

School of Management and Languages

Undergraduate Dissertation Courses: Regulations and Procedures (Year 2011 to 2012)

Accountancy and Finance Courses: C30DX1 and C30DY2 (Co-ordinator Audrey Jackson)
Economics Courses: C20DA1 and C20DB2 (Co-ordinator Philippe LeMay-Boucher)
Management Courses: C10HD1 and C10HE2 (Co-ordinator James Richards)

The following regulations and procedures apply to all undergraduate students who are registered for the above dissertation courses (mandatory or optional), within the School of Management and Languages and should be read in conjunction with the notes of guidance issued for each subject area.

1. Dissertation Courses Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims

To provide an opportunity for undergraduate students to study, in depth, a topic of particular interest in the field of management, economics, accountancy and finance or other related subject area and to write a dissertation which is original work, in the sense that students should attempt to present personal discussion and analysis of the chosen topic. The topic itself does not need to be original.

1.2 Objectives

The student should be able to:

1. Identify and undertake an appropriate area of research. Students will be expected to set out at the start of the dissertation the reasons for selecting the research area and the research problem addressed in the dissertation, paying particular attention to its relevance to the subject area.
2. Undertake an appropriate literature review. This will require a **focused** review of the **relevant** literature. Students will be judged on their skills in selecting relevant aspects of the material read.
3. Explain and **justify** the methodology used. The dissertation should include a clear description of the methodology used, justifying the approach taken and explaining its contribution in terms of evidence collected and analysis undertaken.
4. Introduce empirical and theoretical evidence, arguments and/or other form of original contribution. Students should discuss with their Dissertation Supervisor at an early stage how they intend to bring in new evidence or some other form of empirical and theoretical research. Students should also discuss the importance and relevance of ethical research practices.
5. Undertake a **critical** analysis of literature, evidence, and theoretical arguments.

6. Reach conclusions. Here students will bring together the work of the dissertation by showing how the initial research plan has been addressed in such a way that conclusions may be formed from the evidence of the dissertation.
7. Adopt a style and presentation which is well structured, has clarity of language, makes use of figures when required and is appropriate to the dissertation topic whilst conforming with the “Dissertation Courses: Regulations and Procedures”.

2. Administrative Arrangements

2.1 Dissertation Supervisor

The dissertation will be written under the guidance of a Dissertation Supervisor who will normally be a member of the academic staff having knowledge of the subject area being researched and/or general research experience in the context of business management.

2.2 Dissertation Courses Co-ordinator

Each set of dissertation courses will have a Dissertation Co-ordinator (see front page) who will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the “Undergraduate Dissertation Courses: Regulations and Procedures”, the administrative arrangements and the allocation of students to Dissertation Supervisors.

2.3 SML Research Ethics Committee

Research associated with dissertation courses must satisfy the ethical practices observed by the School’s Research Ethics Committee (see Paragraph 4.3b).

3. Selecting a Dissertation Topic and preparing a Dissertation Proposal during the Semester Two of Stage Three of the degree programme

3.1 Dissertation Topic

Students should identify a dissertation topic and seek preliminary advice from an appropriate member of the academic staff of the School of Management and Languages as soon as possible in Semester Two of the third stage of the their degree programme.

3.2 Dissertation Proposal

Having established a suitable dissertation topic students are required to prepare and submit an Outline Dissertation Proposal (see Appendix 1) during Semester Two of the third stage of their degree programme.

- The purpose of the Dissertation Proposal is to ensure that the dissertation will be focused on a realistic objective that is achievable within the time scale available and to act as a check, at an early stage, on any excessive duplication in relation to other dissertations in the current or previous years. The Dissertation Proposal **must** be themed on a topic appropriate for the student’s degree programme (e.g. A Business Law student must make Business Law a major theme of the dissertation), as an inappropriately themed dissertation is unlikely to be counted as a qualifying module for certain badged degrees. The Dissertation Co-ordinators will review all dissertation proposals to ensure compliance with these requirements, yet it is the student’s responsibility to ensure this requirement is met in Stage Four of the degree programme.
- The Dissertation Proposal must be word processed in the format shown in Appendix 1.

