

## **UNITS**

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## **BUSINESS ANALYSIS AND MODELLING**

### **UNIT DESCRIPTION**

This third level core unit enforces business research methods for those students who are direct entrants to level three of the BA (Hons) Business and Top-up Programme. Concepts of statistical analysis will be further developed, and the concept of business modelling will be introduced through a range of techniques and business scenarios. Computer packages will be used whenever appropriate.

As a foundation to research based units at Level Three, this unit looks at research techniques and methods of researching. The combination of fact finding and statistical analysis prepares students for the vigours of third year work, where students are expected to critically analyse and evaluate solutions to business problems.

#### **Aims:**

- a** To identify and evaluate the statistical techniques used in business analysis.
- b** To evaluate the different modelling techniques used in business analysis.
- c** To analyse and evaluate appropriate research techniques for a variety of business situations and problems.
- d** To develop research, numeracy and IT skills necessary for business analysis.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

#### **1 Understanding and knowledge**

- i identify the different methods used to analyse business data and information
- ii identify the needs for computerised analysis of business data and information
- iii recognise the importance of the data and information analysis to a business

#### **2 Cognitive skills**

- i apply and develop suitable methods of analysis and modelling to a variety of business situations
- ii differentiate between a variety of research techniques and apply the most appropriate technique for a given situation

#### **3 Practical and Professional skills**

- i use business modelling and statistical techniques to aid in the solution of a variety of business situations
- ii use computer software packages to apply business and statistical techniques
- iii research a business situation

#### **4 Transferable (general) and Key skills**

- i make effective use of numerical data
- ii make effective use of IT
- iii communicate effectively by written and oral means

## AREAS OF STUDY

The unit will specifically focus on the business analysis, business modelling and research techniques that may be required to find a solution to a practical business situation.

**Project Planning:** Network analysis and resource planning. Critical path and PERT analysis.

**Modelling Techniques:** Commonly used business modelling techniques such as stock control, simulation, linear programming.

**Sampling and Statistical Inference:** The sampling distributions of means and proportions. Estimation and significance tests.

**Research Techniques:** The use of interviews, questionnaires, observation, record searching and case studies. Primary data, secondary data and tertiary data. How to research by conventional methods and how to use the Internet as a means of research.

## ASSESSMENT (Genesis Data)

### 1 Mini-project –individual - 3 in total

weighting:	40% in total
assessment type:	Project ( <b>PROJ</b> )
special facilities:	None
duration:	In-course

### 2 Case Study

weighting:	60%
assessment type:	Case Study ( <b>CAST</b> )
special facilities:	Open book, library and computer facilities
duration:	One day

## ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

### Coursework assessments

Made up of three in-course mini projects and a case study. Students need a minimum of 35% in the Case study assessment and a combined minimum of 35% for the other three assessments, with an overall mark of 40%, to pass the unit.

Each test will be in the form of a mini assignment and will be designed to test students ability to apply relevant concepts and theories in solving small problems and their ability to articulate understanding. Each test will also give students the opportunity to practice use of different communications methods that may not have been used prior to admission to the course. Assessment by this method will give the students feedback on how they are progressing within the unit.

		Learning Outcomes			
Assessment	Weighting	1	2	3	4
In-course tests	40%	X	X	X	X
Case Study	60%	X	X	X	X

## INDICATIVE READING

### **Core Text**

Cameron, S. 2001 The MBA Handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Prentice Hall, UK

Saunders, Mark et al 2000 Research Methods for Business Students 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed Prentice Hall, UK

Thomas Richard 1997 Quantitative Methods for Business Studies Prentice Hall, UK

### **Recommended Reading**

Curnock A. 1996 Quantitative Methods in Business Stanley Thornes

Edwards, John & Finlay, Paul 1997 Decision Making with Computers Pitman Publishing, London

Gill & Johnson 1997 Research Methods for Managers Paul Chapman

Morris C. 1996 Quantitative Approaches in Business Studies Pitman Publishing, London

Oakshott L. 1998 Essential Quantitative Methods MacMillan

Robson et al 1995 Designing and Building Business Models Using Excel McGraw

Salkind N 2000 Exploring Research 4<sup>th</sup> Ed Prentice Hall, New Jersey

Sekaran U 2000 Research Methods for Business 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed Wiley, USA

Whigham D. 1998 Quantitative Business Methods Using Excel Whitaker

Wisniewski M. 1997 Quantitative Methods for Decision Makers Pitman Publishing, UK

## **BUSINESS AND DISSERTATION**

### **UNIT DESCRIPTION**

Lectures will be delivered for four weeks only and each student will be supported by a dissertation tutor for an average of ½ hour each week on an individual basis.

