

Research Methods

Module description

This module provides a foundation in research approaches and techniques that will enable students to conduct Masters level research in the Business & Management Research Report. The rationale for the research proposal is that it documents the tools and techniques that the student will use in the Research Project process. There will be continual feedback throughout the module enabling students to critique literature and methods by engaging in debate with their peers and the tutors.

The module is also focussed on the progression of students as they develop into becoming independent thinkers, who are capable of articulating and synthesizing the information and knowledge gained from the programme. Feedback and support in the process of collecting evidence will be given throughout the module.

Saunders et al (2015) has been chosen as a core text for this module, with each topic relating to a particular chapter. It is expected that students supplement the lecture input and workshop discussion by reading the appropriate chapters in advance and by undertaking the required pre-work of journals and other information sources.

This module provides a critical analysis to the key principles of research methodology in bringing together the whole programme via this final strategy module. The module combines lectures and small group work using case studies of business and management. At the end of the module, students should have a critical understanding of the main functions of research in terms of the various philosophies and the alternative ways of collecting, organising and presenting data.

This module aims to:

- Provide a conceptual framework from which research philosophies, strategies and methodologies associated with business management can be critically reviewed
- Develop research competencies, in particular, those relating to the collection and analysis of data types that enables students to critically design and evaluate independent research concerning a management problem or business issue

Learning outcomes

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

- critically appraise and evaluate research undertaken by others
- propose and justify a report for a research project in business management that will stand up to critical and ethical scrutiny
- critically examine the contribution primary and secondary data sources can make to research studies in respect of sampling, analysis and data presentation techniques

Module code	MRM	NQF level	7
Credit value	20	Study duration	12 weeks

- synthesize research findings to improve the quality of decision making in management through making recommendations
- collect and analyse primary data ensuring that all ethical research considerations are undertaken
- manipulate numerical data and apply appropriate statistical techniques and using data analysis packages such as Excel or SPSS
- take a reflective and independent approach to the learning process

Syllabus

- Research philosophies, methodologies and strategies
- Primary and secondary data
- Primary data collection methods and tools
- Secondary data collection sources
- Sampling techniques and analysis
- Issues of validity and reliability
- Bias, error and accuracy in the research process
- Ethical considerations and issues
- Creation of research questions and objectives
- Content analysis and construction of a literature review
- Debate of a research methodological strategy
- Analysis of data collection methods in terms of processing and presenting
- Practical data analysis using Excel, SPSS or similar computer software packages

Learning and teaching methods

The learning and teaching methods for the module follow the intended online delivery strategy for the programme as a whole.

The module will be delivered through the provision of specified reading materials on the virtual learning platform, which shall be supported by specified discussion forums and lecturecasts, and tutor support will be available to students via phone, email, and a fortnightly synchronous question and answer (Q&A) session.

Students will be provided with indicative guidance on, and encouraged to look at, relevant websites which are appropriate to the module. They will also be encouraged to identify and share appropriate web-based resources as learning support references with their fellow students and as indicators of their individual learning contexts with their tutors. The lecturecasts will include referenced use of material which will be drawn from the reading materials/web based module learning resources and the practice-based and professional/educational contexts and experience of the tutors.

Description of unit of assessment	Length/Duration	Submission date	Weighting
4 x assessed discussion activities	Two weeks	Every two weeks	20%
Mid-module assignment	2,500 words	Mid module	35%
End of module assignment	2,500 words	End of module	35%
Journal entries	300-500 words	Every two weeks	10%