Module 7:   Dissertation

Stage	3
Semester	3
Module Title	Dissertation
Module Number/Reference	MSC-IPM-RD
Module Status (Mandatory/Elective)	Mandatory
Module ECTS credit	30
Module NFQ level (only if applicable)	9
Pre-requisite Module Titles	Postgraduate Diploma in International Business
Co-requisite Module Titles	N/A
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	Yes
List of Module Teaching Personnel	Áine McManus and Dissertation Supervisors

Contact Hours				Non-contact Hours			Total Effort (Hours)
Lecture	Practical	Tutorial	Seminar	Assignment	Placement	Independent work	
		20				730	750

Allocation of Marks (Within the Module)					
	Continuous Assessment	Project	Practical	Final Examination	Total
Percentage contribution		100%			**100%**

Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

1. Display a critical awareness and conceptual understanding of current relevant issues.

2. Devise and investigate an original and complex problem in international business management by drawing on an extensive and deep knowledge of primary and secondary source.

3. Inter-relate theory and practice to the formulation of an original and pertinent research question/hypothesis.

4. Successfully apply appropriate research techniques, methodologies, and

5. Identify and apply the appropriate statistics / quantitative methods in the analysis of data.

6. Critically evaluate and interpret relevant literature and data, and appraise current results in light of previous findings.

7. Differentiate between good research and research that is lacking in quality and rigour.

8. Analyse and interpret data, draw conclusions and understand the implications of the findings.

9. Devise, direct, and produce to deadline a substantial piece of business research.

10. Act autonomously in tackling problems, and sourcing, planning and implementing solutions.

11. Interpret and communicate the results of their research clearly, concisely and professionally to colleagues and peers and present research findings in a form suitable for publication.

Module Objectives

The dissertation involves an in-depth exploration of a specialised area or issue central to international business management. Drawing on substantial relevant research, literature, concepts and techniques learners will seek to combine management theory and practice. Learners will be supported as they devise the research question, design and apply an appropriate methodology, critically review relevant literature and draw up the dissertation report. The Dissertation offers learners the opportunity to advance their research and business communication skills, and make a significant contribution to their chosen field through enquiry.

Learners register for the MSc Dissertation as a result of not having adequate prior work experience, and then have the opportunity, through experiential learning, to acquire such experience. Then, when the learners are able to complete a satisfactory Management Competency Report and a major Company/Sector Report they will be able, in Stage 4, to transfer their MSc qualification to an MBA qualification.

Note that in order for a learner to be awarded an MBA they must demonstrate masters level in their academic work and to demonstrate management potential illustrated by relevant work experience. Both are necessary for the MBA award.

Module Aims

This module aims:

- To provide an opportunity to apply business management skills and knowledge to professional level research project and to make a significant contribution to the chosen field of enquiry.

- To provide an opportunity to develop strategic questions, source relevant information, and sharpen the analytical and critical thinking processes through a

- To significantly advance learners' presentation and communication skills.
- To provide learners with an in-depth understanding of quantitative techniques
- To familiarize learners with software applications such as Excel

Module Curriculum

This module requires the learner, based on the research concepts, methodologies, and techniques covered in the Business Research Methods module, to produce and present a dissertation following an in-depth exploration of a specialised area or issue central to international business management. The learner will be supported by a supervisor, who, through regular contact with the learner will monitor and review the learner's progress at each of the key stages of the research process. There is also a dedicated Dissertation coordinator whom will also play a crucial role in the smooth running of this stage.

During the first number of weeks of this stage learners will, optionally, be able to attend 4 half day intensive workshops to introduce them to further data manipulation and presentation methods and to provide them with skills in the use of Excel and graphical presentation software. These workshops will also provide a period of intensive consultation with dissertation supervisors to map out in detail the learners work schedule for their dissertation.

Statistical methods and software applications

- **Collecting and analysing data**
  - Descriptive statistics; normal distribution, skewed distributions
  - Null hypothesis, sampling, confidence levels

- **Software applications: Use of Excel**
  - Exploring, displaying and examining data
  - Presenting data;- tables, graphs, charts

Reading lists and other learning materials

Recommended Reading

The required and recommended reading for the Business Research Methods module will assist learners in the completion of their Dissertation. There is no required additional reading for this module other than, of course, the required review of literature needed to complete the Dissertation. This will require consultation of a range of sources that can be accessed through the GCD Library.

