Module Study Guide

AY2015-2016

## Research in the Real World (Dissertation)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Module Code | CP70051E |
| Level | 7 |
| Credits | 40 |

# School of Computing and Engineering

Module Title Research in Real World

# Module Study Guide

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# Module Leader ,Teaching Team and Module Administrator Details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Module Leader** | Colin Beeke |
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| Location |  |

# External Examiner(s)

The External Examiner(s) for this module are listed below.  Please note that this is provided for information only; students are **not** permitted to enter into any correspondence about their marks with External Examiners.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Job Title** |  |
| **Institution** |  |

# Further Information

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | |
| **Total Guided Learning Hours** | | 400 |
| Consisting of: | |  |
| **Teaching Contact Hours** | | 0 |
| **Independent Study Hours** | | 400 |
| **Placement Hours** | | 0 |
|  | |  |
| **Assessment:** | |  |
| Percentage of final marks assessed by: | |  |
| **Exam** | | 0% |
| **Coursework** | | 100% |
| **Practical** | | 0% |

Section

A

Overview and Content

# Welcome and Introduction to the Module

Welcome to this edition of the module study guide for the Dissertation Module. In this guide you will find all the information you need regarding the purpose of the module and its role in the course you are studying. You will also find details of the module content, the assessment requirements and lists of further resources.

All this information and a good deal more besides, is also available on-line on the Blackboard E-Learning platform which can be found at:

http://Online.uwl.ac.uk

Resources on the web site are constantly updated so we recommend that you make regular visits to the site.

Finally – we think we have covered most things here but if you have any suggestions for inclusion please let us know.

Enjoy and Learn!

# 2. Timetable/Venue/Rooms

Please refer to student portal or School of Computing and Engineering notice boards for timings of sessions.

First Point of Contact

If you need to discuss any issue to do with this module, the first point of contact is the module leader, who is named at the start of this guide. If the module leader is unable to deal with the problem, you should then raise it with your course leader, and then with your Head of Subject Dr Danni Novakovic. The Head of School responsible for this module is Professor Morteza (Amir) Alani, and can be contacted at Amir.Alani @uwl.ac.uk

# 3. Aims of the Module

The module provides students with the experience of planning, designing and bringing to a successful conclusion a major piece of individual work. The module aims to encourage and reward individual inventiveness and application of effort. Specifically the aims of the module are to:

* Investigate and explore in depth an area of interest related to their studies using previously acquired knowledge and extend this knowledge in a selected area related to Applied Project management and selected associated pathway.
* Produce a significant piece of work focussed on a specific topic that synthesises the academic content of previously studied modules.
* Develop a project plan and execute the plan whilst responding to changes and adapting the plan as necessary.
* Analyse experimental and other findings from secondary research and to relate them to an appropriate theoretical analysis.
* Communicate the work to others by means of appropriate documentation of professional quality
* Analyse, design and implement a solution to a well-defined problem and document and present the application architecture.

There are three main types of study:

1. **A practically focused development study,** which aims to explore an area or ideas, or demonstrate a concept through appropriate development, testing and critical analysis.
2. **A research-focused study,** which aims to draw on practical data to assess critically a specified area or topic. The empirical data may come from a study undertaken by the student with an appropriate organisation (agreed by the School of Computing and Technology) or a meta-analysis of data already available in published relevant literature.
3. **An** **Applied Project Management Case-Study** approach which aims to draw on one or more specific case studies from an commercial organization in order to explore an idea / concept. The case study provides the basic data for the research.

Regardless of the study pursued, it will be necessary to undertake a literature review because both the ability to develop knowledge and skills through self-guided learning and the ability to critically appraise literature from the perspective of the problem being addressed are fundamental at master’s level.

# 4. Learning Outcomes

On completion of this module students will be able to:

LO1 Demonstrate systematic awareness of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice

LO2 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to research or professional enquiry

LO3 Demonstrate originality in application of knowledge together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in a discipline

LO4 Demonstrate a conceptual understanding that enables critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship in a discipline and evaluation and critiques of methodologies and, where appropriate, development of new hypotheses

LO5 Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make informed judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate conclusions clearly

# 5. Content of the Module

On completing this module students will be able to

* Conduct an original piece of research in the field of projects and project management
* Report the results, analysis and implications of research in the form of a coherent written and structured dissertation

# 6. Learning Resources

## Materials to be provided

This Module Study Guide and Handouts and Notes for most sessions provided, covering all topics.

