in relation to an appropriately formed research proposal which addresses a relevant business issue
- Apply the steps required to create a literature review
- Apply appropriate research designs for quantitative and qualitative research
- Demonstrate an understanding of proper structure and citation in all academic work

Cognitive Skills (B)

- Evaluate independently critical approaches and techniques relevant to business
- Evaluate outcomes and accurately assess/report on own/others work with justification and relate them to existing knowledge structures and methodologies
- Synthesize information to arrive at a coherent conclusion
- Critically evaluate the implications for the recommendations presented

- Critically reflect on the development of knowledge, skills and techniques used during the preparation of the dissertation

Subject specific, practical and professional skills (C)

- Identify modifications to existing knowledge structures and theoretical frameworks
- Develop and utilise theory and methodology appropriate to inquiry of an empirical subject area related to business
- Propose new areas for investigation, new problems, new or alternative applications or methodological approaches
- Select, define and focus upon an issue at an appropriate level; develop and apply relevant and sound methodologies; analyze the issue; develop recommendations and logical conclusions; and be aware of the limitations of the research work
- Gather, organise and effectively communicate complex and abstract ideas and diverse information with regard to a complex and specialised thesis topic

General/transferrable skills (D)

- Demonstrate analytical skills, computing skills, critical reasoning, organisation and planning, report and essay writing skills, and research skills
- Evaluate the ethical dilemmas likely to arise in research and professional practice and formulate solutions in dialogue with peers, clients, and others
- Exercise initiative in organising and pursuing a supervised project, while accepting full accountability for outcomes
- Demonstrate the ability for innovative and autonomous learning, normative and ethical reflection, self-evaluation and engagement with disciplinary benchmarks

Indicative Content:

There is no precise indicative content for individual dissertations other than the general requirement that, in consultation with the supervisor, they should address an issue, or issues, related to business and management practice. A dissertation should contain general criteria such as an introduction, aims and objectives, a literature review, methodological justification, analytical context, conclusions and recommendations.

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Dissertation Assessment Norms approved at Learning and Teaching Policy Committee and found at:

<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-affairs/academic-standing.aspx>.

Teaching Methodology:

As part of the process of completing this course, and prior to the commencement of the research, students will be engaged on a week-long research methods course.

The course will require independent research overseen by the dissertation supervisor, tutorial opportunities including with specialist faculty for more specific academic guidance, including comments on draft materials, and faculty and peer review feedback.

Bibliography:

See syllabus for complete reading list

Indicative Text(s):

- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*, 4th ed. (Oxford University Press, Oxford). Bell, J. (2010). *Doing Your Own Research Project: A Guide for First Time Researchers in Education and Social Sciences*, 5th ed. (London, Open University Press).
- Berg, B. (2011). *Qualitative Research Methods for Social Sciences*, 8th ed. (Pearson, London).
- Cryer, P. (2003) *The Research Student's Guide to Success*. Open University Maidenhead
- Glatthorn, A and Joyner, R (2nd ed) (2005) *Writing the Winning Thesis or Dissertation - a step-by-step guide*. Sage Publications. London
- Levin, P (2005) *Excellent Dissertations!* Open University. Maidenhead
- Robson, C. (2003) *Real World Research*. Blackwell. London
- Rudestam, K.E. and Newtin, R. R. (2002) (2nd ed) *Surviving Your Dissertation. A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*. Sage, London.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. (2010) (6th edition) *Research Methods for Business Students*. Harlow: FT Prentice Hall.
- Walliman, N. (2005) *Your Research Project: A Step-by-Step Guide for the First-Time Researcher*. Sage. London

Journals

Web Sites

- http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/Intro_QDA/how_what_to_code.php
- (NB: the site is a comprehensive and accessible resource on qualitative data analysis)
- www.psy.dmu.ac.uk/michael/qual_collect.htm
- Research Methods Knowledge Base:
www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/index.php

