



Faculty of Business and Law
ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/24

Assessment Brief

Submission and feedback dates

Submission deadline: Before 14:00 on 22 April 2024

Marks and Feedback due on: 20 working days after 24 April 2024

N.B. all times are 24-hour clock, current local time (at time of submission) in the UK

Submit assessment

Module title and code: Economic Research Methods – UMED8N-15-2

Component and type: Course Work Assessment

Assessment title: Individual Detailed Research Proposal

Assessment weighting: 75% of total module mark

Size or length or assessment¹: 2500-word research proposal

Module learning outcomes assessed by this task:

MO2: Evaluate and assess the roles and purposes of alternative forms of enquiry and research.

MO3: Evaluate, select and pursue alternative enquiry approaches, methods and methodologies in economics and related disciplines.

MO4: Apply and define an ethical framework to the process and management of a research project.

MO5: Interpret and evaluate published academic research and other evidence relating to economics and related disciplines,

Completing your assessment

What am I required to do on this assessment?

You need to design a detailed research project based on a mixed methods case study approach and then present that research design in a 2,500-word research proposal. The research theme is the same as was set for the groupwork assessed task:

- ***Why do students engage with the Student Union?***

This assessed task is an individual task, but I hope you will build on the collective work you completed as the groupwork tasks. You can work with the literature review work to which you contributed.

A detailed research proposal needs to address the following questions:

- Is there a particular role/function of the Student Union you are interested in? Or are you interested in the views of your research participants in the round (the Union is a single bundle of services)?
- Based on academic research you find, what do you expect to explain why people feel more/less than attached to the Union than others? What is your strategic research aim?
- Based on this expected explanation how would you design a small research project to demonstrate whether your explanation is plausible/not proven – justifying your choices relative to your strategic research aims?
- Based on your research strategy (above), what combination of data collection activities (from the one covered on this module) would you expect to carry out and why?
- What sampling strategy/strategies would you need to carry out in order to collect the evidence you have identified above?
- What are the ethical risks associated with your outline research design?
- Having piloted one of your data collection methods, what lessons do you draw in order to improve your data collection plans?
- How would you analyse the data you would collect in order to establish an answer to your research question? This involves demonstrating how you move from raw data to derived data to how you infer relationships between your bit of evidence.

In terms of presenting your research design you need to both propose appropriate/plausible choices (ie they need to be appropriate for the research question) and you need to justify your choices relative to academic sources.

We expect your proposal to have the following headings:

1. Introduction and context
2. Literature Review
3. Problem Statement and Conceptual Framework
4. Research Strategy
5. Data collection, piloting and ethics

6. Data analysis planning

You will lose marks if you do not use this set of sub-headings.

Where should I start?

We expect you to build on the conceptual/literature work to which you contributed in the first part of the assessed groupwork task.

What do I need to do to pass?

You need to follow the headings for the proposal. Failure to use these headings may result in getting a score of zero.

Relative to the marking criteria for this assessment, the table below gives you an idea of minimum standard of attainment we are looking for:

		Pass (>=4/10)	wt
MCCW2	Ability to make appropriate and justified research design choices	Choice of case study strategy is plausible, but you might not have given references for all the key decisions underlying your selection. Might not have worked out a mixed-method strategy	15
MCCW8	Ability to plan and structure the analysis of data	Plausible selection of data analysis methods but not correct across the board - not referenced. Possibly missing either the qualitative or quantitative plan. Plan might be offered but no concrete examples are given.	10
MCCW3	Ability to construct appropriate evidence that plausibly and logically links to a research question	Aware of different data collection methods. Choice of method is plausible and justified, but you might not have given references for all the key decisions underlying your selection. The method might be consistent with your choice or strategy or with the question but not both.	25
MCCW4	An ability to run and critically evaluate a pilot data collection exercise for a research project	some reflections on method piloted even if the evidence for actually doing a pilot is 'spotty'	15
MCCW5	Ability to analyse a research design through an ethical risk management process demonstrating mitigation strategies where required	Ethical review is partial - but present. Informed consent is demonstrated but might be incomplete in minor aspects. Mitigation is inappropriate in some aspects - but is appropriate in a general sense.	10
MCCW1	Ability to present a research proposal as a coherent proposition	some of the sections link together, some do not. Writing style and argument is partly unclear. Referencing is not Harvard but there are references. There is a reference list but it might not include all things referenced.	10

MCCW6	Ability to present a body of academic work within a conceptual framework to underpin a research question	The question might be descriptive but you have identified something that suggests the question could be interesting. You might offer some definitions but some of this might be inappropriate. The literature you use to frame the question may be from non-academic sources (such as government reports) - you may have mis-interpreted some of the things you have reported on.	10
MCCW7	Follows the assessment brief instructions	the proposal partially follows some of the headings of the assessment brief	5

What do I need to do achieve higher marks this assessment?

