

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
ALLIANCE MANCHESTER BUSINESS SCHOOL**

Academic Year	2021/2022
Semester	Full Year
Course Unit Code	BMAN31500
Course Unit Title	Dissertation
Credit Rating	40
Year	UG Final year course unit

Course Coordinator and contact details

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Programme Restrictions

BSc Management, and Management (Specialism), BSc International Management with American Business Studies, BSc International Management.

If you are doing a degree with a specialism, please make sure that your dissertation topic is in a relevant specialised area. See the appropriate pages in the UG programme handbook and discuss with your prospective supervisor if you are unsure.

Pre-requisites

BMAN 24410 Research Methodology

Also see the following link for more detail

<https://www.ams.ughandbook.manchester.ac.uk/programme/dissertation/>

Co-requisites

None

Dependent course units

None

Aims

The aim of the UG final-year dissertation is to develop *independent* research skills (with assistance from your supervisor). Your dissertation is an important piece of your *original* work, normally related to aspects of management/business in the subject area that you have been studying. If you wish to do a dissertation in your final year, [you need to find a dissertation supervisor by yourself BEFORE you submit a proposal form.](#)

Please read the information provided on the dissertation page in the Online UG Handbook

<https://www.ambs.ughandbook.manchester.ac.uk/programme/dissertation/>

(Please ensure that you check all the information in the menu on the left-hand side on this web page.)

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of a dissertation, students should be able to structure, organise and reflect upon research-based academic work. The learning outcomes include:

- Formulate research questions and set objectives, and design how to approach them
- Identify, review, and evaluate relevant academic literatures and theories
- Identify and collect appropriate data
- Analyse data and develop logical arguments
- Discuss research findings to draw a conclusion

Transferable and practical skills that you are expected to obtain through doing a dissertation are, for example, enhanced skills of project planning, project management, market analysis, time management, self-discipline, and possibly, skills to communicate managers and/or customers in a real business world, if you carry out fieldwork interviews for your dissertation.

Employability

Please see a document “Why should I do a dissertation” in the [dissertation page](#) of the UG Online Handbook.

Social Responsibility

This module contributes to **UN SDGs Goal 8: decent work and economic growth**, to “promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all”. The procedural skills and knowledge acquired in this module will help students be optimally equipped to contribute to the labour market, thereby enhancing their opportunities for professional development and ensuring the development of the communities to which they contribute.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

This module presents students with the unique opportunity to investigate research topics that interest them, with the support and under the supervision of an experienced member of staff. Students can investigate a variety of topics, including culturally specific, topics related to equality and diversity, etc. They can apply their unique cultural lens to their chosen research topic and enrich knowledge on the cultural differences in treating particular scientific topics.

Methods of Delivery

Individual supervisions provided by an agreed supervisor.

Lecture Hours:

No timetabled lecture.

Seminar/Tutorial/Workshop/Lab Hours:

No timetabled seminar/workshop. Regarding the schedule and frequency of supervision meetings, please discuss with your supervisor.

Private Study

Students are expected to dedicate approximately 300 hours of private study for the successful completion of this course unit.

Total Study Hours

300 hours

Attendance

Please note that you are responsible for the following:

1. Take initiative to establish and maintain good communication with your supervisor and make an appointment with your supervisor regularly.
2. Maintain the progress of your work in accordance with the time frame agreed with your supervisor.
3. Maintain a suitable record of discussions with your supervisor and the progress you made. This will help you work effectively.
4. Take initiative in raising problems if there is any. Please bear in mind that a prompt discussion with your supervisor can prevent difficulties at a later stage.

Syllabus and Teaching Schedule

Week	Date	Deliverable
Semester 1		
3	11 Oct/3pm	Proposal Form
11-12	10 December 2021	Progress Report
12	10 December 2021	Ethics Form
Semester 2		
11	9 May 2022/1pm	Submission of a full dissertation

Key Dates and Deliverables

➤ Semester 1

- **Deadline for submission of the Proposal Form:** 3:00pm on Monday 11 October 2021. Please submit the proposal form online as you have been advised by the UG office.

- **Deadline for submission of a Progress Report:** 10 December 2021.

Please submit a progress report (a written work of approximately 1,000-1,500 words) to your supervisor. (You do not need to submit a copy of it to the UG Office or the course coordinator.) The purpose of a progress report is to enable the supervisor to check if you are on the right track and are working on your dissertation steadily.

The progress report should demonstrate the progress you have made during Semester 1 and indicate how you will develop the research further. It normally includes the review of relevant literatures, research methods, and further work plan, etc. Please discuss with your supervisor what he/she expects in your progress report.

- **Deadline for submission of the Ethics form:** 10 December 2021.

Please also ensure that you submit the Ethics Form via Turnitin). You must obtain your [supervisor's signature](#) on the form.

➤ Semester 1

- **Deadline for submission of a full dissertation:** No later than 12 noon on Monday 9 May 2022.

You must submit an electronic copy to Blackboard.

Note on the dissertation process

➤ **Choosing a topic and securing a supervisor:**

It is very important that you

- (i) identify a *specific* topic that you are interested in,
- (ii) make sure that the topic is within your research capability,
- (iii) make sure that the topic is *relevant* to your degree course.

