

Victoria Management School

**MMBA 532 BUSINESS RESEARCH PROJECT**

Trimester One 2011

**COURSE OUTLINE**

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**Names and Contact Details**

Course Coordinator: Dr David Stewart  
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Senior Lecturer  
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**Trimester Dates**

From Wednesday 2 March to Wednesday, 26 October 2011

**Withdrawal from Course**

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before 11 March 2011
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is 14 May 2011. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late*' including supporting documentation.

The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

**Class Times and Room Numbers**

Part A: Six two hour Lectures to be held on Wednesday, 19:40 to 21:30  
Lecture Theatre GBLT3

Part B: Academic Supervision by VUW academic staff

**Course Content**

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.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

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.

### **Readings**

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

### **Course Delivery**

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.

#### **Part A: Lecture Schedule**

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Topic</b>  |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| 1.          | 2 March     | Introduction to the Research Process – selecting topic, selecting a supervisor<br><i>Text: Chapters 1 &amp; 2</i> |
| 2.          | 9 March     | Developing a research question<br><i>Text: Chapters 3 &amp; 5</i>   |
| 3.          | 16 March    | Writing a Literature Review<br><i>Text: Chapter 6</i>   |
| 4.          | 23 March    | Applying for Human Ethics approval<br><i>Text: Chapters 4, 12 &amp; 13</i>  |
| 5.          | 30 March    | Methodological Design<br><i>Text: Chapters 7, 8 &amp; 9</i>   |
| 6.          | 6 April     | <i>Data Collection</i><br><i>Text: Chapters 10 &amp; 11</i>   |

## **Expected Workload**

You will be expected to spend 150 hours of work to complete the course. Twelve hours will be spent attending lectures, with the balance spread throughout the year. However, it is expected the majority of the hours will be spent in the second trimester.

## **Materials and Equipment**

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 Requirements**

- |                             |  |     |
|-----------------------------|--|-----|
| 1. Literature Review        | Word limit: 2,000<br><i>Due: Wednesday, 27 July 2011</i>     | 15% |
| 2. Research design and HEC  | Word limit: 2,000<br><i>Due: Wednesday, 17 August 2011</i>   | 15% |
| 3. Business Research Report | Word Limit: 10,000<br><i>Due: Wednesday, 26 October 2011</i> | 70% |

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.

Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCA programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

## **Penalties**

In fairness to other students, work submitted after the deadline for the first two pieces of assessment will be subject to a penalty of 5% of the total marks available per day of lateness. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. A “zero” mark will be applied. In the event of unusual, unforeseen circumstances (e.g., serious illness, family bereavement), students should discuss waiver of the penalty with the course co-ordinator prior to the deadline date. Note: No extension will be granted for the submission of the final report.

## **Mandatory Course Requirements**

To meet mandatory course requirements, students must submit three documents – a literature review; research design and HEC form; and a final business research report.

## **Class Representative**

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details made available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

## **Communication of Additional Information**

Additional information or information on changes will be conveyed via blackboard to all class members, etc.

## **Use of Turnitin**

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

**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**

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study).

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress).

The University's statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar) (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx)

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

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx](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/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/)