



## UNSW Course Outline

# MFIN6210 Empirical Studies in Finance - 2024

Published on the 28 Jan 2024

## General Course Information

**Course Code :** MFIN6210

**Year :** 2024

**Term :** Term 1

**Teaching Period :** T1

**Is a multi-term course? :** No

**Faculty :** UNSW Business School

**Academic Unit :** School of Banking and Finance

**Delivery Mode :** In Person

**Delivery Format :** Standard

**Delivery Location :** Kensington

**Campus :** Sydney

**Study Level :** Postgraduate

**Units of Credit :** 6

### Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

## Course Details & Outcomes

### Course Description

This course provides a concise synthesis of the recent available academic literature on empirical studies in finance within a logical and analytical structure. Material covered includes topics from corporate finance, investments, and asset pricing. Special attention will be given to selected

topics in group and lab work. Much of this work is ten to fifteen years ahead of textbooks and represents innovative research at the forefront of the advancement of knowledge.

In this course, you will learn and apply statistical analysis, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, to test the validity of findings in select empirical studies in finance. This course will demonstrate how applying these same skills in a corporate environment can help foster a successful corporate career. In other words, 'how can you use what you learn in MFIN6210, to stand out in the corporate environment, and climb up the corporate ladder.'

This course aims to provide an accessible introduction to empirical studies in financial economics by going beyond the usual econometric/statistical issues. The subtext is to get you to think critically and take nothing for granted by highlighting big mistakes and big successes. MFINS6210 is one of the core courses in the Master of Finance degree. Material covered in Financial Theory (MFIN6214) has direct relevance to this course. This course examines theoretical material covered in MFIN6214 in an applied empirical setting. Students should also find some of the econometric techniques covered in Empirical Techniques and Applications in Finance (MFIN6201) useful in undertaking the individual cooperative project and lab work.

## Course Aims

This course aims to provide an accessible introduction to empirical studies in financial economics by going beyond the usual econometric/statistical issues. The subtext is to get you to think critically and take nothing for granted by highlighting big mistakes and big successes. This course examines theoretical material covered in MFIN6214 in an applied empirical setting. The course will revisit topics relating to corporate finance, investments, and asset pricing. This course also heavily relies on the knowledge built in Empirical Techniques and Applications in Finance (MFIN6201) in the individual cooperative project and lab work.

## Relationship to Other Courses

This course aims to provide an accessible introduction to empirical studies in financial economics by going beyond the usual econometric/statistical issues. The subtext is to get you to think critically and take nothing for granted by highlighting big mistakes and big successes. MFINS6210 is one of the core courses in the Masters of Finance degree. Material covered in Financial Theory (MFIN6214) has direct relevance to this course. In particular, the course examines theoretical material covered in MFIN6214 in an applied empirical setting. The course will revisit topics relating to agency theory, asset pricing, market efficiency, capital structure, pricing of risk and corporate control. This course is also heavily relying on the knowledge built in

Empirical Techniques and Applications in Finance (MFIN6201) in the individual cooperative project and lab work.

## Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes	Program learning outcomes
CLO1 : Evaluate, summarise and discuss the research contributions and findings of top journal academic papers in empirical finance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLO1 : Business Knowledge</li> <li>• PLO3 : Business Communication</li> <li>• PLO5 : Responsible Business Practice</li> </ul>
CLO2 : Work effectively and efficiently in teams to manipulate large datasets, and develop econometric models using a statistical package (STATA) to test hypotheses and theories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLO4 : Teamwork</li> </ul>
CLO3 : Demonstrate you critical thinking and teamwork skills by successfully completing your empirical finance research project within a team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLO2 : Problem Solving</li> <li>• PLO4 : Teamwork</li> <li>• PLO7 : Leadership Development</li> </ul>
CLO4 : Developed sound critical and analytical skills; and be able to discuss and write-up your own research results in academic paper format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLO2 : Problem Solving</li> <li>• PLO3 : Business Communication</li> <li>• PLO6 : Global and Cultural Competence</li> </ul>
CLO5 : Demonstrate effective business communication skills in your class participation and to verbally communicate ideas about empirical finance research in a succinct and clear manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLO3 : Business Communication</li> </ul>