Where normal timetabled sessions do not take place, additional directed learning will be provided, and/or students are expected to undertake additional independent learning.

This unit integrates the issues addressed in the course around a dissertation of the student's choice within the chosen pathway. As such this enables a student to apply the theory of Business and Personnel, or Business and Finance, or Business and Marketing, or Business and Management Studies to a particular issue.

The unit will give students the opportunity to apply the subjects studied at HND and undergraduate level to an issue that indicates their ability to work independently and meet the graduate challenge.

This unit requires each student, independently, to research, write and submit a dissertation of approximately 10,000 words. The dissertation must be directly relevant to the student's chosen pathway within a modern market economy and must be grounded in relevant business and other appropriate theory. It may involve an exploration of some aspect of the business literature in more depth; applying theory to solve a hypothetical or practical problem with a personnel, finance, marketing or business management focus; developing a business based case study; or any other approach negotiated between the student and his/her tutor, and approved by the unit leader.

Undertaking the dissertation will require each student to draw on HND units studied previously; it is also anticipated that each student will make intellectual connections with units studied concurrently at level 3.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

#### **1. Understanding and knowledge**

- i To carry out a dissertation drawing on various key functional areas within the business/sector under study. This will involve one of the following:- personnel, finance, marketing or business management.
- ii To incorporate into a dissertation the latest body of knowledge on business theories related to the chosen pathway.
- iii To demonstrate the ability to undertake the research that is required to produce a dissertation.

#### **2. Cognitive skills**

- i To delineate the relevant objectives for a dissertation
- ii To analyse information appropriate to set objectives
- iii To recognise the links between the different aspects of the dissertation.

### 3. Practical and Professional skills

- i Have managed a dissertation through from conception to delivery
- ii To select and evaluate information for a dissertation from a range of relevant sources
- iii To plan the timing and delivery of a dissertation

### 4. Transferable (general) and Key skills

- i To effectively manage a time constraints effectively
- ii To utilise appropriate information technology for a set task
- iii To locate and exploit information and research sources
- iv To communicate effectively
- v To deal with business research issues adopting a professional approach

### **AREAS OF STUDY**

Early lectures will guide the students towards suitable research with respect to the dissertation proposal that was developed during the Business Analysis and Research unit. They will also indicate to the students a structure and pathway for their dissertation.

Students will be allocated a dissertation tutor to provide ongoing support. This unit is clearly different from more 'conventional' teaching units since it is primarily student driven. The lecturer and dissertation tutor act as facilitators rather than instructors or teachers. The emphasis will therefore be on learning by doing.

### **ASSESSMENT**

#### **Coursework assessment(s)**

#### **Dissertation**

weighting %:	100%
assessment type:	<b>WRIT</b>

### **ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

The proposal for the Dissertation will be produced as part of the assessed work within Business Analysis and Modelling. An updated version of the proposal will form part of the completed appendices.

The dissertations produced by students will be assessed against the following criteria, which are linked directly to the unit's learning outcomes. Evidence will be required in the dissertation of:

#### **Criterion 1**

In depth understanding of the business issues relating to the chosen pathway, and the presentation of some of those issues as a proposal for the dissertation. (15% of Unit Mark)

**Criterion 2**

In-depth knowledge and understanding of business theories and models and, where appropriate, their application to hypothetical or practical problems (20% of Unit Mark)

**Criterion 3**

An ability to critically analysis and evaluate competing theories, synthesize and integrate different information sources and develop testable hypotheses, problems or case studies (20% of Unit Mark)

**Criterion 4**

Effective and relevant research having been undertaken (20 % of Unit Mark)

**Criterion 5**

The ability to communicate effectively (15% of Unit Mark)

**Criterion 6**

Having worked and learned independently (10% of Unit Mark).

