

University of the West of Scotland

Module Descriptor

Session: 2024/25

Title of Module: MSc Masters Project			
Code: COMP11117	SCQF Level: 11 (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)	Credit Points: 60	ECTS: 30 (European Credit Transfer Scheme)
School:	School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences		
Module Co-ordinator:	Bikrant Koirala		
Summary of Module			
<p>The MSc Masters project is designed to enable students to demonstrate their ability to present sustained rational arguments and independent conclusions based on a body of personal research. The content and output of the project must relate to the student's Programme of Study. Projects exploring a solution to a 'live' business opportunity/problem are welcomed. However, all projects must be supported by a clear academic underpinning which can be demonstrated in the literature review. During the module students are also introduced to general research principles, different approaches to undertaking and validating research (e.g. quantitative and qualitative research), and alternative methods of implementing these research approaches (e.g. experimentation, action research). In addition, the module also covers issues such as: planning a project, literature research, critiquing published research, reflection on research process and output, legal and ethical requirements, and constraints.</p> <p>In the case of software specifications or designs, the arguments used are likely to relate to the critical evaluation of the requirements and in the assessment of alternative tools, methods and solutions that could be employed, and the conclusions will concern the justification for the choices made. Alternatively, the project may be primarily concerned with the evaluation of some existing tool or technique or software system, and the arguments shall be concerned with the development and application of criteria in performing such an assessment.</p> <p>Additionally, projects may require the gathering of empirical evidence by directly testing such tools or systems, and/or by seeking information from those who use (or would use in the case of a system to be developed) the system about aspects of its use. In such cases the student will need to present arguments to justify the approach taken in obtaining such evidence and to present it in such a way as to support the conclusions that can be drawn (or not drawn) from it.</p>			

- Undertaking this module will provide the student with the opportunity to develop the following UWS graduate attributes: Universal: critical thinker, analytical, inquiring, ethically minded, research-minded; Work-ready: knowledgeable, problem-solver, effective communicator, motivated, potential leader, enterprising; Successful: Autonomous, innovative, creative resilient, driven, transformational.

Module Delivery Method

Face-To-Face	Blended	Fully Online	HybridC	Hybrid 0	Work-Based Learning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

See Guidance Note for details.

Campus(es) for Module Delivery

The module will **normally** be offered on the following campuses / or by Distance/Online Learning: (Provided viable student numbers permit) (tick as appropriate)

Paisley:	Ayr:	Dumfries:	Lanarkshire:	London:	Distance/Online Learning:	Other:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Add name

Term(s) for Module Delivery

(Provided viable student numbers permit).

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Learning Outcomes: (maximum of 5 statements)

These should take cognisance of the SCQF level descriptors and be at the appropriate level for the module.

At the end of this module the student will be able to:

L1	critically evaluate, identify, and consider the practical use of approaches to research to produce a MSc level project specification (relevant to the domain of the student's specific degree programme)
L2	critically review and evaluate arguments, research approaches, evidence, and conclusions in the academic and research literature (relevant to the domain of the student's specific degree programme), and of the underlying theoretical assumptions and concepts of such approaches

L3	demonstrate an ability to select and apply in a critical and reflective fashion, appropriate research and/or development techniques in producing a solution or solutions to a practical problem (in an area relevant to the student's specific degree programme)
L4	critically and reflectively plan and execute a project to develop an artifact that is fit for purpose in addressing a stated problem (relevant to the domain of the student's specific degree programme)
L5	write a detailed, well-argued and coherent report of a sustained independent work of high quality that fulfils an agreed specification
Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	SCQF Level 11 Research Specification, Literature reviews, Research Methodologies, Data Collection and Analysis, Reporting, in-depth knowledge of their chosen research area
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	SCQF Level 11 Conducting a literature search, identifying appropriate research methodologies and techniques, gathering and making sense of data; writing a research report, developing a technical artifact where relevant
Generic Cognitive skills	SCQF Level 11 Research, Analysis, Reporting, Critical Evaluation and Reflection
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	SCQF Level 11 Use of appropriate ICT in achieving the research objectives e.g. in developing artefacts or data collection/analysis; presenting the results of the project in an appropriate, academic format
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with others	SCQF Level 11 Taking on responsibility for the selection of the research topic and ownership of the research process including integrity in the use of sources. Understanding the application of ethical principles in research; managing and respecting potential research collaborators, 'users', 'clients', and any others who may contribute to the student's project. Able to conduct and report a piece of research following given ethical guidelines
Pre-requisites:	Before undertaking this module the student should have undertaken the following:

	Module Code:	Module Title:
	Other:	
Co-requisites	Module Code:	Module Title:

*Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	Student Learning Hours (Normally totalling 200 hours): (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture/Core Content Delivery	2
Tutorial/Synchronous Support Activity	10
Independent Study	588
	600 Hours Total
**Indicative Resources: (eg. Core text, journals, internet access)	
<p>The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:</p> <p>Oates, B. (2012) <i>Researching Information Systems and Computing</i>, Sage*</p> <p>Cornford, T. and Smithson, S. (2006) <i>Project Research in Information Systems: A Student's Guide</i>. (2nd edition), Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.*</p> <p>Dawson, C., 2009 (2nd edition), <i>Projects in Computing and Information Systems: A Student Guide</i>, Addison-Wesley*</p> <p>Howard, K., Sharp J.A., Peters J. (2002), <i>The Management of a Student Research Project</i>, The OpenUniversity Press*</p> <p>Lazar, J., Feng, J.H., Hochheiser, H. (2009), <i>Research Methods in Human Computer Interaction</i>, Wiley and Sons*</p> <p>Pears, R., Shields G. (2016), <i>Cite them right: the essential referencing guide</i>, 9th ed, Palgrave MacMillan*</p>	

Robson, C. (2003), How to do a Research Project, Blackwell*

Saunders, M.N.K., Thornhill, A., Lewis, P. and McMillan, K. (2008) Research Methods for Business Students:AND "How to Write Dissertations and Project Reports, Prentice-Hall*

Weaver, P. (2003), Success in Your Project: A Guide to Student System Development Projects, Prentice-Hall.*

Wisker, G. (2008) The Postgraduate Research Handbook (2nd edition), Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.*

Please ensure the list is kept short and current. Essential resources should be included, broader resources should be kept for module handbooks / Aula VLE.

Resources should be listed in Right Harvard referencing style or agreed professional body deviation and in alphabetical order.

(*N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the [Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure](#): Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: [UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code](#).

Please ensure any specific requirements are detailed in this section. Module Co-ordinators should consider the accessibility of their module for groups with protected characteristics..

(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	Computing
Assessment Results (Pass/Fail)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

School Assessment Board	Business and Applied Computing
Moderator	TBC
External Examiner	TBC
Accreditation Details	Pending
Changes/Version Number	2

Assessment: (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

The module offers 2 choices of written assessment output. Students can either submit (a) a 'traditional' written report (maximum 18000 words) or (b) an output in the form of a paper suitable for a peer reviewed journal publication (no submission or acceptance by the selected journal is necessary for the MSc Project).

Choice of the latter output should be agreed with the supervisor (who will advise on a suitable journal) and the module co-ordinator. Guidelines as to the type of project appropriate for the journal paper output will be provided by individual supervisors.

Regardless of chosen final output the module requires:

Project Management - worth 20% (3 sub-components of equal weightage)

- *Project Specification*: Production and approval of a formal project specification which outlines the research topic, initial sources of information, suggests a suitable research methodology and an appropriate marking scheme.
- *Interim Report*: Production of an interim report approximately halfway through the body of work to allow formal feedback from supervisor and moderator (maximum of 8000 words)
- *Project Process*: mark awarded by the supervisor.

Final Masters Project Report - worth 60%

A final written report/paper detailing the work of the Masters Project (maximum 18000 words or limit set by the chosen journal)

Oral Examination/Demonstration - worth 20%

A viva which is to take place after submission of the final report/paper ('defence' of the work submitted)

Project Management - worth 20% (Project Specification, Interim Report, Project Process)

Final Masters Project Report - worth 60%

Oral Examination/Demonstration - worth 20%

All the components of assessment are compulsory.

To pass this module:

- Students must achieve at least 40% of the available for each of the three components of assessment.
- Students must achieve an overall mark of at least 50%.

(N.B. (i) **Assessment Outcomes Grids** for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed.

(ii) An **indicative schedule** listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Assessment Outcome Grids (See Guidance Note)

Component 1							
Assessment Type (Footnote B.)	Learning Outcome (1)	Learning Outcome (2)	Learning Outcome (3)	Learning Outcome (4)	Learning Outcome (5)	Weighting (%) of Assessment Element	Timetabled Contact Hours
Dissertation/Project report/Thesis	√	√	√	√	√	60	0

Component 2							
Assessment Type (Footnote B.)	Learning Outcome (1)	Learning Outcome (2)	Learning Outcome (3)	Learning Outcome (4)	Learning Outcome (5)	Weighting (%) of Assessment Element	Timetabled Contact Hours
Clinical/Fieldwork/Practical skills assessment/Debate/Interview/Viva voce/Oral	√	√	√	√	√	20	1

Component 3							
Assessment Type (Footnote B.)	Learning Outcome (1)	Learning Outcome (2)	Learning Outcome (3)	Learning Outcome (4)	Learning Outcome (5)	Weighting (%) of Assessment Element	Timetabled Contact Hours
Performance/Studio work/Placement/WBL/WRL assessment	√	√	√	√	√	20	0
Combined Total for All Components						100%	1 hours