



University of the  
West of England

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

**Code:** UMOCP7-40-3

**Title:** Independent Study Project

**Version:** 1

**Level:** 3

**UWE credit rating:** 40

**ECTS credit rating:**

**Module type:** Project

**Owning Faculty:** FBL

**Field:** Organisational Analysis

**Valid from:** 1 September 2005

**Discontinued from:**

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Co-requisites:** None

Contributes Towards: Awards up to BA/BSc Hons

**UWE Programmes:** None

**Half Programmes:** None

**Co Requisites:** None

**Excluded Combinations:** Developing Business Knowledge (UMSCMD-40-3)

### **Aim of Module:**

- to develop skills for independent research and to demonstrate the students ability to operationalise and apply academic knowledge in the investigation of a business issue or problem
- to enable students to acquire analytical and problem solving skills based on evaluation and synthesis within a work environment
- to provide active and independent learning opportunities outside normal classroom based course delivery modes

### **Learning outcomes:**

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

- discuss, critique and apply knowledge of research methodologies, methods and analytical techniques (A1, A2)
- demonstrate detailed knowledge of a business topic including the literature published in the area, its underlying concepts, theories and assumptions (A1,2)
- research independently, including the ability to identify and define problems and plan, timetable and execute a realistic research design ( A1, A2)
- formulate reasoned solutions and make practical recommendations (A2)

In addition the educational experience may explore, develop and practise but not formally discretely assess the following:

- skills of effective communication in negotiating research access and managing tutor relationships
- skills of academic writing and work organisation
- personal skills such as resourcefulness, flexibility, creativity and clarity of thought, and self confidence

### **Syllabus Outline**

Students are required to plan and complete a max 15,000 word research project, based on the investigation of a business issue. Projects may be based on the experience or knowledge of business acquired during a placement year, or where appropriate, upon prior or current work experience

Completion of the project is an independent learning experience, supported by attendance at research training workshops covering areas such as writing proposals, literature reviews, research methods, data collection, data analysis and writing up research.

### **Teaching and learning methods**

Teaching and learning strategy

- Teaching Strategy – Short block taught research training workshops are provided at the end of stage 2 and in stage 3 to support the independent learning environment in which the project is designed and completed. Students also have an individual project tutor assigned to them for ongoing guidance throughout the research process. Students have access to further learning support, generic research guidance and module announcements through UweOnline and the BBS study skills web resources
- Learning Strategy – Students study time will be allocated between literature research, methodological reflection, data collection and analysis and writing. The weighting of these activities will depend upon the nature of the research topic and the balance between theoretical and empirical emphasis in their chosen research design. Students would be expected to commit substantial time to in depth reading and reflection on their literature review and methodology at stage 3 when writing up their projects.

### **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 websites and information gateways. The University Library's web pages provide access to subject relevant resources and services and the library catalogue. Many resources can be accessed remotely, and remain accessible to placement students. Guidance on access to library resources is provided in the module handbook.

### **Essential reading**

The essential reading will be specified in the module handbook and on Blackboard at the start of the module. This is potentially subject to change at short notice and students should not purchase any text without the guidance of the module leader. Examples of the essential reading for the module may include::

Bryman A and Bell E (2003) *Business Research Methods*. Oxford University Press

Or,

Fisher C., (2007) *Researching and Writing a Dissertation: A guidebook for business students (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)* Harlow: Pearson FT Prentice Hall

Or

Saunders M, Lewis P, Thornhill A (2005) *Research Methods for Business Students(3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)*. Pearson Education Ltd

These texts provide a sound introduction to the form and process of business research. They provide an invaluable support tool in developing a research project design and selecting appropriate data collection methods and approaches to data analysis.

### **Further Reading**

Students are expected to make extensive use of bibliographical databases and to identify recent and relevant academic literature to support their chosen topic. Academic papers from high quality journals should comprise the bulk of the literature review along with books and other non refereed publications. Students are expected to demonstrate an appropriate level of familiarity with the literature in their chosen area, through independent research and use of a broad variety of resources.