**INDICATIVE READING****6. Core Text**

Cameron, S. 2001 The MBA Handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Prentice Hall, UK

Saunders, Mark et al 2000 Research Methods for Business Students 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed Prentice Hall,UK

**7. Recommended Reading**

Cooper, D.R. 1998 Business Research Methods. 6<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: McGraw Hill.

Cooper, H. 1998 Synthesising Research: A Guide for Literature Reviews. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. London: Sage

Cresswell, J. 1998 Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. London: Sage

Easterby-Smith, Mark, Thorpe Richard, and Lowe, Andy. 1991 Management Research: An Introduction. London: Sage

Howard, Keith and Sharp, John A. 1994 The Management of a Student Research Project. Aldershot: Gower

Hussey J & Hussey R. Business Research. 1997 A Practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students. Basingstoke: Macmillan Business.

Jones, S.G. 1998 Doing Internet Research: Critical Issues and Methods for Examining the Net. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage.

Kerwin, John B. 1992 Methods for Business Research. New York: Harper Collins.

## **CONTEMPORARY BUSINESS ISSUES**

### **UNIT DESCRIPTION**

This unit examines some of the most important contemporary issues faced by business organisations at the start of the new Millennium, raising students' awareness and preparing them for the challenges which they might face in a decision making role in their business career. The content of the unit, by its nature, cannot be too prescriptive and will need to be modified as new issues assume significance. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that for the next few years contemporary issues challenging businesses will include: Green issues, Ethics, Flexible working/portfolio management, Demographic change, Globalisation, Gender issues, Trading blocks and agreements.

These issues, as well as any new developments, will be delved into and their origins, current impact and the likely direction in future will be analysed and evaluated.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the unit students should be able to:

#### **Understanding and Knowledge**

Identify contemporary business issues, analyse and discuss their relevance to businesses and their operations in the modern world.

#### **Skills and Other Attributes**

##### **Cognitive**

Critically assess the implications of a contemporary issue within a given situation.

##### **Practical and Professional Skills**

Research, analyse, report and make recommendations on dealing with the above implications.

##### **Transferable and Key Skills**

Communication- Written and oral (Report, Presentation)

### **AREAS OF STUDY**

Notwithstanding new developments affecting business operations, the areas of study will include green and environmental issues, consumerism, GM food, Ethical considerations in domestic and international business, globalisation and pressures on businesses to become global, changes in demographic and social-cultural factors (growing size of the retired population, increasing role of children in the household purchase decision, declining size of the family unit), equal opportunity issues (age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background), the role of trading blocks and international organisations, e.g. WTO, in promoting/hindering trade.



## ASSESSMENT

### Weighting

<b>60%</b>	<b>WRIT</b>	An individual assignment
<b>40%</b>	<b>PRES</b>	A group presentation. Attendance Marks will be deducted for non-attendance at presentations by other groups.

Coursework marks will be aggregated to give one overall mark.

## ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

The unit will be assessed by a combination of individual assignment and group presentation aimed at measuring students' attainment of the stated outcomes. The assignment will typically include analysis, evaluation and interpretation skills and will be based on a relevant contemporary issue. However, different topics will be selected at random for different groups of individuals. All assignments and presentations will be marked according to the same criteria.

## INDICATIVE READING

Core text

### Recommended Reading

Evans, M., Moutinho, L., (1999) Contemporary Issues in Marketing, Basingstoke: MacMillan Press

Magazines, Journals, Papers

The Economist  
The Financial Times

## **FINANCE MANAGEMENT**

### **UNIT DESCRIPTION**

This unit is for students who have studied issues relating to managing financial resources and focuses on the importance of the role of the management of finance. Financial planning will set the scene for the two other major areas of capital investment appraisal and interpretation of financial reports. The unit has been designed to promote financial awareness and experience within the classroom environment of applications of techniques appropriate to capital investment appraisal and interpretation of financial reports. It is intended the undergraduate students will appreciate the potential use of these techniques for a business and thereby gain an insight into the practical problems associated with their use.

