Unit: Business Research Methods	**Guided Learning Hours:** 320
Exam Paper No.: 4	**Number of Credits:** 32
Prerequisites: Knowledge of human resource activities.	**Corequisites:** A pass or higher in Diploma in Human Resource Management or equivalence.
Aim: The purpose of this unit is to examine the methodological issues associated with theory-testing research. The unit will focus on analysis of data, interpretation of results and synthesis of conclusions based on a clear understanding of the objectives of research, the characteristics of data and techniques for manipulating data. Learners discuss basic principles and concrete procedures for successful experimentation: picking an interesting and important problem, creating a laboratory environment, choosing and motivating subjects, designing and conducting experiments, collecting and analysing the data, and reporting the results.	
Required Materials: Recommended Learning Resources.	**Supplementary Materials:** Lecture notes and tutor extra reading recommendations.
Special Requirements: The unit requires a combination of lectures, demonstrations and discussions.	

Intended Learning Outcomes:	Assessment Criteria:
1 What business research is and how it differs from business decision support systems and business intelligence systems.	1.1 Define business research. 1.2 Analyse the trends affecting business research and the emerging hierarchy of business decision makers. 1.3 Analyse the distinction between good business research and research that falls short of professional quality. 1.4 Explain the nature of the research process. 1.5 Analyse differing ethical dilemmas and responsibilities of researchers, sponsors, and research assistants 1.6 Describe ethics in Business Research 1.7 Explain issues associated with research ethics. 1.8 Describe the role of ethical codes of conduct in professional associations.
2 How value assessments and budgeting influence the process for proposing research, and ultimately, research design; including the types of external information and the factors for evaluating the value of a source and its content.	2.1 Describe a research project 2.2 Describe the Business Research Process 2.3 Describe what is included in research design, data collection, and data analysis. 2.4 Describe research problems and how to avoid them. 2.5 Identify the purpose and process of exploratory research. 2.6 Analyse the process of using exploratory research 2.7 Describe how to formulate the research questions. 2.8 Illustrate what is involved in internal data mining 2.9 Describe how internal data-mining techniques differ from literature searches.
3 The relationships that exist between	3.1 Describe the stages of research design

variables in research design; the steps for evaluating those relationships and distinctions between monitoring, nonbehavioural and cognitive behavioural activities, management resources and techniques.	3.2	Identify major descriptors of research design.	
	3.3	Identify major types of research designs.	
	3.4	Describe when observation studies are most useful.	
	3.5	Describe strengths of the observation approach in research design.	
	3.6	Describe weaknesses of the observation approach in research design.	
	3.7	Explain various designs of observation studies.	
4 The steps in conducting a survey; the advantages and disadvantages of surveys.	4.1	Describe how to conduct surveys	
	4.2	Describe the process for selecting the appropriate and optimal communication approach.	
	4.3	Describe factors affect participation in communication studies.	
	4.4	Describe sources of error in communication studies and how to minimize them.	
	4.5	Describe major advantages and disadvantages of the communication approaches.	
	4.6	Describe why an organisation might outsource a communication study.	
5 Uses for experimentations; the reasons for experiments and observational experiments features; including measurement; the distinction between measuring objects, properties, and indicants of properties.	5.1	Identify advantages and disadvantages of the experimental method.	
	5.2	Describe the steps of a well-planned experiment.	
	5.3	Describe the types of experimental designs and their variations.	
	5.4	Identify the scale types used in measurement.	
	5.5	Describe the major sources of measurement error.	
	5.6	Identify the criteria for evaluating good measurement.	
	5.7	Describe the nature of attitudes and their relationship to behaviour.	
	5.8	Describe the critical decisions involved in selecting an appropriate measurement scale.	
	5.9	Describe the characteristics and use of rating, ranking, sorting, and other preference scales.	
6 The influence of question content, question wording, response strategy, and preliminary analysis planning on question construction.	6.1	Design questionnaires	
	6.2	Identify the influence of the communication method on instrument design.	
	6.3	Describe the general classes of information and what each contributes to the instrument.	
	6.4	Identify design issues influencing instrument quality, reliability, and validity.	
	6.5	Describe the sources for measurement questions	

		6.6	Describe the importance of pretesting questions and instruments.
7	Random , stratified, proportional sampling, cluster, systematic and purposive sampling; the importance of editing collected raw data to detect errors and omissions; challenge faced by most researchers who collect and analyze data to extract useful information.	7.1	Identify the two premises on which sampling theory is based.
		7.2	Illustrate the accuracy and precision for measuring sample validity.
		7.3	Describe the process of developing a sampling plan.
		7.4	Analyse the two categories of sampling techniques.
		7.5	Describe the various sampling techniques.
		7.6	Describe the process of preparing data
		7.7	Describe how coding is used to assign number and other symbols to answers and to categorise responses.
		7.8	Describe the use of content analysis to interpret and summarise open questions.
		7.9	Describe the options for data entry and manipulation.
		7.10	Explain how cross-tabulation (also referred to as cross-tab) is used to examine relationships involving categorical variables
		7.11	Evaluate, display and examine data
		7.12	Describe exploratory data analysis techniques
		7.13	Describe how to analyze nominal data using cross tabs
8	The nature and logic of hypothesis testing; measures of association used with chi-square and other contingency table analyses.	8.1	Describe the hypothesis testing procedures.
		8.2	Describe the differences between parametric and nonparametric tests and when to use each.
		8.3	Describe the factors that influence the selection of an appropriate test of statistical significance.
		8.4	Describe how to interpret the various test statistics
		8.5	Describe how correlation analysis may be applied to study relationships between two or more variables
		8.6	Describe the uses, requirements, and interpretation of the product moment correlation coefficient.
		8.7	Describe how predictions are made with regression analysis using the method of least squares to minimise errors in drawing a line of best fit.
		8.8	Describe how to test regression models for linearity and whether the equation is effective in fitting the data.
9	Understand how multivariate analysis of variance assesses the relationship between two or more metric dependent variables and independent classificatory variables.	9.1	Describe multivariate analysis
		9.2	Describe how to classify and select multivariate techniques.
		9.3	Describe how structural equation modeling explains causality among

			constructs that cannot be directly measured.
	9.4		Describe how conjoint analysis assists researchers to discover the most importance attributes and the levels of desirable features.
	9.5		Describe how principal components analysis extracts uncorrelated factors from an initial set of variables
	9.6		Describe how exploratory factor analysis reduces the number of variables to discover the underlying constructs.
10 The contents, types, lengths, and technical specifications of research reports to ensure consistency in the content, layout and presentation.	10.1		Demonstrate how to present written or oral reports
	10.2		Identify the purpose, readership, circumstances/limitations and use.
	10.3		Identify the incorporation of statistical data with in tables, charts, or graphs.
	10.4		Describe how to develop research findings.

Methods of Evaluation: A 3-hour written examination paper with five essay questions, each carrying 20 marks. Candidates are required to answer all questions. Candidates also undertake project/coursework in Business Research Methods with a weighting of 100%.

Recommended Learning Resources: Business Research Methods

Text Books	• Doing Research in Business and Management: An Introduction to Process and Method by Dan Remenyi, Brian Williams, Arthur Money, Ethne Swartz. ISBN-10: 0761959505 • Research Methods in Business Studies: A Practical Guide by Pervez Ghauri (Author), Kjell Gronhaug. ISBN-10: 0273681567 • Research Methods in Management: A concise introduction to research in management and business consultancy by Geoff Lancaster. ISBN-10: 0750662123
Study Manuals	BCE produced study packs
CD ROM	Power-point slides
Software	None