- Students must have discussed their dissertation proposal with an appropriate member of staff before nominating a supervisor on the Dissertation Proposal. Everything will be done to ensure students will be allocated their preferred choice of supervisor, yet where demand for supervisors cannot be met, or there is a more suitable supervisor available, the relevant Dissertation Course Co-ordinator has the right to nominate a supervisor.
- **Two copies of the Dissertation Proposal must be submitted to the Coursework Office, by 1600hrs on the Friday of the 9th week of Semester Two in Stage Three of their degree programme. Students are not entitled to undertake a dissertation (or an equivalent course) unless a Dissertation Proposal is completed and submitted by this deadline. Without the dissertation (or an equivalent course) students cannot graduate with an honours degree.**
- The Dissertation Proposal will be reviewed by the Dissertation Supervisor. Students must arrange a meeting at the start of Semester One during Stage Four of their degree programme, or earlier, with their Dissertation Supervisor to discuss in detail the Dissertation Proposal – including research methodology and style of dissertation.

4. Writing the Dissertation during Stage Four of the degree programme

4.1 Meetings with the Dissertation Supervisor

Academic support will be provided during Stage Four of the degree programme, when the dissertation is being written, through meetings with the Dissertation Supervisor. The onus is on the student to be aware of the availability of the Dissertation Supervisor and arrange meetings as appropriate. Indeed, as part of on-going assessment of the Dissertation programmes, students are expected to keep a record of the supervisor meetings (see Dissertation Coursework Three and Appendix 5), e.g. when they occurred, what was discussed, etc.

It is of great importance that the student arranges to meet his/her supervisor as early as possible during Semester One of Stage Four. The student is entitled to five formal meetings with their supervisor. A **suggested** format for student-supervisor schedule can be found in Appendix 2 of this document.

It should be emphasised that this is the student's dissertation and is entirely the students own work. Coursework designed around the Dissertation Courses allows the Dissertation Supervisor to read one chapter of the dissertation in some detail in order to give feedback on direction, presentation, content and style. The Dissertation Supervisor may scan other chapters to understand the context of the research; however, they should not be expected to read the whole dissertation. Students need not adopt the Dissertation Supervisor's suggestions or recommendations and will not be asked to justify such a decision, provided their actions do not result in a major or unannounced change of subject or direction. **The Dissertation Supervisor will not read the finished work prior to submission.**

4.2 Dissertation Coursework One

During Semester One of Stage Four of the degree programme students are required to submit part one of Dissertation Coursework.

- Part one of the Dissertation Coursework is an extended research proposal as outlined in Appendix 3.
- The Dissertation Coursework must be word-processed.

- Feedback from the supervisor should be provided within two weeks of receipt of the Dissertation Coursework at your next dissertation meeting, or a time that is mutual to both parties.
- **Two copies of Dissertation Coursework One must be submitted, via the Coursework Office, by 1400hrs on the Friday of Week 4 of Semester One in Stage Four of the degree programme.**
- Supervisors must copy written feedback to the relevant Dissertation Co-ordinator.
- Satisfactory completion of the Dissertation Coursework One and Two (see Paragraphs 4.3a and 4.3b) will result in the award of 15 credit points (see Paragraph 8).

4.3a Dissertation Coursework Two: Part 1, Literature Review

During Semester One of Stage Four of the degree programme students are required to submit part two of Dissertation Coursework.

- Part two of the Dissertation Coursework is primarily a draft literature review that will have been carried out in the course of preparing the dissertation.
- The Dissertation Coursework/draft literature review should be between 3,000 and 4,000 words long. Coursework Two must have a full reference list and be formatted in Harvard style (not included in the word count – any tables and figures also used should be excluded from the word count).
- You must attach the form in Appendix 4 to your coursework. Please make sure you complete the headings of Appendix 4 (Student Name to Dissertation Supervisor).
- The form should be the basis of the next meeting with your supervisor, i.e. discuss re-working the literature review, making plans for subsequent chapters and fieldwork.
- The Dissertation Coursework must be word-processed.
- **Two copies of Dissertation Coursework Two, Part 1, must be submitted, via the Coursework Office, by 1400hrs on the Friday of Week 8 of Semester One in Stage Four of the degree programme.**
- Feedback from the supervisor should be provided within two weeks of receipt of the Dissertation Coursework, or a time that is mutual to both parties.
- Supervisors must copy written feedback to the relevant Dissertation Co-ordinator.

Note: Students should be advised that the usual rules regarding self-plagiarism (see Paragraph 7) apply for this course. Where students wish to build upon previous literature review work done in other courses they should note that this is perfectly acceptable, but it is expected that in the normal course of development of a literature review the final submission will be different from the earlier work. It is not acceptable to adopt sections of text from earlier submissions without significant development of the concepts and narrative.

4.3b Dissertation Coursework Two: Part 2, On-line Ethics Approval Form

During Semester One of Stage Four of the degree programme students are required to discuss with your supervisor ethical considerations relevant to your research project and gain ethical approval for

your study. This is particularly the case if your research involves vulnerable groups, such as children, the elderly, the disabled, and ethnic minorities.

