

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

MODULE TITLE	Critical Thinking and Research (FT)		
Module Code	25-7M01-00Y 25-7M01-00C		
Level	7		
Credit Points	15		
Indicative Assessment Tasks & Percentage Weightings	100% Coursework		
Pre-Requisite Modules (if applicable)	None		
Delivered according to Standard Academic Calendar YES	Long: 2 semesters YES	Short: 1 semester NO	Other delivery pattern: NO

1 MODULE AIMS

This module enables you to develop skills in learning, research, communication, reflective practice and analysis. It aims to develop your knowledge, understanding and application of subject specific theories and concepts, forming an important basis for other learning on the course.

The module is very explicitly a starting point for the course, but is also part of a continuing process of self-development through self-reflection, drawing on feedback from peers and from tutors to provide an opportunity for you to recognise and apply different methods of learning in a range of situations and to engage in personal development planning.

The reason for studying research design and approaches in the module is to enable you to understand and evaluate the issues involved in developing and undertaking assignment research and writing activities. It will enable you to assess how other researchers tackle problems in research papers, and to use selected approaches and techniques in your own assignment work and in your dissertation.

The aims of the module are:

- to support you in a process of reflection through which you can monitor your performance, and plan your personal educational and professional development;
- to encourage you to develop proficiency in a range of communication skills;
- to enable you to appraise, organise and analyse information from a variety of sources and to use other people to challenge your thinking and explore alternatives;
- to enable you to critically evaluate theories and concepts relevant to your understanding of business;

- to promote an appreciation of the nature of inductive and deductive research methodologies, quantitative and qualitative methods and the links between methodology, research design, field of study and theory.

The learning outcomes link particularly to the concept of the manager as analytical thinker, but also to the concept of the reflective leader.

2 MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES BY THE END OF THE MODULE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. formulate effective ways of planning, managing and enhancing your learning processes;
2. use a range of skills to communicate knowledge and understanding to a target audience;
3. critically evaluate theories and concepts, and analyse and synthesise information from a variety of sources;
4. identify and assess the elements of the research process, including links between field of study, theory, methodologies, research techniques and interpretation;
5. apply selected aspects of research techniques, and assess their merits;
6. demonstrate self-assessment and critical reflection of the learning process through the development of a portfolio of work to present evidence of your learning.

These learning outcomes are primarily linked to the programme learning outcomes of developing research skills, developing skills of interpretation and evaluation and developing critical research capabilities. The module also emphasises the development of an independent learning capability, connected to continuing intellectual and professional development.

3 INDICATIVE LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

This module will be delivered through a series of workshops and seminars. Sessions will help you to develop practical skills needed in order to study and research at Master's level. Workshop sessions will be student-led and will focus on developing skills in learning, research, communication, reflective practice and analysis. Initially you will reflect on your expectations about the course and your approaches to learning, and about your prior knowledge of the areas covered in the course, exchanging views with other course members. You will have the opportunity to develop an appreciation of the different needs and expectations of other students from a variety of backgrounds and cultures.

In class sessions you will engage in practical tasks, such as identifying ways of accelerating your own learning, reviewing literature, practising writing assignment introductions and conclusions, evaluating articles in relation to research approaches and methods, assessing research tools and analysing a variety of forms of data. You

will learn how to develop higher levels of cognitive processing such as concept formation and creativity through synthesis and analysis.

The learning outcomes will be assessed through a portfolio. Initial submission of draft work, approximately half way through the module, will be for 20% of the marks with the assessment of the finished portfolio counting for 80%.

Demonstrating your achievement of the learning outcomes will involve the completion of a series of short pieces of work designed to engage you in the process of critical self-reflection, both on assessing your learning and on developing action plans for your personal development. As part of the assessment you will submit responses to the feedback you have received for other modules to evidence the learning that has taken place.

You will be given formative feedback in relation to your progress in developing the portfolio through discussion with module tutors at the initial submission.

Formal individual written feedback will be provided following completion of the full portfolio; this is expected to be formative in contributing to continuing learning. The assessed portfolio should be seen as a selected sub-set of the fuller personal and professional development portfolio you will be developing during the course. Generic feedback available to all students via the module blackboard site will be supplemented by individual feedback.

This work links closely to research, in forming a key preparation for research work to be assessed in the dissertation. The module is strongly research oriented in its emphasis on processes of knowledge construction.

4 INDICATIVE MODULE CONTENTS / TOPICS

The module will cover approaches to learning at Master's level, techniques for studying and for researching and approaches to self-development through reflection.

Specific issues addressed will include expectations about teaching and learning and how these match up with the requirements of the course, approaches to aspects of study and assessment at Master's level and research methods. The module will also cover data analysis and presentation of findings.

Key research concepts considered in the module include inductive and deductive perspectives on research, quantitative and qualitative approaches and the links between research design and other aspects of the production of research outputs, such as field of study, type of theory and types of methodology.

The module will also link to learning taking place in other modules being studied concurrently, encouraging reflection on the approaches to learning and to research appropriate to those fields of study.

The emphasis on research processes means that developing skills in accessing and using information will have a high priority. Sessions provided in conjunction with learning centre staff will focus on search skills using current databases and research tools.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS MODULE

- **FURTHER / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THIS MODULE, INCLUDING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA DETAILING HOW YOUR PERFORMANCE IN THE MODULE WILL BE MEASURED, HOW YOU WILL RECEIVE FEEDBACK, DETAILS OF LEARNING RESOURCES AND KEY READINGS.**
- **THIS INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND IN**
 - the module handbook
 - the module blackboard site
- **NOTE THAT THIS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE FROM YEAR TO YEAR**

