



CORPORATE AND ACADEMIC SERVICES

MODULE SPECIFICATION

Part 1: Basic Data					
Module Title	Economic Research Methods				
Module Code	UMED8N-15-2	Level	2	Version	1.1
Owning Faculty	FBL	Field	Economics		
Contributes towards	BA (Hons) Economics; BA(Hons) Banking and Finance				
UWE Credit Rating	15	ECTS Credit Rating	7.5	Module Type	Standard
Pre-requisites	None		Co- requisites	None	
Excluded Combinations	None		Module Entry requirements		
Valid From	September 2012		Valid to		

CAP Approval Date	QMAC Dec 11
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Part 2: Learning and Teaching	
Learning Outcomes	<p>On successful completion of this module students will be able to demonstrate the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A critical awareness of different approaches to academic research in economics (quantitative and qualitative) including a knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of different research designs (in terms of why do it, how to structure it and how should it be ethically); (Elements A1 and A2) 2. A capacity to understand the strengths and weaknesses of different research methods for data collection (relating to economics) in terms of the appropriateness, effectiveness and ethical implications; (Elements A1 and A2) 3. Command and knowledge of different methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis including how these might relate to different research methods of data collection; (Elements A1 and A2) 4. An understand the concept of 'feasibility' in the implementation of a research project (Elements A1) 5. An understand the strengths and weaknesses of secondary data sources for quantitative analysis (Elements A2); 6. An ability to use SPSS to test hypotheses through the use of government survey data. (Elements A2) <p>In the case of a referral the exam (component B) replaces coursework component</p>

	<p>A1 in the list above.</p> <p>In addition the educational experience may explore, develop, and practise <u>but not formally discretely assess</u> the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management skills • Effective communication using written and verbal media • Independent and interdependent (group) working
Syllabus Outline	<p>This module typically will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational statistics - revision; introduction to SPSS • non-parametric tests and measures of association • approaches to research design; research ethics • the importance of the literature review for the framing of research questions • sampling methods • questionnaires and surveys • qualitative data collection and analyses • cross-sectional regression • planning and writing research projects
Contact Hours/Scheduled Hours	<p>Module delivery will be based on 3 hours of scheduled learning and teaching activities per teaching week. The exact format of the scheduled learning and teaching will vary week by week depending upon the content. Over the course of the 12 week session, this should amount to 12 lectures, 12 lectorials and 12 tutorials.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods	<p>Lectures will focus on core material, with a particular focus on theory and its application, and the workings of SPSS. Seminars will focus on investigating and practising the lecture material. Workshops will be based in computer rooms and will emphasise electronic data collection and application and practice with SPSS.</p> <p>In addition staff will be available during the semester during their office hours (2 hours a week) for face to face meetings.</p> <p>Queries and extended discussions with staff can also be approached virtually through e-mail.</p> <p>Extensive use will be made of Blackboard for weekly guided independent study work; to support students' learning; to facilitate interactions between students e.g. for group project work and to provide feedback with quizzes and forums.</p> <p>Students will also be directed towards the University Library online Study Skills resources for the development of skills appropriate to the level and style of the module. In addition a number of e-learning resources will also be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MySkills Study Skills website at http://www.uwe.ac.uk/library/resources/hub/ • Skills4study (s4s) as part of the MySkills resource [Academic reading and note making; Critical thinking; Academic writing; Referencing and plagiarism] • iSkillzone http://iskillzone.uwe.ac.uk [workshops for information retrieval, referencing, evaluation skills and literature reviewing http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/library/help.aspx] • Learn Higher http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/Students.html • Espresso Maths http://www.cems.uwe.ac.uk/mslc/
Key Information Sets Information	<p>Key Information Sets (KIS) are produced at programme level for all programmes that this module contributes to, which is a requirement set by HESA/HEFCE. KIS are comparable sets of standardised information about undergraduate courses allowing prospective students to compare and contrast between programmes they</p>

are interested in applying for.

Key Information Set - Module data				
<i>Number of credits for this module</i>				15
Hours to be allocated	Scheduled learning and teaching study hours	Independent study hours	Placement study hours	Allocated Hours
150	36	114	0	150

The table below indicates as a percentage the total assessment of the module which constitutes a -

Written Exam: Unseen written exam, open book written exam, In-class test
Coursework: Written assignment or essay, report, dissertation, portfolio, project
Practical Exam: Oral Assessment and/or presentation, practical skills assessment, practical exam

Please note that this is the total of various types of assessment and will not necessarily reflect the component and module weightings in the Assessment section of this module description:

Total assessment of the module:	
Written exam assessment percentage	0%
Coursework assessment percentage	60%
Practical exam assessment percentage	40%
	100%

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 web pages provide access to subject relevant resources and services and to the library catalogue. Many of these resources can be accessed remotely. Students will be presented with opportunities within the curriculum to develop their information retrieval and evaluation skills in order to identify such resources effectively.