- **All** students are required to complete and submit an electronic On-line Research Ethics Approval Form as part of Dissertation Coursework Two for approval from School Ethics Committee. The form can be accessed, filled-in and submitted at the following web address: <http://www.sml.hw.ac.uk/forms/ethics/ug.html>. You will receive feedback on your On-line Research Ethics Approval form directly from the Chair of the School Ethics Committee within two weeks after the deadline, via email.
- **The On-line Research Ethics Approval Form must be completed by 1400hrs of Week 8 of Semester One in Stage Four of the degree programmes.** You must **not** begin fieldwork until you have attained ethical approval for your study. If you wish to start your fieldwork early you should submit your On-line Research Ethics Approval form early as well.
- Satisfactory completion of the Dissertation Coursework One and Two (see Paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3) will result in the award of 15 credit points (see Paragraph 8).
- Help and guidance on how to fill in the On-line Research Ethics Approval Form can be found on each respective dissertation course VISION page.

4.4 Dissertation Coursework Three

During Semester Two of Stage Four of the degree programme students are required to submit a Dissertation Self-Assessment Progress Report.

- **Two copies of Dissertation Coursework Three must be submitted (one copy for the Dissertation Co-ordinator and one copy for the Dissertation Supervisor), via the Coursework Office, by 1600hrs on the Friday of Week 3 of Semester Two in Stage Four of the degree programme.**
- The Dissertation Self-Assessment Progress Report must be word processed in the format shown in Appendix 5.

5. Submitting the dissertation

Accountancy & Finance Dissertations

You are required to submit two hard copies of the dissertation, written and bound in the approved manner (see Paragraph 6) to the Coursework Office plus an electronic copy via the Turnitin function on VISION. With your hard copies, you must also submit any supporting electronic data, e.g. SPSS or Excel files, sound files from interviews, transcribed interviews in word processed format, re-analysed data, etc. on a USB drive or CD-Rom. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that submitted electronic files are readable and are identical to the hard copies. **The dissertation should be submitted by 12.00hrs on the Thursday of Week 12 of Semester Two in Stage Four of the degree programme for assessment.**

Economics Dissertations

You are required to submit two hard copies of the dissertation, written and bound in the approved manner (see Paragraph 6) to the Coursework Office plus an electronic copy via the Turnitin function on VISION. With your hard copies, you must also submit any supporting electronic data, e.g. SPSS or Excel files, sound files from interviews, transcribed interviews in word processed format, re-analysed data, etc. on a USB drive or CD-Rom. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that submitted electronic files are readable and are identical to the hard copies. **The dissertation should be submitted by 12.00hrs on the Thursday of Week 12 of Semester Two in Stage Four of the degree programme for assessment.**

Management Dissertations

You are required to submit two hard copies of the dissertation, written and bound in the approved manner (see Paragraph 6) to the Coursework Office plus an electronic copy via the Turnitin function on VISION. With your hard copies, you must also submit any supporting electronic data, e.g. SPSS or Excel files, sound files from interviews, transcribed interviews in word processed format, re-analysed data, etc. on a USB drive or CD-Rom. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that submitted electronic files are readable and are identical to the hard copies. **The dissertation should be submitted by 14.00hrs on the Thursday of Week 12 of Semester Two in Stage Four of the degree programme for assessment.**

These deadlines are final. In line with SML policy on late coursework submissions, **all** dissertations submitted after the deadline will automatically be subject to a 30 per cent deduction. The 30 per cent deduction will be withdrawn if the student can satisfy the Mitigating Circumstances Board there are adequate reasons for the late submission. Students should submit supporting evidence to the relevant Dissertation Co-ordinator, e.g. a medical note or a letter from the University Counsellor. Regardless of the circumstances, dissertations submitted more than two weeks after the deadline will **not** be marked.

You must keep a copy of data that cannot be submitted in an electronic format. Examiners or other School officials may request such data. Field data includes, for example, completed hand written questionnaires and interviews, field diaries, audio recordings, etc.

Binding the Dissertation is the responsibility of the student. Students should aim to have their work ready to be bound several days in advance of the deadline. Dissertations can be bound on campus using Graphics and Printing Services (this is likely to cost between £1.50 and £2 per copy – paid by the student). The dissertation should be ring bound, fronted with a transparent cover, and, backed with a black sheet. Students also have the option of having the dissertation bound off campus.