The Blackboard E-learning platform for discussion groups, distribution of information and email.

## Essential and other Recommended Texts

*Essential texts:*

Martin Davies and Nathan Hughes (2014) Doing a successful research project: using qualitative or quantitative methods 2nd Edition Published Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

**Recommended textbooks**

Horn, Roy (2012) Researching and writing dissertations: a complete guide for business and management students 2nd edition Published London : Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development  
  
  
Machi, Lawrence A (2012) The literature review: six steps to success Published Thousand Oaks, Calif.   
  
Oliver, Paul (2012) Succeeding with your literature review: a handbook for students  
Published Maidenhead : Open University Press  
  
Eco, Umberto, (2015) How to write a thesis Published Cambridge: The MIT Press  
  
Greetham, Bryan (2014) How to write your undergraduate dissertation 2nd edition Published Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan,   
  
By Godfrey, Jeanne (2013) How to use your reading in your essays 2nd edition Published Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan

Bell (2014) Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-time Researchers Paperback 6th edition Open University press   
  
Jean McNiff  & A Jack Whitehead (2013) The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project

Jean McNiff  (2013) Action Research: Principles and practice Paperback

David Coghlan & Teresa Brannick  (2014) Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization  
  
Mark N.K. Saunders, Philip Lewis & Adrian Thornhill (2012) Research Methods for Business Students

Diana Ridley (2012) The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students (SAGE Study Skills Series)

## Other Learning Resources

**Literature**

One of the hallmarks of a scholarly approach is that your work is presented in context, and the contributions of others to the problem area are acknowledged. Any reasonable project topic requires a search of the relevant literature – referring to course texts and assuming that there is nothing else available is obviously inappropriate. Whilst searching the literature to gather appropriate information is a difficult and time-consuming task that you should make a background activity for the rest of the spring semester, you need to show that you have mastered the necessary techniques and have not missed important articles that are reasonably easily available to you.

**Databases**

UWL provides a wide range of digital resources with free access for UWL staffs/students. Some popular digital libraries include

* IEEE/IET Electronic Library
* ACM digital library
* ScienceDirect

Some other databases:

* Survey research methods: [www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~newsted/surveys.html](http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~newsted/surveys.html)
* Qualitative research in IS: [www.auckland.ac.nz/msis/isworld/](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/msis/isworld/)
* VUW Human Ethics Guidelines: [www.vuw.ac.nz/administrative/hec](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/administrative/hec)

For guidance on the correct formatting of referencing within your dissertation see:

The Harvard Citation and Referencing Guide, produced by UWL at

[http://lrs.uwl.ac.uk/find/recording\_your\_references.html](http://lrs.tvu.ac.uk/find/recording_your_references.html). There are other general guides to report writing and undertaking project work that you may come across. It is important that any guidance that you follow is discussed with your supervisor to avoid conflicts in the dissertation process.

## Learning Resources for Open Learning and E-Learning

Learning resources listed above are appropriate for open learning and E-learning. In addition, the Blackboard E-learning platform will be used for discussion groups, distribution of information and email.

Learndirect and Future focus also provide technical courses – which may be used for specific sessions.

LibGuide for Research [http://uwl.libguides.com/content.php?pid=664504&sid=5503050](https://webmail.uwl.ac.uk/owa/redir.aspx?C=8c0f3b78959f41a7b165c7fe31267003&URL=http%3a%2f%2fuwl.libguides.com%2fcontent.php%3fpid%3d664504%26sid%3d5503050)

Section

B

Assessment and Feedback

# 7. Assessment: General Information

Students often ask what type of dissertation is acceptable. For the computing discipline, this question can be hard to answer in a simple manner. Firstly, it is important to recognise that there are three types of dissertation that you can do. These were outlined in section 6. Ultimately, however, the dissertation must focus around IT issues and problems, but can vary significantly. Regardless of the type of dissertation your writing must be objective, original and be backed up with evidence. The evidence can be empirical, software, or contextual review of literature.

