

Masters Dissertation	Code: M 500
<p>Indicative content</p> <p>This module both develops a broad knowledge of the principles of masters level research methodology in the context business and the application of such principles to a major study in an appropriate field selected and researched by the student. In order to achieve this the student will be encouraged, through lectures, group work and independent study, to develop their knowledge and ideas of the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Techniques for creating and developing a research topic that is capable of implementation within an academic and philosophical framework. ◆ The relationship between research questions/objectives, the academic literature, methods of data collection and research philosophy ◆ Procedures that aid the exploration of academic literature and the development of a focused literature study ◆ The ways that the framing of research objectives can impact on the nature of the research and be able to discuss the philosophical implications of specific research objectives and questions. ◆ The distinction between theory building and theory testing research ◆ The distinction between qualitative and quantitative research ◆ The strengths and weaknesses of different research approaches ◆ The concepts of validity reliability and generalisability ◆ The methods by which primary data can be located and collected ◆ The estimation of the size of a research topic ◆ The ways that secondary data can be located and collected ◆ The ways of analysing data and understanding the limitations of that data ◆ Drawing conclusions from data whilst understanding the limitations of those conclusions. ◆ Reflecting on their own particular research interests ◆ The conventions and disciplines that are required to produce a research proposal and dissertation 	
<p>These learning strategies will occupy your time</p> <p>Business research methods</p> <p>All students will need to read at least one text on business research methods in full. Discussions of theoretical and conceptual knowledge will be tutor led, and provide examples of application in the business area. Students will be able to work in-groups on their proposal for the dissertation. This group work will allow the student to experience of a variety of settings being evaluated for research methods as well as their own.</p> <p>There will be 18 taught hours on this program. This may be over a semester on a weekly basis or in a series of blocks. It is expected that students will communicate with their dissertation tutor during the development of their research proposal</p> <p>Dissertation</p> <p>The majority of the module is conducted through independent learning with reference to the personal dissertation tutor on regular intervals throughout the development of the dissertation. It is expected that face-to-face discussions will account for approximately 6 hours.</p>	

<p>On completion, you should be able to demonstrate these learning outcomes: Provide a systematic and critical understanding of a chosen topic of research appropriate to the award for which the course member is registered, with specified aim(s) and objectives by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing a comprehensive and critical literature review and an identification and justification of a sound theoretical framework adopted for your proposed research (Content & Context: BS1;) 2. Critically evaluating potential suitable research designs and methods and justification of your choice (Research: BS1;BS2; BS3;BS10) 3. Developing and implementing and managing a programme of research, (Research, Organisation: BS1;BS2;BS7;BS10) 4. Comprehensively analysing research data and appropriate interpretation of the results (Analysis, Organization:BS1;BS2;BS10) 5. Arguing conclusions based on your own research and making appropriate recommendations to your specified audience(s). (Creative Application: BS2; BS 10;BS11) 6. Presenting a dissertation incorporating all the above elements in a coherent and effective manner (Communicate, Learning: BS4;BS5) 7. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the area of research (Content and context: one or more of KU1 to KU9) 		<p>Which will be assessed by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A dissertation proposal incorporating a learning diary which will include. A review of the idea development process, the aims of the dissertation, a literature of review of key issues, methodology proposed (with justification) and schedules for work.(Learning outcomes 1,2,3) The word limit on this assessment is 5000. These marks provide 25% of the total marks for the module. 2. A dissertation of 15, 000 words prepared in accordance with Business School guidelines that introduces a research topic, defines research objectives, discusses relevant academic literature, provides a credible research methodology, discusses results, draws conclusions, makes recommendations if appropriate. The document should be produced to publication standard. (Learning outcomes 3,4,5,6,7) These marks provide 75% of the total marks for the module. <p>Pass criteria proposal Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A sound understanding of the overall research process ◆ The ability to produce a research proposal capable of being implemented <p>Distinction criteria proposal Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An excellent understanding of the overall research process ◆ The ability to produce a research proposal of a high academic standard, which can be effectively implemented <p>This assessment is carried out as part of the dissertation (see dissertation module descriptor)</p> <p>Pass criteria dissertation. Achieve the listed learning outcomes and demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ sufficient knowledge and a sound understanding of the key theories, issues and debate on the subject of investigation ◆ an ability to integrate theory into practice ◆ an ability to conduct independent research, analyse and interpret data from a variety of sources and formats and draw relevant conclusions from it ◆ display coherent writing style including citation of references and appropriate standard of document presentation <p>Distinction criteria dissertation As above plus to demonstrate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Critical examination of learned theories ◆ creative application of theories appropriate to the subject of investigation ◆ Evidence of original research work and excellent research skills ◆ Completeness of research evidence thoroughly analysed, which results in a contribution to management theory and/or practice ◆ Professional standard of writing style including citation of references and document presentation 				
<p>You will need access to these resources: Library text and electronic sources IT facilities and appropriate packages Research organisation(s) Dissertation Tutor</p>						
<p>and refer to these texts: Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Lowe, A. (2002). <i>Management Research - An Introduction</i>.2nd Edition. Sage Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A., (2000). <i>Research Methods for Business Students</i>, 2nd Edition, Financial Times/ Prentice Hall Yin, R.K (1994), <i>Case Study Research Design and Methods</i>, 2nd Edition, Sage Carter, M. P. & Williamson, D. W (1996). <i>Quantitative Modelling for Management and Business</i>. Pitman ZHUANG, Lee. (2001) <i>Staffordshire University Business School Masters Dissertation Handbook</i></p>						
<p>The module will be delivered at</p>		<p>and its pattern of delivery</p>				
<p>Any approved site of Staffordshire University Business School</p>		<p>Postgraduate</p>				
<p>You must satisfy these pre-admission requirements None</p>		<p>and have passed these pre-requisites None</p>		<p>and also study these co-requisites None</p>		<p>and cannot combine this module with None</p>
Level M	Credits 60	Learning Hours 600	Examination Board Postgraduate Business Award Board	School Business	Contributing school(s) (%)	Tutor