6. Length and structure of the dissertation

6.1 Dissertation Length

- For students who are registered for **Accountancy and Finance Dissertation** Courses (C30DX1 and C30DY2) – the dissertation must not exceed 14,000 words including textnotes and abstract but excluding appendices, references, acknowledgment and personal statements, table of contents and list of abbreviations.
- For students who are registered for **Economics Dissertation** Courses (C20DA1 and C20DB2) – the dissertation must not exceed 14,000 words including textnotes and abstract but excluding appendices, references, acknowledgment and personal statements, table of contents and list of abbreviations.
- For students who are registered for **Management Dissertation** Courses (C10HD1 and C10HE2) – the dissertation must not exceed 14,000 words including, textnotes and abstract but excluding appendices, references, acknowledgment and personal statements, table of contents and list of abbreviations.
- All dissertations submitted must include a word count (see Appendix 6).
- A dissertation is not validly submitted until it is accepted by the Dissertation Co-ordinator as being within the word count limit.

6.2 Dissertation Structure

- **Title Page:** The title page should adopt the format shown in Appendix 6 and should show:
 - The title of the dissertation
 - The name of the author
 - The name of the Dissertation Supervisor
 - The word count
 - The degree programme which the student is registered for,
 - The date of submission
- **Abstract:** The dissertation should contain an abstract of up to 350 words.
- **Acknowledgements and Personal Statement:** A brief statement should be provided which:
 1. Acknowledges all help received in writing the dissertation.
 2. Gives an assurance that the dissertation is the student's own work (see Paragraph 7 regarding plagiarism). In particular students may need to supply evidence of how they arrive at their findings.
 3. Gives an assurance that the *SML Undergraduate Dissertation Courses: Regulations and Procedures* has been read and understood.
 4. Acknowledges that the student has gained ethical approval for their study and that they have their On-line Research Ethics Approval Form passed off by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.
- **The student must sign the Personal Statement.**
- **Contents Page:** The contents page should list the chapter headings, appendices, references and the pages on which they can be found.
- **Sections and Chapters:** The Dissertation should be divided into chapters and sections as appropriate to the topic. The introduction should include a statement on the dissertation aims and

objectives and the conclusion should include a statement on the extent to which the aims and objectives have been met.

- **Text:** There are a number of regulations which students should observe:
 1. The dissertation must be written in English.
 2. The dissertation should be word processed on one side of the page (A4 size paper), with double line spacing using 12 point text.
 3. Pages should be numbered consecutively, centred at the bottom of the page.
 4. Pages should have a margin on the left and right-hand sides. The margins should be at least 25mm wide.
 5. Any direct quotations in the text should be properly indicated as such, and their sources listed in the references.
- **Textnotes:** Textnotes can provide additional information on points made in the text of the dissertation. They may be presented as footnotes or as endnotes, either of which should be kept to a minimum. Neither footnotes nor endnotes should be used, however, if the sole purpose is to give a page or reference, since these should be presented as parenthetical insertions into the main text of the dissertation. Articles and books mentioned in the text, including textnotes, should be identified by the author's name and the year of publication. The title of the article or book should then be listed in the dissertation's references.
- **References:** **All references** used in writing the dissertation should be provided with works (articles and books) compiled in alphabetical order by author or first-named author. In line with SML policy, in-text references and the reference list must adhere to the Harvard system.
- **Appendices:** Appendices may be used to provide supporting evidence but should only be used as necessary. Students may wish to include in appendices, evidence which confirms the originality of their work or illustrates points of principle set out in the main text. **Appendices should contain a maximum of 10 pages.** Only subsidiary material should be included in appendices.

7. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is when a student attempt to pass off deliberately or unintentionally someone else's work as their own. Plagiarism comes in many forms, but typical examples (courtesy of the University of Sussex) include:

- *Collusion* – when one student allows another student to copy their work.
- *Complete plagiarism* – where the work is copied entirely from one or more sources.
- *Partial plagiarism* – this involves inserting an unacknowledged passage of text into the coursework.
- *Word switch* – copying sentences and changing a few words without appropriate reference to the original source.
- *Concealing sources* – failure to make ongoing acknowledgements to original sources used more than once in a piece of work.
- *Self-plagiarism* – when a student uses material from a previous assignment in a current assignment.
- *Inadvertent plagiarism* – the result of poor study skills.

