



University of the  
West of England

## MODULE SPECIFICATION

**Code:** UMSD3M-15-M

**Title:** Management Research

**Version:** 1

**Level:** M

**UWE credit rating:** 15

**ECTS credit rating:** 7.5

**Module type:** Standard

**Owning Faculty:** FBL

**Field:** Strategy and International Business

**Faculty Committee approval:** QMAC

**Date:**

**Valid from:** 1 September 2011

**Discontinued from:**

**Contributes towards:** MSc International Management

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Co-requisites:** None

**Excluded combinations:** None

### Aim of module

The module aims to enable students to understand the importance of gaining and using knowledge and evidence to inform management decision-making and academic study. It is designed to equip students with knowledge and skills to collect, critically evaluate, interpret and present relevant information. During the module students will be encouraged to engage with a variety of academic perspectives that inform management research and decision-making.

### Learning outcomes

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

- critically analyse a range of academic perspectives with reference to their role in the creation and use of different types of knowledge (Component B)
- demonstrate an appreciation of the contextual relevance of such perspectives in research design and in the selection of appropriate analytical techniques (Component B)
- discuss how culture and the values of the researcher, and others with an interest in the outcome of research, affect the research process and how data are gathered and used (Component A)
- evaluate the role of research-based knowledge and evidence in complex managerial decision-making and policy formation (Components A and B)
- make informed decisions about appropriate methodologies, commonly-used methods and any particular challenges of undertaking management research in a global context (Components A and B)
- appraise the ethical and practical issues arising in carrying out research, and take account of these issues when developing a research proposal (Component B)

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

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

- work in teams to debate the merits and drawbacks of different approaches to the gathering, interpretation and presentation of data
- demonstrate knowledge of different approaches to learning, using evidence and presenting academic arguments

### **Syllabus outline**

- A review of the main philosophical and theoretical perspectives associated with creation of management knowledge
- Questions and debates related to the nature and use of evidence and how it relates to managerial decision-making and academic studies
- Identification and critical analysis of significant types of research strategy used in management research
- Critical evaluation of ethics and values in the research process and the importance of considering risk to researchers and participants in designing any research. Consideration of the purpose and role of ethics committees and the completion of ethical audits.
- Reviewing literature and other sources of evidence critically
- Discussion of the process of planning and designing research: proposals, strategies, etc.
- Comparing and contrasting methodologies and methods in conducting research
- Consideration of approaches to the analysis, interpretation and presentation of data for different audiences

### **Teaching and learning methods**

Learning in the module is achieved through a combination of class-based activity, group-based activity and independent study. The classroom sessions are designed to actively support the development of independent learning strategies by the students. The sessions combine formal lecture input with a wide range of participative activities including case studies, individual and group-problem solving activities, student-led discussions of existing research and article reviews. Students will be encouraged to study directed readings and to critique policy documents and research articles.

Students will be asked to explore key themes in more depth through their private reading and individual study, and will be encouraged to reflect on the similarities and differences in different approaches to learning, creating knowledge, interpreting evidence and presenting management and academic arguments. They will also be asked to reflect on the application of these ideas to their own interests.

### **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 to the library catalogue. Many resources can be accessed remotely.

Students will be directed towards the FBL study skills website as appropriate. Students will be encouraged to use Blackboard resources referred to in the module handbook. Students are not expected to purchase a core text for this module.

The following list is provided for validation panels/accrediting bodies as an indication of the type and level of information students may be expected to consult. As such, its currency may wane during the

life span of the module specification. However, as indicated above, current advice on what to read will be available via other, more frequently updated mechanisms.

### **Indicative reading**

Alasuutari, P., Bickman, L. and Brannen, J. (eds) (2008) *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods* London: Sage

Becker, S, and Bryman, A. (2004) *Understanding Research for Social Policy and Practice*, London: Policy Press

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011) *Business Research Methods*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Cameron, S. (2009) *Business Research Methods: a practical approach*, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

Crowther, D. and Lancaster G. (2008) *Research methods: a concise introduction to research in management and business consultancy*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann

Eriksson, P. and Kovalainen, A. (2008) *Qualitative Methods in Business Research*. London: Sage

Ghauri, P. N. and Grønhaug, K. (2005) *Research Methods in Business Studies: a practical guide*, Harlow: Financial Times, Prentice Hall

Harvey, M and Blackman, K. (2005) *Researching Business and Management: a roadmap for success*, London: Palgrave Macmillan

Lee, N. (2008) *Doing Business Research: a guide to theory and practice*, London: Sage

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Harlow: Financial Times, Prentice Hall

Sekaran, U. and Bougie, R. (2009) *Research Methods for Business: a skill building approach*, Oxford: John Wiley & Sons

### **Journals**

Some journals that may be particularly useful are listed below. Students can use electronic databases, abstracts and bibliographies to identify journals and articles that are relevant their own project. Many journals can now be accessed electronically via the University's intranet. Examples of journals you may find particularly useful include:

Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods

Journal of Social Science Research

Organizational Research Methods

The University has also prepared some on-line learning material on research methods: **The Research Observatory**. Students can access the Research Observatory via the UWE home page- click on Learning and Teaching.

**Assessment**

The assessment comprises two components. The first assessment is a research proposal. Students will be required to develop a research proposal on an international management topic set by the module staff. This proposal will include the aim and objectives of the research, a brief literature review highlighting relevant sources and identifying research themes, proposed research methodology and methods with accompanying rationale, and an audit of ethical and health and safety issues to be taken into consideration in designing the research. The second assessment (component A), which is the final assessment for this module, is an individual interview similar to a viva examination.

**Weighting between components A and B (standard modules only)                      A: 25%    B: 75%**

**ATTEMPT 1**

**First Assessment Opportunity**

**Component A**

**Description of each element**

1 Viva (10 minutes)      FINAL

Element weighting

100%

**Component B**

**Description of each element**

1 Research proposal 2500 words

Element weighting

100%

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

**Component A**

**Description of each element**

1 Viva (10 minutes)

Element weighting

100%

**Component B**

**Description of each element**

1 Research proposal 2500 words

Element weighting

100%

**Specification confirmed by .....Date .....**  
**(Associate Dean/Programme Director)**