You must never lose sight of the fact that the dissertation is the pinnacle of achievement your degree and represents 400 hours of study.

By completing the assignments you should be able to satisfy the learning outcomes of the module.

A statement of the assessment criteria, including generic and key skills criteria will be given to you before the beginning of the assessment and the quality with which you fulfil the criteria will determine the mark you may achieve at or above 50 %. If you do not meet the criteria you will receive a mark below 50%.

Research Proposals developed from the Professional Enquiry Methods Module may form the basis of the dissertation. However, it is recognised that the research interests of students may change or that there may be a new source of ideas. If students elect to develop a dissertation in an area that is different from the research proposal that they developed from the Professional Enquiry Methods module then they will be required to develop a new research proposal which will be subject to scrutiny from an appropriate panel and the student will be required to defend the proposal.

This module requires a single assessment of the form shown here:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Assessment 1** |
| **Type of Assignment** | MSc Thesis |
| **Length** | 8,000-15,000 words with appropriate artefacts if applicable. |
| **Key Skills Addressed** | 5.2; 5.3; 5.4 |
| **Timing** | As agreed with individual supervisors and subject to information included in section 6 |
| **Weighting** | 100 |
| **Assessor** | Tutor |

### **Anonymous Marking**

The Faculty policy on Anonymous marking is applied to all appropriate student assessments.

## **Pass Requirements**

Students must achieve at least 50% in order to pass the module.

For every academic year, the dates for submission are set by Course Leader. Please check you’re your Course Leader for deliverable dates.

# 8. Details of Assessment

This section guides you through the steps in ensuring that you have produced a dissertation worthy of submission to the exam board.

### **Choosing a topic**

By the time you are doing dissertation, you have already chosen a topic and are already working with a supervisor, both which were agreed during the study of the Professional Enquiry Methods module. The dissertation is biggest element of your course and you must achieve a pass grade in order to be awarded a Masters degree.

The topic chosen must be an area that you are interested in and are happy to work in. The supervisor will provide guidance for you to develop your proposal, completed and agreed in Professional Enquiry Methods, into a full blown successful Dissertation.

### **Doing the Dissertation**

Now that your proposal has been approved you will have period of supervised study, depending on your mode of study. During this time you will arrange meetings with your supervisor to provide evidence of your progression and to seek help and guidance. When you attend these meetings, it is best to go well prepared. For example, if you seeking comments on written work, make sure that your supervisor has had sight of the documents before the meeting. At the end of the meeting, make sure that you have both agreed on the next steps. Follow your plan and make sure that you modify the plan and keep it up to date. You are doing a research topic so expect problems and plan for them.

### **Preparing the Dissertation**

Your research is required to be documented in the form of a dissertation which meets the guidelines set out below for structure and presentation.

General requirements

1. Submit one electronic PDF copy through Turnitin in the Blackboard site for dissertation (if you cannot see it in your homepage, please contact the module leader).
2. The dissertation should be between 8,000 and 15,000 words in length excluding quotations, references, titles for figures and tables, acknowledgements and appendices. Deviations to these rules will incur university wide penalties.
3. You are required to clearly state the total words used.

#### **Structure**

The dissertation will normally contain the following sections or chapters.

1. The title page which includes the following text:

[Dissertation Title]

 Submitted September 2015, in partial fulfilment of   
the conditions of the award of the degree MSc [your pathway]

 [Student Name]

School of Computing and Technology

University of West London

 I hereby declare that this dissertation is all my own work, except as indicated in the text:

 Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Copyright** – A statement regarding copyright should be presented in the middle of the page. “the copyright of this dissertation belongs to the author under the terms of the UK Copyright acts as amended by The University of West London regulations. Due acknowledgement must always be made of the use of any materials contained in, or derived from this thesis”.
2. **Abstract** (on one page) – a summary of the dissertation stating the problem identified, the approach and the results.
3. **Acknowledgements** (on one page) – people / orgs that have helped you during the dissertation.
4. **Table of contents** (include page numbers)
5. **Introduction** – Define the area / topic / problem or research question that you have postulated and are addressing in the dissertation. Include relevant critical discussion of existing work in order to fully define the context of your work.
6. **Literature review** – Present a critical review of the relevant literature sourced from books, journals, reports and other grey literature. Use this to provide an informed and critical contextual positioning for your work.
7. **Methods** – Provide a theoretical structure for how you are intending to test your aims / objectives or your hypothesis. Provide a rationale for the approach that you have chosen.
8. **Results and Discussion** – Here you need to present a detailed description and analyses of your findings in the context of existing literature, your methodology and /or organizational practice or policy. The results should be clearly described using appropriate figures and tables and the establishment of relationships (causal, correlation etc) should be presented so that the reader can clearly follow your logic.
9. **Conclusion** – Here you should describe the key features of your research and how the aims and objectives have been met. Some of the principal findings should be further emphasised and you should you should provide recommendations for further work or changes in practice or policy if appropriate.
10. **References** – A list of authors and their works which have been cited in the text using the Harvard referencing system
11. **Word count**
12. **Appendices** (numbered sequence)

#### **Presentation**

The following provides a description of the guidelines and requirements for presentation based on British Standards BS 4821 for Dissertation presentation.

1. Word processed on one side of A4 white paper
2. Use Point Size 12 for main text
3. Paragraphs left justified with even spacing between words
4. Line spacing is set to 1.5 except for quotations
5. Margins set as: Left – 1.5in; Right – 1in. Top and Bottom – 1in.
6. Quotations should be indented
7. Bindings – the dissertation should be bound so that it can be fully opened. Biding material should be Black.
   1. Spine: the spine should bear the initials of forenames followed by the surname of the candidate; the year of submission and the degree. All should be in 8mm capital height. The information should be printed along the spine so that it is readable when the volume is lying flat with the front cover uppermost.
   2. Cover title: the title of the dissertation should be presented on the from board in upper case, the candidate’s name in mixed case. The title MSc in Information Systems should be placed below the student’s name.

### **Marking and Quality System.**

Your dissertation will be marked by your supervisor and blind double-marked by another member of staff. It may also be marked by the External Examiner. The mark will be recommended at the Subject Exam Board in order to be approved by the Programme Exam Board. If your work is deemed unsatisfactory and fails to meet the expected grades you may be required to re-submit your work and possibly re-take the module if you fail again on the re-submission.

Example 1 – Turnitin: submissions

This assessment element is to be submitted to Turnitin. You will find a link to the Turnitin Assignment from the Assessments area of the Blackboard course menu.

You will need to ensure that your assessment is uploaded as a single document, and in the correct format (e.g. a Word document or PDF – the acceptable file formats are displayed on screen when you come to submit via Turnitin).

When submitting, please enter your student ID number in the “submission title” box. The document itself should contain your student ID number in a header or footer; your name should not be visible on the work.

Turnitin generates an Originality Report, and you are encouraged to make use of this facility as a support tool to help you ensure the source material in your assignment is correctly referenced before final submission.

You will be able to submit revised drafts of your work up until the assignment due date. Only the final version will be marked by your tutor.

At the due date and time, no further submissions or changes are possible. Whatever is in the Turnitin inbox at this time will be regarded as your final submission.

A separate submission box is provided for students with an agreed extension, or submitting under the 5 Day Rule.

Timing and methods of feedback (eg written, oral, group, individual, other):

The dissertation will be marked and feedback supplied within 15 days of final submission date. Please note that these are only provisional marks that need to be taken before the external examiner for agreement and finalised at the examination board.

# 9. Summative Assessment Grid

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of assessment | Module learning outcome | Word count or equivalent | Due date | Threshold | Pass mark | Weighting |
| Dissertation  MSc Thesis | All | 8000 to 15000 | TBA  Please refer to section 9 | 50% | 50% | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# 10. Statement on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the practice of taking someone else’s work and passing them off as their own.[[1]](#footnote-1) It is presenting someone else’s work as one’s own irrespective of intention. Close paraphrasing; copying from the work of another person, including another student; using the ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement; and repeating work that you have previously submitted – at the University of West London or at another institution - without properly referencing yourself (known as ‘self-plagiarism’) shall also constitute plagiarism.

For further information please refer to the Student Handbook.