In previous years SML Dissertation students have been reported to the University's Disciplinary Committee for: extensive close paraphrasing with and without full attribution to the original source, copying from the work of ex-Heriot-Watt University students and non-Heriot-Watt students, the use of fictional data, "cutting and pasting" of academic literature and Internet-based texts directly into the dissertation, and excessive reproduction of existing literature with or without full attribution to the original source. Plagiarism, in whatever form it takes, is viewed in SML as a form of cheating and the University takes a very serious view regarding any student involved in cheating (*University Ordinance No. 9*). In SML the main approach to detecting plagiarism is through dissertation examiners and co-ordinators using their experience of supervision and access to plagiarism tools, such as Turnitin. Where there is reasonable suspicion of plagiarism the student will be referred to the University's Disciplinary Committee. If your work is reported to the University's Disciplinary Committee you are unlikely to have your case heard and dissertation marked in time for the regular July graduation. Severe penalties will be applied in cases where students have been found to have plagiarised. There is plenty of literature on what constitutes plagiarism in the campus library, particularly in relation to conducting a Business Management-related dissertation.

A general guide to referencing (a fuller account is provided in Appendix 7) the work of others is that a direct quotation must be acknowledged in the text with quotation marks – e.g. According to Bloggs (2007, p. 35), teamworking can be defined as "a co-ordinated attempt to harness the innate human desire to co-operate and be allowed to work in an anonymous fashion." A general idea (e.g. teamworking is good for the employer and the employee) must also be acknowledged by the reference to the author and year – e.g. It has been said before that teamworking is good for employee job satisfaction and employers see advantages in higher levels of production (Bloggs, 2007). You must also fully reference figures or charts taken from the work of others.

If you have any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism then you are advised to consult your Dissertation Supervisor.

8. Assessment and Credit Rating

8.1 Assessment

All dissertations will be read by two internal examiners including the Dissertation Supervisor. In addition, some dissertations may be read by an External Examiner. An agreed mark will be awarded for the dissertation courses. Criteria used in the assessment will reflect the dissertation course aims and objectives (see Paragraph 1, Paragraph 9, and Appendix 8).

Assessment of students who are registered for **Accountancy and Finance** Courses (C30DX1 and C30DY2), **Economics** Courses (C20DA1 and C20DB2) and **Management** Courses (C10HD1 and C10HE2) is based entirely on the written dissertation content.

8.2 Credit Rating

For the purposes of credit rating - Regulation 3 (New), Paragraphs 6 and 17:

1. In the event that the dissertation is **not** submitted, yet Dissertation Coursework One and Two has been satisfactorily completed, the student will be awarded 15 credit points.
2. The students will be awarded 30 credit points for passing for the dissertation courses.

9. Guidelines for Assessment of Dissertations

These notes are intended as a guide to both students and academic staff by setting out a description of standards to achieve the honours grade indicated

	Fail	Third	Lower second	Upper second	First
Identification of research area, objective(s)					
1.	No identification of the area.		Area, objective(s) broadly identified and stated.		Precise statement of area, objective(s). The boundaries of the dissertation are assessed.
Use of literature (books, journals, lectures, etc.)					
2.	Random selection of texts used. References cannot be easily checked.		A few appropriate texts used. References generally pinpointed.	Sources methodically searched for relevant texts.	Wide range of sources searched methodically. Most relevant texts referred to. References pinpointed.
Identification of Research Methodology					
3.	No identification of methodology.		Methodology broadly identified and stated		Detailed discussion of methodology.
New evidence and/or other forms of original contribution					
4.	Irrelevant evidence or old evidence presented as new.	Lack of awareness of potential bias in evidence presented.		Objective evidence derived from relevant sources.	Original idea giving objective evidence relevant to the area.
Analysis of literature, evidence or theoretical arguments					
5.	Analysis not consistent with evidence.		Analysis broadly consistent with evidence.		Analysis consistent with evidence.
Conclusions and recommendations					
6.	Extent to which objectives met is not clear.	Conclusions roughly in line with evidence and argument.	Conclusions/recommendations generally follow from the facts and explicitly related to the argument.		Precise conclusions/recommendations explicitly related to theoretical arguments. Evidence clearly states which objectives have been met.
Style, originality (Turnitin) and presentation (structure clarity of language, use of figures)					
7.	Style puts the reader off. Misuse of figures. Excessive similarity index.	Logical sequence, using figures as a limited aid. High similarity index.	Logical sequence and use of figures. A good similarity index.		Style creates a favourable impression. Clear and logical. Imaginative use of figures. Very low similarity index.

10. Timetable

10.1 Stage Three of Degree Programme

- During Semester Two Year Three identify a Dissertation Topic and seek advice from an appropriate member of academic staff. (Paragraph 3.1)
- During Semester Two produce an Outline Dissertation Proposal and submit two copies by 1600hrs on Friday Week 9. (Paragraph 3.2 and Appendix 1)

Where possible students will be allocated their preferred supervisor, but excessive demand may lead to re-allocation.

