**Research Methods**

**Overview**

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| Level | 4 (Semester 7) |
| Duration | 4 weeks |
| Lectures | 10x40 minutes/week for 2 weeks |
| Practicals/tutorials | 5x2 hours/week for 3 weeks |

**Learning Outcomes**

* By the end of the course students will have acquired the following:
* Knowledge and understanding of the theory and practice of business research including: philosophical ideas underpinning different research approaches; quantitative and qualitative research methods; the research process; ethical issues in research; the wider context of research; contemporary research ideas in business studies and the social sciences more generally;
* An understanding of how to apply research theories, methods and practices in designing, carrying out, analysing and writing up a small-scale research study;
* An awareness of a range of research approaches and methods, to facilitate selection of the most appropriate approach and method for addressing particular research questions
* An ability to review existing research, critique published literature, critically evaluate and assess evidence and the quality and validity of research;
* An appreciation of the ethical constraints on the conduct of research;
* Transferable intellectual skills including critical thinking, constructing an argument, and writing skills.

**Syllabus**

The course addresses the question of research methods, that is, how to do research in accountancy and finance, business management, real estate and social science more generally.

The kinds of questions that will be addressed include:

* how to design a questionnaire;
* how to analyse quantitative data;
* how to conduct a face-to-face interview;
* how to analyse interview transcripts;
* how to design a research project; how to gain access to a research sample.

The course also emphasises how research methods and practices are linked to broader philosophical ideas about the nature of reality (ontology) and how knowledge is constructed (epistemology).

The course will also address ethical issues in research, and questions about the validity and scientific status of knowledge.

The course is structured around a distinction between qualitative and quantitative research approaches and methods. It will introduce different qualitative methods (e.g. qualitative interviews; focus groups; ethnography and participant observation; secondary analysis of qualitative data) and quantitative methods (e.g. questionnaires and structured interviews; structured observation; content analysis and official statistics). The distinction between qualitative and quantitative approaches is a useful way of structuring the course and of introducing wider philosophical issues and debates. However, this distinction will also be critically examined and broken down, and there will be discussion of how these approaches can be combined in management, property, accountancy and finance research.