



University of the
West of England

BRISTOL

MODULE SPECIFICATION

Code: UMAC3Y-10-M **Title:** Research Methods – Financial Management **Version:** 3
Level: M **UWE credit rating:** 10 **ECTS credit rating:** 5
Module type: Project
Owning Faculty: FBL **Field:** Accounting and Finance
Valid from: 1 September 2004 **Discontinued from:**
(Revised 1 September 2007)

Contributes towards: MSc Financial Management; MSc Accounting and Financial Management

Pre-requisites: None

Co-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Aim of module

The module aims to prepare students for the dissertation stage of the MSc Financial Management and subsequent research, intervention and project management work;

It seeks to develop students' knowledge and understanding of the different traditions, methodologies and methods of social science research that are relevant to this programme, and to equip them with the skills required to plan, undertake and manage effectively a substantial, analytical investigation.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module students will be able to ...

- Understand, evaluate and, in a research proposal, apply the relationship between theory, research approach and method;
- Demonstrate, in the format of a research proposal, a critical understanding of the principal traditions, methodologies and approaches of research the social sciences in a financial management or an accounting education context;
- appreciate the ethical issues which need to be addressed in social scientific and business research, including those arising in relation to the negotiation of research access, dissemination and implementation of research findings.
- conduct systematically a literature search, which identifies key sources for a selected research project, making appropriate use of available resources;
- design appropriate research strategies having due regard to time constraints, methodological approaches, practical matters and ethical issues
- reflect on their learning and personal development with a view to developing strategies for further development of both skills and knowledge.

All of the specified learning outcomes will be assessed in the single element of submitted work.

Syllabus outline

- Introduction to research in social science especially as applied in a financial management or accounting education context; definitions of research; types of research; the research process; characteristics of a good research project
- Research planning; generating a research topic and conceptualising the research problem; selecting an appropriate methodological approach; research design and project management; negotiating access; ethical issues;
- Research paradigms and methodologies;

- Literature search and review
- Research design
- Data collection
- Analysis of quantitative data
- Analysis of qualitative data
- The final research report

Teaching and learning strategy

There will be two modes of delivery of this module. The first (for students based on the UWE campus) will be principally face-to-face delivery with taught elements, directed reading, seminar discussions, and individual and group exercises. Face-to-face interaction will be supplemented by use of Blackboard for communication with and between students.

The second mode relates to students who do not attend classes at UWE. This distance learning mode has no face-to-face contact. Learning activities including communication with and between students, as well as course management will be facilitated via Blackboard. Emphasis will be placed on creating and sustaining an active and vibrant learning community. E-learning tools such as discussion boards, podcasts and blogs will be integral to the module structure.

Both modes will encourage students to reflect on their own learning and on their development as a professional. Students will be encouraged to refer, as appropriate, to the study skills web pages

Reading Strategy

- Reading strategy: All students will be encouraged to make full use of the print and electronic resources available to them through membership of the University. These include a range of electronic journals and a wide variety of resources available through web sites and information gateways. The University Library's web pages provide access to subject relevant resources and services, and to the library catalogue. Many resources can be accessed remotely. Students in both modes will be presented with opportunities within the curriculum to develop their information retrieval and evaluation skills in order to identify such resources effectively.

Essential reading: Students will be required to purchase a core text book. It is likely that Collis and Hussey (2003) *Business Research*, Palgrave MacMillan will be the core text book. It is likely that the textbook will change from year to year so students should check with the module leader or current year module handbook before buying.

- Further reading: Further reading will be required to supplement the text book. Suggested reading by topic will be indicated in the module outline provided at the start of the module, or by Blackboard. This will come from sources such as:
 - Hoque (2006) *Methodological issues in Accounting Research*, Spiramus
 - Ryan, Scapens and Theobald (2002) *Research Method and Methodology in Finance and Accounting* 2nd Edition, Thomson Press
 - Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, (2007), *Research Methods for Business Students*, Prentice Hall
 - Silverman, D. (2006), *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, London:Sage.
 - Swift, L. (2001), *Quantitative Methods for Business, Management and Finance*, London:Palgrave
 - Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K., (2007), *Research Methods in Education*, London, Routledge

Assessment

The assessment of the module is via the submission of a full scale research proposal which will include a short reflective statement on the student's experience. This mode of assessment tests all of the specified learning outcomes.

Formative assessment will be delivered mainly through the requirement to make a presentation of the research proposal to an informed audience prior to final submission of the written proposal; the

presentation will comprise powerpoint slides and either face-to-face delivery (in the case of campus-based students) or an accompanying podcast (in the case of distance learning students). Other formative feedback will be delivered in the context of class discussions and via UWE online.

Percentage split
Weighting between components A and B N/A

ATTEMPT 1

First Assessment Opportunity

Component A

Description of each element

1 Individual written project (2000 words)

Element weighting
100%

Second Assessment Opportunity (further attendance at taught classes is not required)

Component A

Description of each element

1 Individual written project (2000 words)

Element weighting
100%

ATTEMPT 2 (OR SUBSEQUENT): Attendance at taught classes is required