10.2 Stage Four of Degree Programme

- During Semester One produce an Extended Dissertation Proposal and submit two copies by 14.00 Friday of Week 4. (Paragraph 4.2 and Appendix 3)
- During Semester One produce Dissertation Coursework Two (Literature Review) and submit two copies by 1600hrs on the Friday of Week 8. (Paragraph 4.3a and Appendix 4)
- During Semester One submit an On-line Research Ethics Approval Form, electronically, for approval for fieldwork studies to the School Ethics Committee by 14.00hrs on the Friday of Week 8. (see Paragraph 4.3b)
- During Semester Two produce a Dissertation Progress Report and submit two copies by 16.00hrs on the Friday of the 3rd week. (see Paragraph 4.4 and Appendix 5)
- During Semester Two submit two hard copies, one electronic copy via Turnitin, plus data filed on USB drive/CD Rom:

Accountancy & Finance: 12.00hrs on the Thursday of the 12th week (Paragraph 5)
Economics: 12.00hrs on the Thursday of the 12th week (Paragraph 5)
Management: 14.00hrs on the Thursday of the 12th week (Paragraph 5)

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Appendix 1: Outline Dissertation Research Proposal

Submission Date 16.00hrs on Friday, Week 9, Semester 2, Stage 3 of Degree Programme

Student Name and Matriculation Number:	
General degree pathway (circle applicable)	Management – Accountancy and Finance - Economics
Degree Title:	
Indicate a preferred Dissertation Supervisor:	
Provisional Title (a sentence that summarises your proposed research project):	
The Research Question(s) (<i>i.e.</i> , what do you hope to establish with your research?)	
Why did you select this topic (e.g. a future career choice, a favourite topic, etc.)?	
List up to five journal articles, reports or books that related closely to what you wish to research:	
How will you obtain data/information to write your dissertation (e.g. re-analyse existing datasets, law reports, interviews, questionnaires, focus group, etc.)?	
What problems do you foresee (e.g. will I be able to get access to the right people at the right time, etc.)?	
Any other comments:	
For staff purposes only:	

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Appendix 2: Example Dissertation Supervision Schedule

**Semester
One**

Date	Targets	Meeting Agenda
Week 1/2	1 st main dissertation meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify research topic • Discuss literature search, writing and structure • Discuss fieldwork
Week 4	Submission: Extended research proposal (See Appendix 3 of course rules and regulations – approx. 1800 words)	
Week 6	2 nd dissertation meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on extended proposal • Discuss full draft of literature review • Discuss research methodology and fieldwork • Discuss On-line Research Ethics Approval Form
Week 8	Submission 1: Draft literature review (See Appendix 4 of course rules and regulations – approx. 3000 – 4000 words) Submission 2: On-line Research Ethics Approval Form	
Week 10	3rd dissertation meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on draft literature review • Discuss methodology chapter • Discuss plans for fieldwork

**Semester
Two**

Date	Targets	Meeting Agenda
Week 3	Submission: Self-assessment progress report (See Appendix 5 of course rules and regulations)	
Week 4	4th dissertation meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss self-assessment progress report • Discuss progress with data collection • Discuss data analysis and evaluation
Week 8	5th dissertation meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss dissertation progress • Discuss compilation of research findings
Week 12	Submission: Final dissertation (See Appendix 6 of course rules and regulations – 14,000 words)	

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Appendix 3: Extended Dissertation Research Proposal

Submission Date 16.00hrs on Friday, Week 4, Semester 1, Stage 4 of Degree Programme

Student Name and Matriculation Number:			
General degree pathway (circle applicable)	Management – Accountancy and Finance – Economics		
Degree Title:			
Course Codes:		Date:	
Dissertation Supervisor:			
Dissertation Title:			
Provide a 500 word rationale and outline of your research project (<i>i.e.</i> , introduction).			
Outline your specific research question(s) and your main aims and objectives (<i>i.e.</i> , what do you hope to establish with your research?) and state the contribution of your project to research in this area. (300 words maximum).			
Provide a detailed description of your chosen research method and design. This should include a description of how you are going to gather the information and how you are going to analyze it. (500 words maximum)			
Using literature identified provide a 500 word sample of your literature review.			
List 20 relevant journal, professional publications or policy documents, etc. that will be used within your project. This should be presented in a reference list format (Harvard style).			
Provide a time schedule for the execution of the dissertation from start to finish.			
For staff purposes only:			

Note: Students should be advised that the usual rules regarding self-plagiarism (see Paragraph 7) apply for this course. Where students wish to build upon previous literature review work done in other courses they should note that this is perfectly acceptable, but it is expected that in the normal course of development of a literature review the final submission will be different from the earlier work. It is not acceptable to adopt sections of text from earlier submissions without significant development of the concepts and narrative.