A range of financial techniques will be examined and applied. Students will be made aware of the reasons for the selection and use of such techniques and their practical limitations.

The principal areas of study will be in financial planning, capital investment appraisal and the interpretation of accounts.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

It is intended that by the end of the unit the student should be able to:

#### **A Understanding and knowledge**

- 1 Be aware of a range of financial management techniques that can be usefully applied to business situations.
- 2 apply and critique the financial management techniques including any limitations linked to proposed solutions.

#### **B Cognitive skills**

- 1 critically appraise the capital investment appraisal techniques and ratio interpretations.

#### **C Practical/professional skills**

- 1 identify, apply and critique appropriate financial management techniques for various business problems.

#### **D Transferable/key skills**

- 1 apply numeracy and analytical skills to the role of manager.
- 2 use external sources for research to apply appropriate techniques for solving business problems.

## AREAS OF STUDY

**1. Financial Planning:** to be aware of the significance of long, medium and short-term financial planning in business.

**2. Capital Investment Appraisal:** a review of costs associated with decision-making and the different methods of appraisal focussing on the concept of net present value. Capital rationing, sensitivity and the impact of UK tax rules will be addressed.

**3. The interpretation of financial reports and the utilisation of ratio analysis:** review of the strengths and weaknesses of the main financial statements and their significance to the user groups. Evaluate the role, application and critical evaluation of ratio analysis as an aid to interpretation.

## ASSESSMENT (Genesis Data)

### Examination assessment

weighting:	40%
assessment type	EXAM
duration:	2 hours

### Coursework assessment

weighting:	60%
assessment type	CSWK
duration:	

## ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

The examination will be structured to require students to address a combination of technique and discussion based topics. Institute assessment regulations will apply.

The coursework will focus on student research into discussion-based areas.

Assessment Details		Learning Outcomes			
Assessment	Weighting	A	B	C	D
Coursework	60%	X	X	X	X
Examination	40%	X	X	X	X

## INDICATIVE READING

Many of the books recommended are reprinted constantly, therefore the book list to be used will reflect the latest edition at that time.

### Core Text

McLaney, EJ: 2000 *Business Finance Theory and Practice 5<sup>th</sup> Ed*, Financial Times Prentice Hall England

Watson, Denzil & Head Anthony: 2001 *Corporate Finance Principles & Practice 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed*, Financial Times Pitman Publishing England

**Recommended Reading**

McLaney, Eddie & Attrill, Peter: 2002 *Accounting an Introduction 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed*, Financial Times Prentice Hall England

Samuels, J M; Wilkes, F M & Brayshaw, R E: 1995 *Management of Company Finance 6<sup>th</sup> Ed* Chapman Hall England

Weetman, Pauline: 2003 *Financial & Management Accounting An introduction 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed*, Financial Times Prentice Hall England

Accountancy Journals and Financial Papers, including Financial Management and Accountancy

## **PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

### **UNIT DESCRIPTION**

This unit is intended to help students of all disciplines understand the role of appropriate people management strategies in organisations; how people management strategies can contribute to organisational success and the lack of people management strategies can contribute to organisational failure.

This unit seeks to increase the students' understanding and experience of the tools available to managers and organisations and also create a critical awareness of problems and contradictions that can arise when managers seek to operationalise a Human Resource strategy. It also looks to create awareness of the issues inherent in maintaining the employment relationship in a changing employment context.

The unit looks to integrate the nature of the employment relationship with the four main areas of Relations, Reward, Resourcing and Development.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of the unit, the student should be able to:

#### **Understanding and knowledge**

1. Understand and apply the theoretical basis of managing people and the employment relationship within organisations.
2. Understand issues involved in using a variety of human resource management techniques and tools.

#### **Skills and other attributes**

##### **Intellectual skills**

1. Use appropriate concepts and perspectives to analyse workplace behaviour and employment processes.
2. Consider the contradictions and outcomes of choices when managing people as a resource.

##### **Practical and Professional skills**

1. Consider alternative perspectives in employment matters.
2. Use a variety of people management tools.

##### **Key skills**

1. Research, analyse, reformat and evaluate information.
2. Negotiation skills.

**AREAS OF STUDY**

This is indicative and should allow for some evolution over time.

