

Victoria Management School

MMBA 532 BUSINESS RESEARCH PROJECT

Full Year 2010

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

Course Coordinator: Dr David Stewart
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Withdrawal from Courses:

Information available via

Withdrawal dates: Late withdrawals with Associate Dean (Students) permission
(See Section 8: Withdrawals - from the Personal Courses of Study Statute)
<http://policy.vuw.ac.nz/Amphora!~policy.vuw.ac.nz~POLICY~000000001743.pdf>

Withdrawal dates: refunds:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Class Times and Room Numbers

Lectures: Wednesdays

Time: 17:40 – 19:30

Venue: RWW413

Course Start Date: Wednesday, 3 March 2010

Course Completion Date: Wednesday, 13 October 2010

Format:

Part A: Six two hour Lectures
Lecture Theatre RWW 413

Part B: One-on-One Academic Supervision
(Student – VUW academic staff)

Course Objectives

The Victoria Master of Business Administration Programme serves to produce professional managers capable of fulfilling strategic roles within business and government enterprises. Integral to this capability is the application of systematic and organised research methodologies to investigate specific problems or opportunities encountered in the work setting.

This course aims to provide students with applied research methodologies with which practical solutions to real organisational issues can be derived. The scope of this course, being focused on individual student proposals, is open-ended and negotiable. Students need to gain access to an organisational sponsor, identify a relevant issue, and propose an applicable methodology in order for the business research project to proceed. By the end of this course, students will:

1. Have an understanding of the major social science research methodologies available for applied business research.
2. Have the experience of defining and addressing real-life problems and opportunities in organisational settings.
3. Have an appreciation for applicable research methods as a means to address organisational issues.

Textbook:

The recommended textbook for MMBA 532 is Zina O’Leary ‘The Essential Guide to Doing Research’ Sage, 2009.

Additional materials such as readings, etc. will be made available to Course Participants during the Course.

The course will also rely on materials from a variety of sources, including practitioner and academic journals, dependent on the specifics of topic area chosen by the student.

Assessment

Business Research Report Word Limit: 10,000 100 %

Due: Wednesday, 13 October 2010

Upon conclusion of the project students will be required to submit a detailed research project subject to the terms and conditions set by the supervising academic staff member in consultation the Course Co-ordinator. At a minimum, research projects will incorporate a detailed literature review, a comprehensive research design that covers data collection and analysis, a discussion of findings and conclusions, and a recommended management action plan.

Course Terms of Reference

Late Assignments

Unless otherwise authorised by the Course Co-ordinator, in consultation with the Academic Supervisor, students will have ten weeks to prepare a topic analysis and five months, subsequently, to complete the research and submit the report. Note: No extension will be granted for the submission of the report.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To meet mandatory course requirements, students must submit two documents – a topic analysis and a final business research report. The topic analysis must be submitted to the course coordinator for his approval by Wednesday, 5 May 2010.

Passing the Course

In order to pass this course, students are required to obtain at least fifty percent of the overall course marks available.

Victoria MBA Grading Standards

Victoria MBA - Excellent Category

A (80 – 84%) to A+ (85% and above): The quality is performed to a very high level of proficiency, i.e. it is at a standard that makes it exceptional at Master's level.

Victoria MBA - Very Good Category

B+ (70 – 74%) to A- (75 – 79%): The quality is performed at a high standard. Students have reached a level which clearly exceeds “competency”.

Victoria MBA - Good Category

B- (60 – 64%) to B (65 – 69%): The quality is clearly demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as competent in respect of this quality.

Victoria MBA - Satisfactory Category

C (50 – 54%) to C+ (55 – 59%): The quality is demonstrated to a minimally acceptable level. There may be flaws but these are not serious enough to “fail” the student on this quality.

Victoria MBA - Unsatisfactory Category

E (0 – 39%) to D (40 – 49%): The quality is absent or performed to a very low level, or the performance is seriously flawed in this respect.

Individual Work

While the Victoria MBA programme has a tradition of study group collaboration, there are important elements in the assessment process that are strictly individual. Unless otherwise approved by the Course Controller in advance, MMBA 532 is designed as an entirely individual learning module.

For the following important information follow the links provided:

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

General University Policies and Statutes

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

AVC (Academic) Website: information including: Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/>

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/

Session Schedule

The course has two parts. Part A is a series of six lectures scheduled for the beginning of Trimester One (see below). Part B is governed by the interaction between the student and the VUW academic staff member.

Course evaluation and success will be defined by the proposal document negotiated between the student and the academic supervisor in consultation with the Course Co-ordinator who will ensure parity across individual projects and supervisors.

Part A: Lecture Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
1.	3 March	Introduction to the Research Process – selecting topic, selecting a supervisor <i>Text: Chapters 1 & 2</i>
2.	10 March	Developing a research question <i>Text: Chapters 3 & 5</i>
3.	17 March	Writing a Literature Review <i>Text: Chapter 6</i>
4.	24 March	Methodological Design <i>Text: Chapters 7, 8 & 9</i>
5.	31 March	Data Collection <i>Text: Chapters 10 & 11</i>
6.	21 April	Writing a Research Proposal & applying for Human Ethics approval <i>Text: Chapters 4, 12 & 13</i>