Remember that failure to use the sub-headings we give you may result in your getting a score of zero.

Relative to the marking criteria for this assessment, the table below gives you an idea of minimum standard of attainment we are looking for to achieve a higher pass:

		excellent ($\geq 7/10$)	wt
MCCW2	Ability to make appropriate and justified research design choices	Clear understanding of how mixed-method research strategies lead to high quality research answers in the case of the chosen research questions - use of research method references. The outline research design will show a clear sampling strategy that is both justified, referenced and appropriate for the question that is asked.	15
MCCW8	Ability to plan and structure the analysis of data	Data analysis methods consistent with the question and the methods. Justification of analytical method referenced - probably has structured this around the 5-stage plan outlined in class. Concrete examples given to illustrate how analysis will happen.	10
MCCW3	Ability to construct appropriate evidence that plausibly and logically links to a research question	Good understanding of what a data collection method is (as distinct from a research strategy). Clearly able to identify and critique the use of research methods in the papers you have read - use of reference to justify your choices. Able to demonstrate how chosen research methods generates evidence for your research question. The data collection instrument is appended to proposal.	25

MCCW4	An ability to run and critically evaluate a pilot data collection exercise for a research project	Piloting done - evidence offered up for piloting. Reflections illustrate awareness of key issues and plausible solutions to any research problems encountered.	15
MCCW5	Ability to analyse a research design through an ethical risk management process demonstrating mitigation strategies where required	There is a review of the ethical risks of the research proposal - and that mitigative actions have been proposed to face up to ethical challenges. Ethical procedures of informed consent are demonstrated in the data collection instruments	10
MCCW1	Ability to present a research proposal as a coherent proposition	All parts of the design link together, arguments are referenced and justified. Writing style is clear, references are in Harvard style and given in a reference list at the end of the paper.	10
MCCW6	Ability to present a body of academic work within a conceptual framework to underpin a research question	A question that clearly centres on explaining the relationship between concepts of interest. You clearly identify the concepts and link them either to debates in the media or to debates in the academic literature. You illustrate the issue with some contextual statistics/ observations. You will frame this question with knowledge from existing academic research. Will have a synthesis of literature.	10
MCCW7	Follows the assessment brief instructions	the proposal follows the structure given in the assessment brief	5

How does the learning and teaching relate to the assessment?

See above

What additional resources may help me complete this assessment?

- The blackboard site.
- Talking to teaching team

What do I do if I am concerned about completing this assessment?

UWE Bristol offer a range of Assessment Support Options that you can explore through [this link](#), and both [Academic Support](#) and [Wellbeing Support](#) are available.

How do I avoid Assessment Offences (AO) on this module? ²

Use the support above if you feel unable to submit your own work for this module. The most common form of AO on this module comes from students copying the work of other students. If you wish to avoid an AO, remember:

- Do not copy and paste proposals from the work of others – our AO software has access to work submitted by students across the University. If you are reading through the work of others, remember to express yourself in your own words.
- Remember to use the sub-headings we give you – because failing to use them may result in your being given a score of zero.

Marks and Feedback

Your assessment will be marked according to the marking criteria outlined above.

You can use these to evaluate your own work before you submit.

1. In line with UWE Bristol's [Word Count Policy](#), the word count includes everything in the main body of the text including headings, tables, citations, quotes, lists, etc. It does not include the title, student number, references, bibliography and/or footnotes (provided footnotes only include references). There is a 10% margin.
2. UWE Bristol's [UWE's Assessment Offences Policy](#) requires that you submit work that is entirely your own and reflects your own learning, so it is important to:
 - Ensure you reference all sources used, using the [UWE Harvard](#) system and the guidance available on [UWE's Study Skills referencing pages](#).
 - Avoid copying and pasting any work into this assessment, including your own previous assessments, work from other students or internet sources
 - Develop your own style, arguments and wording, so avoid copying sources and changing individual words but keeping, essentially, the same sentences and/or structures from other sources
 - Never give your work to others who may copy it
 - If an individual assessment, develop your own work and preparation, and do not allow anyone to make amends on your work (including proof-readers, who may highlight issues but not edit the work) and

When submitting your work, you will be required to confirm that the work is your own, and text-matching software and other methods are routinely used to check submissions against other submissions to the university and internet sources. Details of what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it can be found on UWE's Study Skills [pages about avoiding plagiarism](#).