Management of the Employment Relationship

History of personnel management in organisations  
 HRM, strategy and reaction  
 The nature of the Employment Relationship  
 Perspectives and Philosophies of Management  
 Control in Organisations  
 Negotiation  
 Equal Opportunities and Diversity  
 Organisational Justice  
 Exit  
 Alienation and Survival

Resourcing

Human Resource Planning  
 Choices of Employment status  
 Job Analysis and Job Design  
 Recruitment  
 Selection: choice and strategy  
 Selection: Interviewing

Performance

Reward  
 Learning and Development  
 Competencies  
 Career Development  
 Organisational Performance  
 Individual Performance

**ASSESSMENT**

The unit will be assessed by coursework only, comprising:

## Written

Weighting: 60%  
 Assessment type: ASSI

This consists of two individual pieces: an essay and a report, each worth 30%

## Presentation

Weighting: 40%  
 Assessment type: GRPS

This consists of two separate presentations, each worth 20%

Students are required to obtain an overall pass between the four different elements of the coursework.

**Assessment strategy:**

A variety of assessment methods is used to reflect the nature of the unit. The first and early assessment is an individual report on a negotiations exercise in class. A short group presentation that ties in with an area of study is the first group presentation required. A

second, organisational based group presentation takes place towards the end of the unit with the final assessment as an essay from a choice of questions.

Learning Outcomes	Report (I)	Pres 1 (G)	Pres 2 (G)	Essay (I)
Understanding and Knowledge 1	√	√	√	√
Understanding and Knowledge 2	√	√	√	
Cognitive Skills 1		√	√	√
Cognitive Skills 1	√	√	√	√
Practical and Professional skills 1		√	√	√
Practical and Professional skills 1		√	√	
Transferable (general) and Key Skills 1	√	√	√	√
Transferable (general) and Key Skills 1	√	√	√	

## INDICATIVE READING

### Core text:

Marchington, M., and Wilkinson, A (2002) People Management and Development London:CIPD

Pilbeam, S and Corbridge, M (2002) People Resourcing: HRM in practice Harlow: FT Prentice Hall

### Recommended reading:

Gennard, J and Judge, G (2002) Employee Relations London: CIPD

Grint, K. (1998) The Sociology of Work 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Cambridge: Polity Press

Hollinshead, G., Nicholls, P. and Tailby S. (1999) Employee Relations London: FT Pitman

Marchington, M., and Wilkinson, A (2002) People Management and Development London:CIPD

Maund, L (2001) An Introduction to Human Resource Management Basingstoke: Palgrave

Noon, M. & Blyton, P. (1997) The Realities of Work Basingstoke:MacMillan

Pilbeam, S and Corbridge, M (2002) People Resourcing: HRM in practice Harlow: FT Prentice Hall

Redman, T and Wilkinson, A (2001) Contemporary Human Resource management: text and cases Harlow: FT Prentice Hall

Thompson, P and McHugh D (2002) Work Organisations, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn., Basingstoke: Palgrave

Thompson, P and Warhurst, C. eds. (1998) Workplaces of the Future Basingstoke: MacMillan

Thompson, P. (1989) The Nature of Work Basingstoke: MacMillan

Torrington, D., Hall L., and Taylor S. (2002) Human Resource Management Harlow: FT Prentice Hall

Watson, T. (2002) Organising and Managing Work, Harlow: FT Prentice Hall

Whetten, D and Cameron, K (1998) Developing Management Skills Harlow: Addison-Wesley

**Journals**

Human Resource Management Journal  
Industrial Relations Journal  
British Journal of Industrial Relations  
New Technology, Work and Employment  
People Management  
Work and Occupations  
Work, Employment and Society  
Human Resource Development Journal

**Websites**

[cipd.co.uk](http://cipd.co.uk)  
[dti.gov.uk](http://dti.gov.uk)  
[acas.org.uk](http://acas.org.uk)  
[personneltoday.com](http://personneltoday.com)  
[guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk)  
[statistics.gov.uk](http://statistics.gov.uk)  
[Xperthr.com](http://Xperthr.com)