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Evaluate, summarise and discuss the research contributions and findings of top journal academic papers in empirical finance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment 1</li> <li>• Assessment 2</li> </ul>
CLO2 : Work effectively and efficiently in teams to manipulate large datasets, and develop econometric models using a statistical package (STATA) to test hypotheses and theories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment 3</li> <li>• Assessment 2</li> </ul>
CLO3 : Demonstrate you critical thinking and teamwork skills by successfully completing your empirical finance research project within a team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment 3</li> <li>• Assessment 2</li> </ul>
CLO4 : Developed sound critical and analytical skills; and be able to discuss and write-up your own research results in academic paper format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment 3</li> </ul>
CLO5 : Demonstrate effective business communication skills in your class participation and to verbally communicate ideas about empirical finance research in a succinct and clear manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment 1</li> <li>• Assessment 2</li> </ul>

# Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System | Echo 360

## Learning and Teaching in this course

The teaching and learning approach adopted emphasises the importance of developing critical thinking skills. This is achieved through a mix of formal lectures, lab sessions, discussion groups and group project work. An important part of the course is linking theoretical material covered in Financial Theory (MFIN6214) with appropriate empirical tests. This is achieved by using several learning techniques, including, class room discussions based on journal papers drawn from recent empirical research, group projects and lab sessions. Students will be expected to participate actively in all classroom activities and will have the opportunity to discuss their own findings from group project work inclass.

# Assessments

## Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates	Program learning outcomes
Assessment 1 Assessment Format: Individual	10%	Start Date: Week 1 Due Date: Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PLO1 : Business Knowledge</li><li>• PLO2 : Problem Solving</li><li>• PLO3 : Business Communication</li><li>• PLO5 : Responsible Business Practice</li></ul>
Assessment 2 Assessment Format: Group	40%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Friday Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PLO3 : Business Communication</li><li>• PLO4 : Teamwork</li><li>• PLO2 : Problem Solving</li><li>• PL07 : Leadership Development</li></ul>
Assessment 3 Assessment Format: Individual	50%	Due Date: Mid-term; week 7. Final; Exam period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PLO1 : Business Knowledge</li><li>• PLO2 : Problem Solving</li><li>• PLO3 : Business Communication</li></ul>

## Assessment Details

### Assessment 1

#### Assessment Overview

The individual assignments assess students' understanding of the research contributions and findings of top academic papers in empirical finance.

Assesses: PLO1, PLO2, PLO3

#### Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Evaluate, summarise and discuss the research contributions and findings of top journal academic papers in empirical finance.
- CLO5 : Demonstrate effective business communication skills in your class participation and to verbally communicate ideas about empirical finance research in a succinct and clear manner.

#### Detailed Assessment Description

This involves ongoing contributions to the course. The assessment for this will be based on ongoing contributions in class, in class forums, and in any additional exercises provided during the term.

## Assessment 2

#### Assessment Overview

The team assignment practically assesses critical thinking and teamwork skills based on empirical finance research.

Assesses: PLO2, PLO3, PLO4, PLO7

#### Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Evaluate, summarise and discuss the research contributions and findings of top journal academic papers in empirical finance.
- CLO2 : Work effectively and efficiently in teams to manipulate large datasets, and develop econometric models using a statistical package (STATA) to test hypotheses and theories.
- CLO3 : Demonstrate you critical thinking and teamwork skills by successfully completing your empirical finance research project within a team.
- CLO5 : Demonstrate effective business communication skills in your class participation and to verbally communicate ideas about empirical finance research in a succinct and clear manner.

#### Detailed Assessment Description

This is a teamwork assignment. You will need to answer detailed questions related to the course materials. Additional information will be available during the course. The assignment will be due in week 10.

#### Submission notes

Via moodle

### Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

## Assessment 3

### Assessment Overview

The final examination assesses the student's individual understanding of the course materials and techniques.

Assesses: PL01, PL02, PL03

### Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO2 : Work effectively and efficiently in teams to manipulate large datasets, and develop econometric models using a statistical package (STATA) to test hypotheses and theories.
- CLO3 : Demonstrate your critical thinking and teamwork skills by successfully completing your empirical finance research project within a team.
- CLO4 : Developed sound critical and analytical skills; and be able to discuss and write-up your own research results in academic paper format.

### Detailed Assessment Description

Weight	Assessment Name	Assessment Due Date / Timing
20%	Mid-term	Week 7, online via Moodle
30%	Final Exam	Final Exam period, online via Moodle

The Mid-term focuses on the first five weeks of material

The Final exam covers all weeks.

