

School of Management

## **MMBA 532 BUSINESS RESEARCH PROJECT**

Full Year 2014

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

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#### **Names and Contact Details**

##### **COURSE COORDINATOR**

**Dr David Stewart**, PhD, MBA, MA, BA (Hons), Dip Teach

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Email: [David.Stewart@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:David.Stewart@vuw.ac.nz)

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##### **PROGRAMME ADMINSTRATOR**

Amanda Cunningham

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Telephone: 463 5367

#### **Trimester Dates**

From Wednesday 5 March to Wednesday, 29 October 2014

#### **Withdrawal from Course**

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before 14 March 2014.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is 22 August 2014. 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, 17:40 to 19:30  
Lecture Theatre: GBLT1

**Part B:** Academic Supervision by VUW academic staff

#### **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.	5 March	Introduction to the Research Process <i>Text: Chapter 3</i>
2.	12 March	Understanding paradigms and methodologies <i>Reading: Guba &amp; Lincoln</i> <i>Text: Chapter 1 &amp; 2</i>
3.	19 March	Writing a Literature Review <i>Text: Chapter 4</i>
4.	26 March	Quantitative Research <i>Text: Chapters 6 &amp; 7</i>
5.	2 April	Qualitative Research <i>Text: Chapters 16 &amp; 18</i>
6.	8 April	Applying for Human Ethics approval <i>Text: Chapter 5</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.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

On successful completion of the course students will have improved their ability to:

1. Develop an effective research question to guide their research.
2. Present a research design based on the relevant literature in a field of management.
3. Have an understanding of the major social science research methodologies available for applied business research.
4. Carry out a research exercise with respondents (people), analyse the results and draw conclusions in relation to the research question.
5. Show how the results contribute to management practice.

### **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 identify a relevant issue and propose an applicable methodology in order for the business research project to proceed. The student then needs to collect relevant data and write a business research project including appropriate recommendations.

## **Readings**

The recommended textbook for MMBA 532 is Bryman, A. & Bell, E. 'Business Research Methods', Oxford University Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2011

## **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**

Assignments build up to a final business research project. Your project:

- must involve research with people (human subjects)
- could also include use of documents, etc.
- be related to a business or organisational problem
- can be quantitative, qualitative or both.

1. Literature Review	Word limit: 3,000 <i>Due: Wednesday, 30 July 2014</i>	20%
2. Research design and HEC	Word limit: 2,000 <i>Due: Wednesday, 20 August 2014</i>	10%
3. Business Research Report	Word Limit: 10,000 <i>Due: Wednesday, 29 October 2014</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.

From Trimester 1, 2014, a revised Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf>.

In particular, there will be a new grade scheme, in which the A+ range will be 90-100% and 50-54% will be a C-.

<b><i>Pass/Fail</i></b>	<b><i>Grade</i></b>	<b><i>Normal Range</i></b>	<b><i>Indicative Characterisation</i></b>
Pass	A+	90%-100%	Outstanding performance
	A	85%-89%	Excellent performance
	A-	80%-84%	Excellent performance in most respects
	B+	75%-79%	Very good performance
	B	70%-74%	Good performance
	B-	65%-69%	Good performance overall, but some weaknesses
	C+	60%-64%	Satisfactory to good performance
	C	55%-59%	Satisfactory performance

	C-	50%-54%	Adequate evidence of learning
Fail	D	40%-49%	Poor performance overall, some evidence of learning
	E	0-39%	Well below the standard required

### **Penalties**

Extensions will not be granted for the literature review, the research design or the submission of the final report. In the event of an unusual, unforeseen circumstance (e.g., serious illness), students should discuss the possibility of an extension being granted with the course co-ordinator prior to the deadline date. Note: appropriate documentation will be required to substantiate your case.

### **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.

### **Mandatory Course Requirements**

To meet mandatory course requirements, students must submit five documents by the respective due dates:

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Topic Analysis           | Wednesday, 7 May 2014      |
| 2. Literature Review        | Wednesday, 30 July 2014    |
| 3. Research design          | Wednesday, 20 August 2014  |
| 4. HEC Application          | Wednesday, 20 August 2014  |
| 5. Business Research Report | Wednesday, 29 October 2014 |

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat)

### **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.

### **Student feedback**

Student feedback on University courses may be found at: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php)

**Link to general information**

For general information about course-related matters, go to  
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information>

**Note to Students**

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.