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Appendix 4: Dissertation Coursework Two – Supervisor Feedback

Submission Date 16.00hrs on Friday, Week 8, Semester 1, Stage 4 of Degree Programme

Student Name and Matriculation Number:

Degree Title:

Dissertation Course Codes:

Date:

Dissertation Title:

Name of Dissertation Supervisor:

DISSERTATION SUPERVISOR COMMENTS

Comments on literature sources:

Comments on draft literature review:

Further comments and advice:

Note for Dissertation Supervisor: Please send a copy for each student to the relevant Dissertation Courses Co-ordinator.

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Appendix 5: Dissertation Coursework Three (Self-Assessment Progress Report)

Submission Date 16.00hrs on Friday, Week 3, Semester 2, Stage 4 of Degree Programme

Student Name and Matriculation Number:			
General degree pathway (circle applicable)	Management – Accountancy and Finance – Economics		
Degree Title:			
Dissertation Course Codes:		Date:	
Dissertation Title:			
Dissertation Supervisor:			
Provide details of the meetings you have had so far with your supervisor since the beginning of Semester One, e.g. how many times you have met, when you met, what you discussed, etc.			
Have you finalised your dissertation structure? If not, please explain why:			
Have you obtained any new evidence required for your dissertation (e.g. interviews, company accounts, questionnaire surveys, data, etc.)? If not, please set out when you expect this to take place or indicate that this is not relevant for your dissertation:			
Have you completed any further draft chapters (give details)? If not when would you expect to do so?			
Supervisor comments:			

Note for Dissertation Supervisor: Please immediately notify the relevant Dissertation Courses Co-ordinator of any under-performing student.

Appendix 6: Title Page Template (TO BE DELETED)

<p>Dissertation Title: INSERT YOUR TITLE HERE</p> <p>by</p> <p>INSERT YOUR NAME HERE</p>

Dissertation Supervisor: **INSERT NAME OF YOUR SUPERVISOR HERE**

Word Count: **INSERT FINAL WORD COUNT HERE**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the degree of MA (Hons) in
INSERT YOUR DEGREE TITLE HERE

at

School of Management and Languages
Heriot-Watt University
Edinburgh

INSERT MONTH AND YEAR

School of Management and Languages
Undergraduate Dissertation Courses: Regulations and Procedures

Appendix 7: Notes of Guidance on dissertation writing using original source material

1. Giving reference to the work of others

When writing a dissertation, you will gather evidence relevant to the area of research. That evidence will include the opinions of others as published in academic and professional works. It is important that you indicate in the text the source of the information used. If you use ideas, hypotheses or opinions of **other** people, you need to indicate that these are not your own ideas, by clearly identifying the source. Consequently, references are required not only for quotes, but also for other information taken from specific sources.

In line with SML policy, when making reference to the work of others in your dissertation you must use the Harvard System, as exemplified below:

“The best strategy for survival for a large firm ... might be to increase its size.” (Singh, 1971, p. 142).

However, instead of using a direct quote, you may in the dissertation state:

The best strategy for survival for a large firm might be to increase its size (Singh, 1971, p. 142).

This is not your idea, and you need to state so clearly. *You still need to identify the source, even if it is not a quote.*

During your reading, you will find authors discussing ideas from other persons' work. This may involve an interpretation of their ideas or results. Where possible, you should read the original work, as authors may misinterpret or misrepresent work of others. For instance, **it is possible to access journal articles, reports and academic books not available through the campus library via the Inter-library Loan system (£2 per resource), or through reciprocal arrangements between Heriot-Watt University and other institutions with libraries in the Edinburgh area (check with any campus librarian).** However, on occasions it may be too difficult to obtain the original source, and you may, therefore, want to refer to findings from an article which you have not read but which has been referred to in the work of another person.

For example, Miller and O'Leary (1987) discussed research by Argyris (1952). If you want to refer to the idea generated by Argyris but you are unable to read the 1952 paper because of time constraints or lack of availability, you will need to explain how you obtained the information. There are several ways in which academic authors do this but one approach which you may find useful is:

According to Miller and O'Leary (1987), it was held by Argyris (1952) that the mechanisation of accounting techniques was depersonalising organisational controls.

By doing this you also protect yourself against any risk that Miller and O'Leary may have misunderstood what Argyris actually said.