For further advice on plagiarism go to the UWL website:

<http://www.uwl.ac.uk/students/current-students/Advice-students-plagiarism>

# 11. Evaluation of the Module

The module is evaluated in three stages.

Stage 1 Student Committee Meetings (one at each level)

Students are encouraged to raise positive and negative feedback via their representative on the relevant Student Committee Meetings (one held each semester) at which the module leader, programme leader and Head of Subject will normally be present

Stage 2 Student Evaluation

Towards the end of the module you will be invited to complete an on-line feedback form; this form allows for quantitative analysis of student feedback. After this stage the tutor can use the feedback to make changes to the module if necessary. Comments on the module from students can also be sent via the Blackboard messaging system.

Stage 3 Formal Module Evaluation

Additional feedback on the design of the module and its content is sought from the external examiner responsible for the module. Formal module feedback is summarised in the Module Report produced by the module leader. These reports are presented to the Course Leader and Head of School and actions are noted in the Programme Annual Monitoring report which is reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee.

# 12. Personal Development Plan (PDP)

There is no explicit PDP requirement in this module.

Section

C

Module Schedule

# 13 Guide to Learning Sessions

## Learning Activity

The School of Computing and Technology has established the following programme to ensure that students receive adequate guidance and feedback on the way that their work towards the dissertation and achieving the learning outcomes is progressing. Throughout the dissertation process, you should keep the following in mind:

* Responsibility for the research and the content of the dissertation is the student's alone. The supervisor is there to offer comment and advice and it is advisable to listen carefully and respond appropriately - if you do not your supervisor may be less inclined to take the time to discuss and help you develop your work.
* The supervisor is expected to know how the student is progressing with their dissertation. This usually means that the supervisor will require the student to attend meetings and present both written and oral evidence of progress as the dissertation develops.
* Students should see their supervisors regularly. It is the student's responsibility to arrange and attend an appropriate programme of meetings with their supervisor. Your supervisor may have many other responsibilities and may need to be away from the campus. You cannot expect to just drop in to your supervisor's office whenever you want to discuss your dissertation.
* The supervisor is not the sole arbiter of the eventual dissertation standard and students should see the supervisor’s comments as helpful advice and not as judgements on their work. A supervisor cannot change the dissertation requirements.
* A supervisor will provide formal feedback on the deliverables that you submit to the School of Computing and Technology. They will also provide informal feedback on drafts of your work. At a minimum you can expect informal feedback on one draft per deliverable. You will, however, need to negotiate the timing of submission of these drafts well in advance to fit in with your supervisor’s schedule.
* A second reader will be assigned to each student. Their role is to provide formal feedback on the deliverables that you submit to the School of Computing and Technology. You should not expect them to act as a second supervisor or ask them to provide feedback on drafts of your work.
* If your supervisor leaves the School of Computing and Technology, your second reader will normally act as supervisor on a temporary basis until you find a new supervisor. In such an instance it will be your responsibility to negotiate with another member of staff to take over as your supervisor.

You may approach any member of staff for assistance with your dissertation content. It is up to you to decide who is best placed to help you. Your supervisor may also ask for another academic to be nominated as an advisor where they believe you would benefit from their expertise.

## Key Skills

The QCA provides a framework for describing the key skills that students are expected to have achieved on completion of a Masters programme. Full details are found at the following website address. <http://www.qca.org.uk/keyskills/>

For postgraduate level, the key skills that are relevant are Level 5 skills (see the website for more details).

This table shows the Key Skills at Level 5 and how they map to this module and it’s assignments. As a general rule, for each of the modules there is a single assessment so the assessment number is not shown. Where there are two assessments then the appropriate assessment number is shown.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 5.1 | 5.2 | 5.3 | 5.4 |
|  | Explore the demands of the work and formulate viable proposal for meeting the demands | Plan to manage the work and meet your own skills development needs: gain the necessary commitment | Manage the work adapting your strategy as necessary to resolve at least two complex problems and achieve the quality of outcome. Formally review with an appropriate person your use of skills in communication, problem solving and working with others | Evaluate your overall performance and present the outcomes including at least one formal oral presentation of the outcomes of your work and one written evaluation to your overall approach and application of skills |
|  |
|  |
| **Dissertation** |  | X | X | X |

## Assessment Criteria and Grades

**Assessment criteria**

The following form is used by individual markers to assess the Dissertation you submit. As you can see there are sIX criteria, the relative importance of which is shown below.

Introduction 10%

Literature Review 25%

Methodology 20%

Analysis and discussion of findings 25%

Conclusions and overall coherence 15%

General presentation 5%

**MSc Applied**

**Project Management Dissertation Marking Pro Forma**

Below you will find the marking criteria for the dissertations. The marking criteria are stated as questions and are very detailed so as to offer clear guidelines for the students as to what we are looking for in each section. Naturally, some of the criteria carry more weight than others and this is reflected in the overall impression section. Having discussed the dissertation and agreed your final mark please enter this below. Please staple both comments sheets together and return with both copies of the dissertation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Student name:** | | **Student number:** | |
| **First marker’s mark:** | **Second marker’s mark** | | **Agreed final mark:** |
| **First marker:** | | **Second marker:** | |

***Introduction: 10%***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MARKING CRITERIA** |  |
| Is the topic clearly stated and defined with a clear overall purpose? |  |
| Has appropriate background information been provided with all special terms and general terms defined? |  |
| Are the aims and objectives (or research questions) clear, relevant and coherent? |  |
| Do aims, objectives etc. go beyond mere description, i.e. do they involve explanation, comparison, criticism or evaluation? |  |
| If an hypothesis is identified, is it a proper, testable hypothesis? |  |
| Are the aims and objectives achievable? |  |

***Overall impression***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7-10** | **6** | **5** | **4** | **1-3** |
| Clearly and explicitly identifies appropriate research questions/ hypotheses and explains how they were arrived at. Comprehensive background information / definitions. Above criteria comprehensively covered | Clearly identifies and explains research questions/hypotheses. Good background information / definitions. Above criteria mostly covered well. | Clearly identifies research questions/ hypotheses but lacking a clear explanation of how they were derived. Some good background information but lacking in some aspects. Above criteria all attempted with some good aspects and some less well covered | Adequate identification of research questions/ hypotheses but poorly explained. Background information has some relevance but is lacking in some key aspects. Most of the above criteria are attempted with some being done well. | Lacks identification of research questions/hypotheses or does not explain how they were derived. Very limited background information. A number of the above criteria have not been attempted |

Mark given for this section and any other comments:

***Literature review: 25%***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MARKING CRITERIA** |  |
| Has a comprehensive range of RELEVANT literature been used, i.e. is that used pertinent to research questions or is the impression given that almost everything read on or around the problem has been included with little critical selection? |  |
| Is the literature firmly rooted in theoretical base? Has the literature of any related disciplines been included if appropriate? |  |
| Are the sources used up to date where appropriate and do they have sufficient academic weight? |  |
| Does the dissertation give evidence of a critical attitude towards source material, i.e. does it compare, contrast and criticise a number of relevant concepts, models and theories in terms of their internal logic, structure and consistency? |  |
| Are the key themes and issues surrounding the research questions clearly drawn from the literature? |  |
| Does it deal with relevant debates and controversies? |  |
| Have sources been acknowledged and referenced fairly and properly? Is the bibliography at the end of the dissertation complete and in the appropriate convention? |  |

***Overall impression***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **18-25** | **15-17** | **12-14** | **10-12** | **1-9** |
| Comprehensive, critical appraisal of relevant literature and clear relation to research questions. Above criteria comprehensively covered. | Comprehensive appraisal of relevant literature with high level of critical appraisal. Related to research questions. Above criteria mostly covered well. | Adequate appraisal of mostly relevant literature with some critical appraisal. Not always relevant to research questions. Above criteria all attempted with some good aspects and some less well covered. | Adequate discussion of mostly relevant literature but tends towards the descriptive with very limited critical appraisal. Most of the above criteria are attempted with some being done well. | Literature is limited in scope or largely irrelevant, there is little appraisal. Very descriptive. A number of the above criteria have not been attempted. |

Mark given for this section and any other comments:

***Methodology: 20%***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MARKING CRITERIA** |  |
| Is there a clear rationale for the methodology? Is the methodology described appropriate for the data required? Have the alternatives been discussed and have the advantages and disadvantages of chosen methods been discussed? |  |
| Is the research methodology described fully so that it could be replicated? i.e:  Are the relevant research instruments (e.g. blank questionnaire, interview questions etc.) included in the appendices? Are the research instruments well designed with all questions etc. relevant to research aims?  Are sampling methods described in detail? i.e. who are the respondents, how many are there and how were they selected?  Are data analysis methods discussed? |  |
| Is there evidence of care and accuracy in the data collection process? |  |
| Are reliability and validity issues addressed? Are any constraints or limitations identified? Has the methodology been evaluated in retrospect with suggestions for improvement if the research were to be undertaken again? |  |

***Overall impression***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **16-20** | **13-16** | **9-12** | **5-8** | **1-4** |
| Methodology relevant to purpose with evidence of exploring alternative methods and choices well justified. Well planned, executed and critically evaluated. Above criteria comprehensively covered. | Methodology relevant to purpose with evidence of exploring alternative methods but has some difficulty in justifying choice. Generally well planned and executed and evaluated although evaluation may lack a critical approach in some aspects. Above criteria mostly covered well. | Methodology not relevant to purpose in all aspects but has some good aspects. Justification for choice is limited. There may be shortcomings in the planning and execution and the evaluation has been attempted but is limited in terms of a critical approach. Above criteria all attempted with some good aspects and some less well covered. | Methodology has some relevance to purpose but has been insufficiently planned and executed. Justification for choice is limited. Evaluation is attempted but is poor. Most of the above criteria are attempted with some being done well. | Methodology is not relevant to purpose or is poorly explained and difficult to understand. poorly planned and executed. A number of the above criteria have not been attempted. |

Mark given for this section and any other comments:

***Analysis and discussion of findings: 25%***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MARKING CRITERIA** |  |
| Is the analysis appropriate to the data collected, thorough and complete? i.e.  FOR QUESTIONNAIRES  Were all questionnaires etc. approved by the supervisor prior to being sent out?  Do the appendices contain a data summary sheet, a summary questionnaire and details of statistical analysis undertaken?  Does any statistical analysis make the most of the data collected?  FOR INTERVIEWS  Do the appendices contain data collected and analysed such as interview transcripts?  Has qualitative data been systematically analysed?  FOR OBSERVATIONS  Do the appendices contain back-up data on observations carried out?  FOR OTHER METHODS  Does any statistical analysis make the most of the data collected? Is any qualitative analysis methodical and thorough?  Are all appendices referred to in the text? |  |
| Are the findings presented clearly and interestingly for the reader to follow? i.e.  Are the key themes and issues discussed, with useful tables and charts embedded in the text and with the appendices being used appropriately for bulky and/or less interesting/essential data?  Is all data presented relevant to aims and objectives?  Are all statements made supported by the data? |  |
| Have the findings been discussed and evaluated? i.e.  Have patterns in the data been identified?  Have the findings of the primary research been compared and contrasted with findings, theories, models or concepts derived from the literature review?  Does it deal with relevant debates and controversies? |  |

***Overall impression***

|  |  |  |  |  |
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| **21-25** | **18-20** | **15-17** | **12-14** | **1-11** |
| Relevant, rigorous and thorough analysis. Clear and unambiguous presentation of findings. Well presented and excellent discussion and evaluation of findings. Above criteria comprehensively covered. | Relevant and thorough analysis. Clear presentation of findings. Good discussion and evaluation of findings. Above criteria mostly covered well. | Generally relevant analysis but lacks a thorough approach. Generally clear presentation of findings. Discussion and evaluation of findings is carried out but lacks rigour. Above criteria all attempted with some good aspects and some less well covered. | Analysis is carried out in a basic fashion but full use is not made of data collected. Presentation of data is limited or lacks clarity – however some useful findings are drawn from the data. Discussion and evaluation is superficial or relies on unsupported assertions. Most of the above criteria are attempted with some being done well. | Data has not been sufficiently well analysed to draw appropriate conclusions. Unclear or confusing presentation of data. Discussion and evaluation very limited or shows a lack of understanding of the evidence collected. a number of the above criteria have not been attempted. |

Mark given for this section and any other comments:

***Conclusions and overall coherence: 15%***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MARKING CRITERIA** |  |
| Do the conclusions follow on from the findings? Are the conclusions well grounded in the evidence and arguments presented? Are contentious conclusions backed by reasoned arguments and evidence? |  |
| Are the conclusions discussed in context and are they applicable to a wider scenario? |  |
| Have the research questions been reviewed and addressed? |  |
| Does the dissertation have an overall coherence? |  |

***Overall impression***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **13-15** | **10-12** | **7-9** | **4-6** | **1-3** |
| Conclusions valid and consistent with analysis. Comprehensive reference to research questions. Above criteria comprehensively covered. Has an overall coherence | Conclusions valid and generally consistent with analysis. Good reference to research questions. Above criteria mostly covered well. Is generally coherent although it may lack coherence in parts. | Conclusions generally valid and partially consistent with analysis. Above criteria all attempted with some good aspects and some less well covered. Some evidence of coherence. | Some valid conclusions but generally inconsistent with analysis. Inadequate reference to research questions. Most of the above criteria are attempted with some being done well. Has limited coherence. | No obvious conclusions drawn or they are inconsistent with analysis. little or no attention to research questions. a number of the above criteria have not been attempted. Little or no coherence. |

Mark given for this section and any other comments:

***General presentation: 5%***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MARKING CRITERIA** |  |
| Is the overall style and presentation of the dissertation in accordance with that specified in the Module Study Guide? i.e.  Standard title page?  Length 8,000-15,000 words?  Word count given?  Word-processed?  White A4 paper?  Loose leaf spiral binders?  Correct pagination?  Correct margins?  Double spacing for text? Single spacing for indented quotes?  Chapter and section headings?  Numbering of tables and figures?  Appropriate font/bolding and italics? |  |
| Is the title concise, coherent, appropriate and as registered? |  |
| Is the abstract a concise (1 page) summary of the main aims, methodology, findings and conclusions? |  |
| Are acknowledgements made as appropriate? |  |
| Is the contents page clear, concise and logically numbered? Are appendices, tables and figures listed in the contents page? |  |
| Has the dissertation been spell and grammar checked? |  |

***Overall impression***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| Fulfils all requirements and follows an acceptable style in a correct manner. Well laid out. Easy to read and leads the reader along a well argued path. | Fulfils most requirements and follows an acceptable style in a generally correct manner. Presented so that it is easy for the reader to follow. | Attempts to follow an acceptable style and fulfils most of the requirements. Not laid out with maximum clarity and sometimes difficult to follow the argument. | Generally attempts to conform to requirements and adequately executed. Some aspects of the presentation unclear or untidy. | Does not meet a number of key requirements and fails to follow an acceptable style. Often unclear and untidy. |

Mark given for this section and any other comments:

**General comments on dissertation overall:**

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is important for you to understand the various roles and responsibilities distributed amongst stakeholders.

### **Supervisor**

The supervisor is appointed by the Module Leader with guidance from the Dissertation Panel based on the required expertise for the dissertation and other departmental considerations. Supervisors can be changed in consultation with the student and subject to agreement from the Dissertation Panel.

The supervisor will provide help and guidance when requested by the student. Specifically, they will provide guidance on your chosen topic, appropriateness of research methodology; suggestions of appropriate literature; issues of copyright; planning of your dissertation; monitor your progress; agree to planned meetings (within the 6hr limit) and advise you on deadlines.

### **Student**

The student does all the work!

Specifically, you are expected to:

1. decide on a topic area
2. prepare a short and full proposal
3. Agree a schedule of meetings with the supervisor within the 6hr limit.
4. Raise issues before they become problems.
5. Keep to all deadlines.
6. Submit drafts as requested.
7. Familiarise yourself with all relevant university regulations pertaining to your course of study.

### **Dissertation Module Leader**

The module leader maintains the operational running of the module and will ensure that students are informed of all changes in deadlines and other information. They will coordinate the convening of Dissertation Panels and other events as necessary.

### **Dissertation Examination Panel**

The dissertation panel that includes the supervisor and a second marker will evaluate and mark your dissertation. They will recommend the module leader with a final mark for your work.

1. Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary - <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/plagiarism> - accessed 18.05.15 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)