Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Management (631) – Business Research Methods

Prerequisites: Knowledge of human resource activities.	**Corequisites:** A pass or higher in Diploma in Human Resource Management or equivalence.
Aim: The purpose of this course is to examine the methodological issues associated with theory-testing research. The course will focus on analysis of data, interpretation of results and synthesis of conclusions based on a clear understanding of the objectives of research, the characteristics of data and techniques for manipulating data. Candidates discuss basic principles and concrete procedures for successful experimentation: picking an interesting and important problem, creating a laboratory environment, choosing and motivating subjects, designing and conducting experiments, collecting and analysing the data, and reporting the results.	
Required Materials: Recommended Learning Resources.	**Supplementary Materials:** Lecture notes and tutor extra reading recommendations.
Special Requirements: The course requires a combination of lectures, demonstrations and discussions.	

Intended Learning Outcomes:	**Assessment Criteria:**
1 Understand business research.	1.1 Describe what business research is and how it differs from business decision support systems and business intelligence systems. 1.2 Analyse the trends affecting business research and the emerging hierarchy of business decision makers. 1.3 Analyse the distinction between good business research and research that falls short of professional quality. 1.4 Explore the nature of the research process.
2 Describe ethics in Business Research	2.1 Discuss issues are covered in research ethics. 2.2 Illustrate differing ethical dilemmas and responsibilities of researchers, sponsors, and research assistants. 2.3 Describe the role of ethical codes of conduct in professional associations.
3 Describe the Business Research Process	3.1 Describe a research project 3.2 Describe how value assessments and budgeting influence the process for proposing research, and ultimately, research design. 3.3 Describe what is included in research design, data collection, and data analysis. 3.4 Discuss research problems and how to avoid them.
4 Identify the purpose and process of exploratory research.	4.1 Describe the types of external information and the factors for evaluating the value of a source and its content. 4.2 Analyse the process of using exploratory research

		4.3	Be able to formulate the research questions.
		4.4	Illustrate what is involved in internal data mining and how internal data-mining techniques differ from literature searches.
5	Describe the stages of research design	5.1	Identify major descriptors of research design.
		5.2	Identify major types of research designs.
		5.3	Describe the relationships that exist between variables in research design and the steps for evaluating those relationships.
6	Understand observation	6.1	Describe when observation studies are most useful.
		6.2	Describe distinctions between monitoring, nonbehavioral and behavioral activities
		6.3	Describe strengths of the observation approach in research design.
		6.4	Describe weaknesses of the observation approach in research design.
		6.5	Discuss various designs of observation studies.
7	Understand Surveys	7.1	Describe the process for selecting the appropriate and optimal communication approach.
		7.1	Describe factors affect participation in communication studies.
		7.2	Describe sources of error in communication studies and how to minimize them.
		7.3	Describe major advantages and disadvantages of the communication approaches.
		7.4	Describe why an organisation might outsource a communication study.
8	Describe uses for experimentations	8.1	Identify advantages and disadvantages of the experimental method.
		8.2	Discuss the steps of a well-planned experiment.
		8.3	Describe the types of experimental designs and their variations.
9	Describe measurement	9.1	Identify the distinction between measuring objects, properties, and indicants of properties.
		9.2	Identify the scale types used in measurement.
		9.3	Describe the major sources of measurement error.
		9.4	Identify the criteria for evaluating good measurement.
		9.5	Describe the nature of attitudes and their relationship to behavior.
		9.6	Describe the critical decisions involved in selecting an appropriate measurement scale.
		9.7	Describe the characteristics and use of

			rating, ranking, sorting, and other preference scales.
10	Understand how to design questionnaires	10.1	Identify the influence of the communication method on instrument design.
		10.2	Describe the general classes of information and what each contributes to the instrument.
		10.3	Analyse the influence of question content, question wording, response strategy, and preliminary analysis planning on question construction.
		10.4	Identify design issues influencing instrument quality, reliability, and validity.
		10.5	Describe the sources for measurement questions
		10.6	Discuss the importance of pretesting questions and instruments.
11	Understand sampling	11.1	Identify the two premises on which sampling theory is based.
		11.2	Illustrate the accuracy and precision for measuring sample validity.
		11.3	Describe the process of developing a sampling plan.
		11.4	Analyse the two categories of sampling techniques.
		11.5	Describe the various sampling techniques.
12	Describe the process of preparing data	12.1	Illustrate the importance of editing the collected raw data to detect errors and omissions.
		12.2	Describe how coding is used to assign number and other symbols to answers and to categorise responses.
		12.3	Discuss the use of content analysis to interpret and summarise open questions.
		12.4	Describe the options for data entry and manipulation.
13	Understand how to explore, display, and examine data	13.1	Describe exploratory data analysis techniques.
		13.2	Describe wow cross-tabulation is used to examine relationships involving categorical variables.
14	Understand the nature and logic of hypothesis testing. Understand measures of association	14.1	Describe the six-step hypothesis testing procedure.
		14.2	Describe the differences between parametric and nonparametric tests and when to use each.
		14.3	Describe the factors that influence the selection of an appropriate test of statistical significance.
		14.4	Describe how to interpret the various test statistics
		14.5	Describe how correlation analysis may be applied to study relationships between two or more variables
		14.6	Describe the uses, requirements, and

			interpretation of the product moment correlation coefficient.
		14.7	Describe how predictions are made with regression analysis using the method of least squares to minimise errors in drawing a line of best fit.
		14.8	Describe how to test regression models for linearity and whether the equation is effective in fitting the data.
15	Describe multivariate analysis	15.1	Describe how to classify and select multivariate techniques.
		15.2	Describe how multivariate analysis of variance assesses the relationship between two or more metric dependent variables and independent classificatory variables.
		15.3	Describe how structural equation modeling explains causality among constructs that cannot be directly measured.
		15.4	Describe how conjoint analysis assists researchers to discover the most importance attributes and the levels of desirable features.
		15.5	Describe how principal components analysis extracts uncorrelated factors from an initial set of variables and exploratory factor analysis reduces the number of variables to discover the underlying constructs.
16	Understand how to present written or oral reports	16.1	Describe the contents, types, lengths, and technical specifications of research reports.
		16.2	Identify the purpose, readership, circumstances/limitations and use.
		16.3	Identify the incorporation of statistical data with in tables, charts, or graphs.
		16.4	Describe how to develop research findings.

Text Books	• Doing Research in Business and Management: An Introduction to Process and Method by Dan Remenyi, Brian Williams, Arthur Money, Ethne Swartz. ISBN-10: 0761959505 • Research Methods in Business Studies: A Practical Guide by Pervez Ghauri (Author), Kjell Gronhaug. ISBN-10: 0273681567 • Research Methods in Management: A concise introduction to research in management and business consultancy by Geoff Lancaster. ISBN-10: 0750662123
Study Manuals	BCE produced study packs
CD ROM	Power-point slides
Software	None