If you want to directly quote material from Argyris, as reproduced in Miller and O’Leary, one method of referencing is as follows:

Accounting techniques “have reached the ultimate state of dwelling within an electronic tube and emerging only to shake a mechanical finger at erring human beings” (Argyris, 1952, foreword, in Miller and O’Leary, 1987, p. 257).

For undergraduate dissertations, the references should contain an alphabetical listing of the books and articles read. Thus, the references should include Miller and O’Leary (1987), but not Argyris (1952).

In the dissertation you are expected to develop your own ideas and state your own opinions. However, the work of other people will be essential to the development of your own thoughts and ideas. You need to identify what ideas of other people you have drawn upon so that the examiners know how you have used these ideas in forming your own conclusions.

2. References

If you have referred to the work of other people, you need to give a full reference to the source in the list of references. Examples of references from various sources are given below. The references will usually be ordered alphabetically.

If there are two or more references by the same author(s) in the same year, add a, b, c, etc. on to the year (see newspaper article where author unknown below).

If an article has been written by 3 or more authors, give the name of all authors in the references. However in the text, use the name of the first author, followed by *et al.* and the year of publication. For example, Fama *et al.* (1969) was the first applications of event study methodology.

2.1 Examples of entries in the references

The following are examples of how to treat individual source items. **Please note that final reference lists should not be sub-classified into books, journal articles, etc.** (See specimen references below in section 2.2.)

Books

Fairburn, J.A., and Kay, J.A., (1990), *Mergers & Merger Policy*, Oxford University Press.

Chapter in book

Fairburn, J.A., (1990), “The Evolution of Merger Policy in Britain”, in Fairburn, J.A., and Kay, J.A., (1990), *Mergers & Merger Policy*, Oxford University Press, pp. 193-230.

Journal articles

Fama, E.F., (1980), “Agency Problems and the Theory of the Firm”, *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 88, No. 21, pp. 288-307.

Fama, E.F., Fisher, L., Jensen, M.C., and Roll, R., (1969), “The Adjustment of Stock Prices to New Information”, *International Economic Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1, February, pp. 1-21.

Newspaper article where author known

Jonquieres, G.D., (1992), "Decline in Cross-Border Deals", *Financial Times*, January 10, Section II, p. 17.

Newspaper article where author unknown

Economist, (1992a), "Mad Mergers in Europe", February 1, p. 18.

Economist, (1992b), "Perrier Bottled", March 21, p. 107.

Official Documents, e.g., Accounting Standards

ABS, (1994), FRS 5: Reporting the Substance of Transactions, Accounting Standards Board.

[In the text you give (ASB, 1994) as the reference.]

Internet sources

Reuters, (1996), "EC says no to 'gentleman's agreement' with UEFA over Bosman", Internet Soccer Features,

<http://www.nando.net/newsroom/sports/oh/1996/oth/soc/feat/archive/020196/soc/51483.html> (last accessed 20/5/2011).

In the references, the above sources should be listed alphabetically as follows:

2.2 Example Reference List – please note that the reference list is not sectioned by type of reference

ASB, (1994), FRS5: *Reporting the Substance of Transactions*, Accounting Standards Board.

Economist, (1992a), "Mad Mergers in Europe", February 1, p. 18.

Economist, (1992b), "Perrier Bottled", March 21, p. 107.

Fairburn, J.A., (1990), "The Evolution of Merger Policy in Britain", in Fairburn, J.A., and Kay, J.A., (1990), *Mergers & Merger Policy*, Oxford University Press, pp. 193-230.

Fairburn, J.A., and Kay, J.A., (1990), *Mergers & Merger Policy*, Oxford University Press.

Fama, E.F., (1980), "Agency Problems and the Theory of the Firm", *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 88, No. 21, pp. 288-307.

Fama, E.F., Fisher, L., Jensen, M.C., and Roll, R., (1969), "The Adjustment of Stock prices to New Information", *International Economic Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1, February, pp. 1-21.

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<http://www.nando.net/newsroom/sports/oh/1996/oth/soc/feat/archive/020196/soc/51483.html> (last accesses 20/5/2011).

School of Management and Languages
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Appendix 8: Dissertation Courses Marking Scheme and Summary Marking Sheet

Student's Name:

Degree Programme:

Dissertation Title:

Mark Awarded:

Examiner:

Date:

Examiner's Comments:

1. Identification of research area and objectives:

2. Use of literature:

3. Methodology:

4. New evidence and/or other form of original contribution:

5. Analysis of empirical evidence and/or theoretical arguments:

6. Conclusions:

7. Style, originality (Turnitin report) and dissertation presentation:

Other comments: