

**Course Outline 2013**  
**BUSADMIN 798 A & B: MBA RESEARCH PROJECT (30 POINTS)**  
**Quarter 2 & 4 (1134 & 1138)**

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### **Course Prescription**

Individual project addressing a specific management challenge or business issue facing an organisation.

### **Programme and Course Advice**

To complete this course students must enrol in BUSADMIN 798 A and B, or BUSADMIN 798. Completion of BUSADMIN 798 requires prior completion of Part II of the MBA (90 points from BUSADMIN 780 – 790).

### **Goals of the Course**

This is the capstone course of the MBA. Integrated and linked with prior MBA courses, the research required by this project provides an opportunity to engage with real world complexities, enhance individual competencies and develop lasting skills most particularly in thinking and enquiry, communication, managing information and decision making. Students undertake an individual project that addresses a specific and real management challenge or business issue. In doing so they have the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their capacity for high value thinking and effective decision making.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course it is expected that the student will be able to:

1. Apply their knowledge and understanding of management to identify and describe a pertinent business or management problem of appropriate scale and scope
2. Review current understanding and assess alternate approaches to the identified problem, applying theory and demonstrating a capacity for evaluative and critical thinking
3. Apply skills in locating and analysing information and in planning and executing independent research
4. Reflect upon and integrate their own work and the research of others to develop a coherent and evidence-based set of conclusions and recommendations
5. Deliver persuasive, informed and evidence based oral and written communications on a researched topic

### **Content Outline**

#### **Quarter 2**

We will cover the following topics:

- Exploring issues and solving problems in business
- Defining a problem
- Alternative approaches to research
- Finding and assessing relevant literature including critiquing the work of others
- Writing your literature review
- Identifying gaps in knowledge

#### **Quarter 4**

We will cover the following topics:

- Planning and reporting.

- Ethics and integrity in research
- Data and information
- Analysing and reporting complex data
- Writing up research

## Learning and Teaching

Sessions will include lectures, exercises, peer review, student presentations and one-to-one clinics with a member of academic staff.

Weekend streams will meet for six hours each fortnight, and weeknight streams will meet for three hours weekly during the quarter. Class time will be used for a combination of lectures and seminar discussions of individual projects. In addition to attending class, students should be prepared to spend about another fourteen hours per fortnight on activities related to this course. In Quarter 2 you will identify your research topic and select a specific issue for further investigation. You will then assess the theories, findings and approaches of other researchers using a range of quality sources.

Finally, you will produce a structured literature review concluding with a refinement of the problem in terms of what is known and what needs to be established or explored. In Quarter 4 you will use your literature review as a starting point and explore your issue further using business data and information drawn from your research context. You will analyse your data and write a well-argued and evidence based report that addresses your business problem, draws on the research of others and your own findings to culminate in a coherent set of conclusions and recommendations.

A grade will be assessed in both Quarter 2 and Quarter 4.

The MBA Breakfast for December 2013 will feature a selection of reports from this cohort.

## Teaching Staff

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## Learning Resources

A suggested textbook for this course is: Jankowicz, A.D. (2004), *Business Research Projects* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). London: Cengage Learning.

A more recent alternative is: Polonsky, M. J., & Waller, D. S. (2010). *Designing and managing a research project: A business student's guide*. Sage Publications, Incorporated.

There is no course book for this course. Additional materials and templates will be provided via CECIL.

## Assessment

### Q2

Individual Assignment Part A (Problem description)	25%
Individual Assignment Part B (Literature Review)	75%
Total	100%

### Q4

Individual Assignment Part A (Project plan)	15%
Individual Assignment Part B (Project presentation)	10%
Individual Assignment Part C (Report)	75%
Total	100%

Further details on these assessments will be provided on CECIL and discussed at the first session.

The broad relationship between these assessments and the course learning outcomes is as follows:

	Assessment				
Learning Outcome	Problem description	Literature review	Plan	Research Presentation	Project Report
1 Problem	X			X	X
2 Literature		X		X	X
3 Analysis			X	X	X
4 Decision making		X	X	X	X
5 Communication	X	X	X	X	X