

ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS

Unit Reference Number	A/618/0236
Unit Title	Advanced Research Methods
Unit Level	7
Number of Credits	20
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	200 Hours
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	80 Hours
Mandatory / Optional	Mandatory
SSAs	15.3 Business Management
Unit Grading Structure	Pass / Fail

Unit Aims

The unit aims to equip learners with the practical, technical, and methodological skills to conduct independent research for their research project and management broadly defined. It recognises that conducting research requires the development of specific and generic research skills, including understanding the research design process, understanding different techniques for conducting research in business and management studies, and appreciating the ethical and social implications of undertaking high value research. This unit will enable learners to develop critical awareness of key research skills as researchers and/or intendent practitioners.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcomes - The learner will:	Assessment Criteria - The learner can:
1. Be able to develop research approaches in an appropriate project management context.	1.1 Appraise relevant research problems. 1.2 Develop and justify appropriate research aims and objectives within a defined scope and timeframe. 1.3 Critically explore, select and justify research approaches.
2. Be able to critically review literature on a relevant project management research topic.	2.1 Critically analyse different theoretical approaches to a research problem. 2.2 Create a structured and thorough critical literature review.
3. Be able to design research methodologies for a relevant project management topic.	3.1 Critically evaluate relevant research methodologies to reflect the research objectives. 3.2 Design an appropriate methodology in terms of the research objectives for a defined population. 3.3 Justify the methodology selected in terms of the research objectives within agreed ethical guidelines.
4. Be able to develop and present a research proposal.	4.1 Create a research question, literature review and methodology. 4.2 Propose techniques for use with quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. 4.3 Present the proposal using suitable methods.

Scenario

This assessment will require you to propose an independent, small scale research project set in a project management context by using appropriate research approach, strategy, methodology and techniques that make up formal research.

In order to achieve the unit learning outcomes and assessment criteria, you need to select a topic area for an investigative primary research project. The research itself is dependent on you, the context of your area of learning, your focus of interest and the anticipated outcomes.

You may draw together a range of other areas of content within the programme of study to form a holistic piece of work that makes a positive contribution to your area of interest. However, it is expected that your project will be work focused and you will demonstrate your knowledge, understanding and application of aspects of Project Management, while addressing a “live” issue.

You will need to check with your Tutor that your choice of topic is appropriate.

Task 1 of 1 – Research Project Proposal **(ACs 1.1, 1.2, ACs 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)**

Instructions

In this task, you will need to produce a research project proposal. You need to research and think about a business problem related to an organization, industry or sector. The problem must belong to a specific functional area of the Project management. In your research proposal you must address the following:

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1. Introduction
 - a. Introduce the business problem or opportunity with supporting data and trends.
 - b. Clearly explain the background to the business problem or opportunity, and justify the reasons for, and the value of, the research to your employer and the wider academic community.
 - c. Outline the research project’s aims and objectives.
 - d. State the limitations and scope of the proposed research.
2. Literature Review
 - a. Critically review key literature and recent academic publications around the subject area discussing key definitions, current theoretical frameworks, and research carried out in similar business areas.
 - b. Develop a conceptual and theoretical framework for the research from the literature review explaining how and why it supports and informs your approach the research process.
3. Research Methodology
 - a. Explain and justify your research approach and strategy.
 - b. Data collection:
 - Discuss data collection methods.
 - Select the instrument, design it and justify an appropriate method with an outline of a pre-test/pilot to be included as an appendix.
 - Clearly outline the administration of the data collection process.
 - c. Population and Sampling: Define the research population, sampling strategy and clarify access to respondent issues.

- d. Data Analysis: Describe and justify how you propose to analyse and report the results and findings of your research with a discussion about reliability and validity and the management error.
4. Statement of Ethics
 - a. Discuss access to respondent issues, permissions from organisation to conduct research, confidentiality, rights of withdrawal, consent, management of data security etc.
 5. Timeline
 - a. Develop a plan using GANTT Chart from start to completion of the research.

Delivery and Submission:

- A completed research proposal (circa 2500 words excluding relevant appendices) with an extended reference list of at least twenty academic, journals and industry sources to be included at the end of the work.

Referencing:

- Each section must reflect any supporting Harvard style citations.
- A comprehensive Harvard style bibliography (not a reference list)

Evidence to be submitted:

- Research proposal – 2500 words