

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

MODULE TITLE	Research Methods		
MODULE CODE	<i>BC2001 (L5)</i>	CREDIT VALUE	20 Credits
SCHOOL	SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT		

MODULE AIMS

To enable students to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the research process, build research skills, and develop the capacity to apply qualitative and quantitative research methods and analyse results. The module will help students to understand and apply methods, evaluate existing research, and prepare them to undertake research for the dissertation/ report module.

MODULE CONTENT

The indicative syllabus includes:

- Role uses of theory, models and hypotheses in research.
- Research assumptions.
- Research ethics
- Searching and reviewing previous literature, information and source material
- Generating ideas for a research topic
- Developing a research proposal for dissertations and reports
- Developing research aims and objectives
- Research approaches: qualitative research; quantitative research; mixed methods.
- Research design strategies
- Data collection methods
- Sampling
- Negotiating access
- Analysing qualitative data
- Analysing quantitative data
- Validity, reliability and data veracity
- Drawing conclusions/ making recommendations

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module a student will be able to:

1. Analyse previous research relevant to their subject area and formulate appropriate research questions, aims and objectives drawing upon this.
2. Select and utilise appropriate data collection methods for both qualitative and quantitative research
3. Develop a research proposal selecting appropriate subject relevant literature and research strategies and methods
4. Analyse qualitative and quantitative data
5. Describe the role of ethics in research

TEACHING METHODS

The module will employ a mix of formal taught input and practical exercises organised around weekly interactive workshop sessions. There will be some formal input during which key concepts are introduced. Students will also be given exercises to complete to develop their practical research skills. This will include interviewing skills, using research software for collecting and analysing data, developing and conducting surveys, selecting and using sampling techniques, and understanding the ethical challenges that researchers can face. They will also be given the opportunity to evaluate existing research and to engage in discussion and debate about how research is planned and carried out, how choices are made by researchers, the use to which research is put and the challenges involved in conducting research.

The module will be supported by online material and students will be expected to use these resources regularly to reinforce workshop-based learning. The module is assessed through a combination of individual written work and undertaking a series of time-limited online activities to further develop and assess the students' understanding of how research data are collected and analysed. The first assignment is a research methods essay and it is designed to enable students to understand how to select an appropriate research strategy and method(s) for research. The final assignment comprises a research proposal on a topic of the student's own choice. Students review previous subject-specific research and use the knowledge they acquire from this exercise and from the module content to devise a research proposal.

Graduate Skills and Attributes: written and oral communication; planning and time management; decision making; data collection and analysis; evaluation; numeracy; research skills; problem solving.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

This module is assessed through an Essay on research methods (40%), a test (20%) and a Research proposal (40%).