Students will be directed and expected to undertake essential reading throughout the module. However, depending upon specific topics addressed over the course of the module, students will be expected to undertake additional reading for themselves. A list of indicative textbooks and relevant journals is provided below but students are expected to recognise that these may be starting points only and that they should extend their reading as widely as is necessary to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge.

Blackboard – This module is supported by Blackboard, where students will be able to find all necessary module documentation, including guidance on Further Reading within the module handbook/outline. Direct links to information resources will also be provided from within Blackboard

UWE Libraries – Engagement with online resources available through the library will be a core requirement of this module.

Essential & Further Reading

The essential reading for the module will be:

	<p>Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011). <i>Business Research Methods</i>, Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>In addition, students will be directed towards useful foundational texts to which they could refer. Students will be provided with a wide variety of written, audio and video texts that will be taken from journal articles, national and international newspapers and websites. Journal articles will be available electronically, or in the library. Students will be guided throughout the module as to the appropriate texts. Module guides will also reflect the range of reading to be carried out.</p>
Indicative Reading List	<p>The following list is offered to provide validation panels/accrediting bodies with 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. CURRENT advice on additional reading will be available via the module guide or Blackboard pages.</p> <p>Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011). <i>Business Research Methods</i>, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Gauri, P. and Gronhaug, K. (2005). <i>Research Methods in Business Studies: A Practical Guide</i>, London: Prentice Hall. Bryman, A. (2004). <i>Social Research Methods</i>, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Patton, M. (2002). <i>Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods</i>, London: 2002. Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009). <i>Research Methods for Business Students</i>, London: FT/Prentice Hall. Barrow, M. (2001). <i>Statistics for Economics, Accounting and Business Studies</i>, London: Pearson. Kennedy, P. (1998). <i>A Guide to Econometrics</i>, Oxford: Blackwell. Field, A. (2009). <i>Discovering Statistics Using SPSS</i>, London: Sage.</p> <p>Articles from academic journals and from national and international newspapers will be drawn on. These will include specific webpages that students will be recommended to read regularly as well as respected economic blogs. Within these websites there are video and audio recordings of respected economists and policy makers.</p> <p>Academic and Practitioner Journals</p> <p>Applied Economics International Review of Applied Economics Journal of Economic Methodology Economic Journal American Economic Review The Economist</p>

Part 3: Assessment

Assessment Strategy	<p>This module deploys a mix of formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment takes various forms and will occur throughout the module in particular through the workshop exercises in the lectorials. This formative assessment may include peer feedback on informal activities and through the group work component (Component A1). Formative assessment will be important because the summative assessment all occurs late in this particular module. The module will also deploy online quizzes through blackboard to help students assess their progress.</p> <p>Summative assessment will be based on two pieces of assessed work.</p> <p>Summative Assessment Component A1: In groups the students will develop a research design to explore a question in economics using a qualitative approach (data collection and analysis). The students will present their feasibility study and will be assessed on:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the presentation itself (50% of element) a short reflective note that outlines the student's contribution to the group work (50% of element) <p>Students will receive oral feedback during the presentation.</p> <p>Component A2: The students will complete a 2000 word research paper that uses SPSS software and deploys it to analysis data from secondary survey data. The student will have to identify a question, develop a hypothesis based on existing literature and analyse the data using SPSS in order to confirm or deny their hypothesis. The student will initially need to submit a project proposal (1 sheet A4 pro forma) that will be worth 1/3 of the marks for this element.</p> <p>Formative Assessment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with other students in seminars. Engagement with external speakers and with private sector businesses. Regular VLE messages, including podcasts, provide generic feedback to groups on lectures, seminars and practical classes. 				
60%	Component A				
% weighting between components A and B for first assessment (Standard modules only)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">A:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">B:</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">100%</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	A:	B:	100%	
A:	B:				
100%					
First Sit					
Component A1 Description of each element	Element weighting				
1. Group project presentation, and reflective note on individual contribution to group work (by each student)	40%				
2. 2000 word research paper, and 1 side A4 project proposal (on provided pro forma)	60%				
Component B Description of each element	Element weighting				
n/a					
% weighting between components A and B for referrals (Standard modules only)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">A</td> <td style="text-align: center;">B</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">100%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">n/a</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	100%	n/a
A	B				
100%	n/a				
Resit (further attendance at taught classes is not required)					
Component A (controlled conditions) Description of each element	Element weighting				
1. 2000 word individual essay exploring a theme on research methodology for economics	40%				
2. 2000 word research paper, and 1 side A4 project proposal (on provided pro forma)	60%				
Component B Description of each element	Element weighting				
n/a					
If a student is permitted an EXCEPTIONAL RETAKE of the module the assessment will be that indicated by the Module Description at the time that retake commences.					