• **Be realistic**

Remember that you must complete your dissertation by the deadline and within a word limit. Contrary to what you might think, the dissertation does not have to be based on entirely first-hand, empirical research. The point is that you demonstrate your analytical skills. You are strongly advised to discuss your research approach with your supervisor.

• Your first task is to **find your supervisor**

To find a supervisor, please explore the staff lists under the “**Our divisions**” at the bottom of <https://www.mbs.ac.uk/research/>

Academic members of staff at AMBS are grouped into four divisions. Each division’s page provides you with the information of academic members’ research areas. (Please note that your supervisor must be a faculty member of Alliance Manchester Business School.) You should not assume that your proposed topic would be of your supervisor’s interest. You may need to be flexible to adapt/improve your topic based on your supervisor’s advice.

• **Submit the proposal form**

Once you have secured a supervisor and his/her agreement on your topic, you need to submit the proposal form online. The form can be downloaded from the [dissertation page in the Online UG Handbook](#).

Your proposal should outline a research question, objectives of your research, and a theoretical framework and methodology that you are going to apply. You should have an initial discussion with your supervisor before the proposal deadline. If you make a significant change in your dissertation topic after you submitted your proposal form to the UG office, you need to obtain the agreement from your supervisor. (Please note that if the change of the topic requires the change of the existing supervisor, you will need to find an alternative supervisor by yourself and inform the course coordinator about the change.)

• **About methods**

Consider carefully what type of methodology – qualitative or quantitative – is relevant to your topic. It is also important that you discuss feasibility of your plan with your supervisor.

(In case of quantitative methods, for example, please bear in mind that negative results of a hypothesis do not mean your thesis is unacceptable. It is more important that you demonstrate how the results were derived, analyse what the results would imply, and identify possible limitations in your work.)

Whatever method you choose, what matters most is how you handle results/findings academically and analyse rigorously.

➤ **Note:**

- An electronic submission link will open in this course's Blackboard space about two weeks before the deadline. (Until the link becomes available in Blackboard, you cannot submit your work electronically.)
- You have only ONE chance to submit an electronic copy to Blackboard. So, please ensure that you submit the final, full version.
- Submission of a different version later, or making a correction after the submission, is not allowed in any case. (This applies to both a paper copy and an electronic copy).
- The recommended format for an electronic copy is either a WORD or PDF file.

Reading List (for general guidance only)

- Bailey, S. (2006) Academic writing: A handbook for international students (2nd ed.).
- Creswell, J.W. (2009) Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., & Jackson, P. (2012) Management research.
- Monippally, M. & Pawar, B.S. (2010) Academic writing: A guide for management students and researchers.
- Saunders, M. et al (2009) Research methods for business students.
- Yin, R.K. (2003) Case study research: design and methods.

Assessment

Dissertation 100%

The word limit is **12,000 words +/- 10%** (this word count does not include the title page, abstract, table of contents, footnotes/endnotes, tables/figures, the list of references and appendices).

Examination: No exam

Coursework: No assessed mid-term coursework. However, in Weeks 12-13 of Semester-1, students are required to submit

- (i) A progress report (to your supervisor), and
- (ii) The ethics form (to the UG office)

A progress report is a formative assessment; thus, it will not be marked. However, you should arrange a meeting with your supervisor to receive feedback. This is normally done in January (subject to you supervisor's availability. Please consult your supervisor).

Please also see the **Key Dates** on p. 3 above.

Marking Process

The dissertation is assessed on various factors. For instance, credit is given to:

- the student's use of theory and the ability to justify its relevance to the dissertation topic.
- the student's ability to construct an argument and to develop it in a logical manner.
- skills in data collection, the ability to analyse the result, interpret its importance, and provide implications.
- the general presentation of the work, e.g., formatting, style, structure, logical development, appropriate referencing, and bibliography.
- clarity of expression of ideas, grammar, and spelling.

Please discuss with your supervisor for more details and specific issues.

The School follows a fair, rigorous and transparent marking process for all summative work. All dissertations are assessed by two examiners independently. The dissertation supervisor is normally the first marker. The supervisor will nominate an internal (second) examiner who is familiar with the given subject area. Similar to examination scripts, the dissertation may be forwarded to external examiners for a further evaluation to confirm a grade.

A list of detailed marking criteria and the reduced scale step marking grade descriptor are also available in this course's Blackboard space.

Feedback

- 1) You should keep your supervisor informed about your progress and ask the supervisor to provide feedback on your key output, especially a progress report.
- 2) After you submit your progress report to your supervisor in December, your supervisor will provide you with feedback in January. Please note, however, the timing and method of feedback may differ depending on each supervisor's schedule and preference.
- 3) You are responsible to make an appointment with your supervisor for feedback or check your supervisor as to how feedback will be given (some supervisors may provide feedback by email).
- 4) Final grade of your dissertation: Students will receive their dissertation mark *after* the meeting of the Board of Examiners and all final-year grades are confirmed. This normally takes place in the end of the academic year (**i.e., the end of June**). If you wish to receive specific feedback to your dissertation, you can contact your supervisor by email in the first instance, **AFTER** the final mark is released.

Methods of Feedback from students/course unit survey

- Students can give feedback on course organization and other general issues regarding the dissertation course by emailing to the course coordinator or meeting with her (by appointment only).
- At the end of the course, each student will be asked to complete the course unit survey, which will be used to gather feedback on general organisation of the course as well as overall quality of supervision.