The GCD Library provides off campus access to electronic journals and databases via Moodle. The main databases used by learners and staff of the Graduate Business School include:

- Business Source Premier

- Emerald

- Sage Fulltext

- Nexis

- Business Insights

- Education Research Complete

- Communications and Mass Media Complete

- Other recommended websites

Where we do not have immediate remote access to materials we use the document supply and inter-library loan facilities of the British Library and Trinity College Dublin Information Service. We do not charge any fees to learners for document supply or inter-library loan. Obviously if access to materials is only available on site of another library we arranger search passes for learners.

Module Learning Environment

A wide variety of teaching and learning strategies is used across the programme. These have been selected by the teaching team to motivate the learners, to maximise opportunities for learning and to provide exemplars of good practice in teaching and learning. It is within this module; the dissertation module that learners are expected to take responsibility for their own learning. Development of independent learning is core to this module. Learners are advised to use this time to extend themselves as independent learners. They will be required to develop a rigorous approach to further research and the critical evaluation of complex concepts and ideas.

In support of this independent learner's environment, a series of lectures and seminars will provide essential module information; dissertation handbook, learner/supervisor feedback reports, timelines etc. Moodle will be the main platform for distributing this series of documents providing principle subject knowledge. Further reading from a range of sources supplements core information and contributes towards the achievement of all module aims.

This will be supported by group learning activities and individual project work via Moodle. Further academic skills will be developed through the use of subject specific literature posted on Moodle; learner led support groups and guided tasks will also facilitate learner's research. These will enable learners to critically review, consolidate, and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge and critically evaluate new concepts and evidence from a range of sources. Moodle will also provide a range of additional lecture notes, relevant literature, self-assessment activities, and links to online resources.

Reflection, research, and further study - Learners should use this time to plan, critically analyse and reflect on their learning, undertake extensive further research through private study and engage in the online library resources (SAGE Journals, Emerald Insight, ERIC, Business Source Premier etc.) through wider direct and indirect reading

By developing these skills as independent learners it will allow for the enhancement of graduate skills and contribute towards future employability.

Module Teaching and Learning Strategy

The Business Research Methods module during Stages 1 and 2 is designed to provide learners with the key skills and knowledge required to carry out their dissertation. Within these taught modules, learners cover statistical methods and software applications which are applied during Stage 3.

Depending on the subject matter of the proposed dissertation, each learner will be allocated a supervisor with whom they will maintain regular contact through the research process. Regular monthly progress reports (Week 3, 7, 11 and 14) will be submitted to the MSc. coordinator from both supervisor and learner. Poor learner dissertation planning and management will be noted by the supervisor, and may be taken into account in determining the final mark.

Module Assessment Strategy

Element Number	Weighting	Type	Description
1	100%	Project	Dissertation

Dissertation Marking Scheme

Dissertation   100%

Abstract   5%

- 350 word summary of research

Introduction and rationale   10%

- Definition of research issue and outline of study.
- Rationale for study and clarity of statement of the purposes and methods used.

Literature Review   20%

- Usefulness of appropriate literature and references to provide the context and develop a framework for the investigation, the analysis, and the discussion of findings.

Methodology   20%

- Appropriateness of the topic and methods used.
- The rigor and extent to which they have been implemented.

Analysis & results   20%

Discussions and Recommendations   15 %

- Quality of conclusions and recommendations.

Presentation of dissertation   10%

- Presentation, including layout and structuring of material (conformity to conventional format of a work of scholarship, or report of practice), neatness, style and clarity.

Total   100%

Constructive Alignment of Assessment

Module Learning Outcomes	Assessment Strategy	
	Assignment	**Exam**
MLO 1	Yes	N/A
MLO 2	Yes	N/A
MLO 3	Yes	N/A
MLO 4	Yes	N/A
MLO 5	Yes	N/A
MLO 6	Yes	N/A
MLO 7	Yes	N/A
MLO 8	Yes	N/A
MLO 9	Yes	N/A
MLO 10	Yes	N/A
MLO 11	Yes	N/A