### Assessment information

Exam is conducted online via moodle

## General Assessment Information

As a student at UNSW you are expected to display [academic integrity](#) in your work and interactions. Where a student breaches the [UNSW Student Code](#) with respect to academic integrity, the University may take disciplinary action under the Student Misconduct Procedure. To assure academic integrity, you may be required to demonstrate reasoning, research and the process of constructing work submitted for assessment.

To assist you in understanding what academic integrity means, and how to ensure that you do comply with the UNSW Student Code, it is strongly recommended that you complete the [Working with Academic Integrity](#) module before submitting your first assessment task. It is a free, online self-paced Moodle module that should take about one hour to complete.

### **Grading Basis**

Standard

### **Requirements to pass course**

In order to pass this course students must:

- Achieve a composite mark of at least 50 out of 100
- Engage actively in course learning activities and attempt all assessment requirements
- Meet any additional requirements specified in the assessment details
- Meet the specified attendance requirements of the course (see Schedule section)

# Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 12 February - 18 February	Lecture	Introduction; agency conflicts; principal-principal conflicts
Week 2 : 19 February - 25 February	Lecture	Corporate Governance
Week 3 : 26 February - 3 March	Lecture	Merger Activity
Week 4 : 4 March - 10 March	Lecture	Takeover performance
Week 5 : 11 March - 17 March	Lecture	Divestitures
Week 6 : 18 March - 24 March	Other	Flexibility week
Week 7 : 25 March - 31 March	Lecture	Equity offerings
	Assessment	Mid-term exam
Week 8 : 1 April - 7 April	Lecture	Capital Structure
Week 9 : 8 April - 14 April	Lecture	ESG
Week 10 : 15 April - 21 April	Lecture	Venture capital and private equity

## Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

## Course Resources

### Prescribed Resources

The recommended textbook is Humphery-Jenner, 2021, "Regression Handbook", Amazon:  
<https://amzn.to/3MmiY29>

The course otherwise refers to journal articles and other resources.

# Course Evaluation and Development

Feedback is regularly sought from students and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. At the end of this course, you will be asked to complete the myExperience survey, which provides a key source of student evaluative feedback. Your input into this quality enhancement process is extremely valuable in assisting us to meet the needs of our students and provide an effective and enriching learning experience. The results of all surveys are carefully considered and do lead to action towards enhancing educational quality.

## Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	Mark Humphey-Jenner					No	Yes
Lecturer	David Webb					No	No
	Elvira Sojli					No	No

## Other Useful Information

### Academic Information

#### COURSE POLICIES AND SUPPORT

The Business School expects that you are familiar with the contents of this course outline and the UNSW and Business School learning expectations, rules, policies and support services as listed below:

- Program Learning Outcomes
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student Responsibilities and Conduct
- Special Consideration
- Protocol for Viewing Final Exam Scripts
- Student Learning Support Services

Further information is provided on the [key policies and support page](#).

Students may not circulate or post online any course materials such as handouts, exams, syllabi or similar resources from their courses without the written permission of their instructor.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) – under the Outcomes tab – are what you should be able to demonstrate by the end of this course, if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

CLOs also contribute to your achievement of the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), which are developed across the duration of a program. PLOs are, in turn, directly linked to [UNSW graduate capabilities](#). More information on Coursework PLOs is available on the [key policies and support](#) page. For PG Research PLOs, including MPDBS, please refer to the [UNSW HDR Learning Outcomes](#).

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

As a student at UNSW you are expected to display [academic integrity](#) in your work and interactions. Where a student breaches the [UNSW Student Code](#) with respect to academic integrity, the University may take disciplinary action under the Student Misconduct Procedure. To assure academic integrity, you may be required to demonstrate reasoning, research and the process of constructing work submitted for assessment.

To assist you in understanding what academic integrity means, and how to ensure that you do comply with the UNSW Student Code, it is strongly recommended that you complete the [Working with Academic Integrity](#) module before submitting your first assessment task. It is a free, online self-paced Moodle module that should take about one hour to complete.

## Submission of Assessment Tasks

### SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances beyond your control interfere with your performance in a specific assessment task or tasks, including online exams. Students studying remotely who have exams scheduled between 10pm and 7am local time, are also able to apply for special consideration to sit a supplementary exam at a time outside of these hours.

Special consideration is primarily intended to provide you with an extra opportunity to demonstrate the level of performance of which you are capable. To apply, and for further information, see Special Consideration on the UNSW [Current Students](#) page.

Special consideration applications will be assessed centrally by the Case Review Team, who will

update the online application with the outcome and add any relevant comments. The change to the status of the application immediately sends an email to the student and to the assessor with the outcome of the application.

Please note the following:

1. Applications can only be made through Online Services in myUNSW (see the UNSW [Current Students](#) page). Applications will not be accepted by teaching staff. The lecturer-in-charge/course coordinator will be automatically notified when your application is processed.
2. Applying for special consideration does not automatically mean that you will be granted a supplementary exam or other concession.
3. If you experience illness or misadventure in the lead up to an exam or assessment, you must submit an application for special consideration, either prior to the examination taking place, or prior to the assessment submission deadline, except where illness or misadventure prevent you from doing so.
4. If your circumstances stop you from applying before your exam or assessment due date, you must apply within 3 working days of the assessment or the period covered by your supporting documentation.
5. Under the UNSW Fit To Sit/Submit rule, if you sit the exam/submit an assignment, you are declaring yourself well enough to do so and are cannot subsequently apply for special consideration.
6. If you become unwell on the day of – or during – an exam, you must stop working on your exam, advise your course coordinator or tutor and provide a medical certificate dated within 24 hours of the exam, with your special consideration application. For online exams, you must contact your course coordinator or tutor immediately via email, Moodle or chat and advise them you are unwell and submit screenshots of your conversation along with your medical certificate and application.
7. Special consideration requests do not allow the awarding of additional marks to students.

Further information on Business School policy and procedure can be found under “Special Consideration” on the [key policies and support](#) page.

## LATE SUBMISSION PENALTIES

For assessments other than examinations, late submission will incur a penalty of 5% per day or part thereof (including weekends) from the due date and time. An assessment will not be accepted after 5 days (120 hours) of the original deadline unless special consideration has been approved. An assignment is considered late if the requested format, such as hard copy or electronic copy, has not been submitted on time or where the ‘wrong’ assignment has been submitted.

For assessments which account for 10% or less of the overall course grade, and where answers are immediately discussed or debriefed, the LIC may stipulate a different penalty. Details of such late penalties will be available on the course Moodle page.

## FEEDBACK ON YOUR ASSESSMENT TASK PERFORMANCE

Feedback on student performance from formative and summative assessment tasks will be provided to students in a timely manner. Assessment tasks completed within the teaching period of a course, other than a final assessment, will be assessed and students provided with feedback, with or without a provisional result, within 10 working days of submission, under normal circumstances. Feedback on continuous assessment tasks (e.g. laboratory and studio-based, workplace-based, weekly quizzes) will be provided prior to the midpoint of the course.

## Faculty-specific Information

### PROTOCOL FOR VIEWING FINAL EXAM SCRIPTS

UNSW students have the right to view their final exam scripts, subject to a small number of very specific exemptions. The UNSW Business School has set a [protocol](#) under which students may view their final exam script. Individual schools within the Faculty may also set up additional local processes for viewing final exam scripts, so it is important that you check with your School.

If you are completing courses from the following schools, please note the additional school-specific information:

- Students in the **School of Accounting, Auditing & Taxation** who wish to view their final examination script should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Banking & Finance** should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Information Systems & Technology Management** should also refer to [this page](#).

### COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Feedback is regularly sought from students and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. At the end of this course, you will be asked to complete the [myExperience survey](#), which provides a key source of student evaluative feedback. Your input into this quality enhancement process is extremely valuable in assisting us to meet the needs of our students and provide an effective and enriching learning experience. The results of all surveys are carefully considered and do lead to action towards enhancing educational quality.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The Business School is actively monitoring student learning and quality of the student experience in all its programs. A random selection of completed assessment tasks may be used for quality assurance, such as to determine the extent to which program learning goals are being achieved. The information is required for accreditation purposes, and aggregated findings will be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential.

## **TEACHING TIMES AND LOCATIONS**

Please note that teaching times and locations are subject to change. Students are strongly advised to refer to the [Class Timetable website](#) for the most up-to-date teaching times and locations.