

IM906-60 Dissertation

26/27

Department

Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Carla Washbourne

Credit value

60

Module duration

20 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The CIM Masters dissertation is a piece of work (10,000 words) which addresses a single student-selected subject. The topic may concern any aspect of the subject matter of their Masters programme.

The dissertation is an exercise in independent study in which students pursue a topic of interest to them. It allows them to further develop a range of independent research skills, including literature search and bibliography construction, theoretical argument, and generation/appraisal of empirical evidence.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The principal aims of this dissertation module are:

- to develop students' intellectual ability to develop and evaluate theoretical concepts and to be able to relate these to current developments and experiences;
- to undertake an independent programme of research of direct relevance to the core themes of the students' postgraduate course of study;
- to expose students to in-depth critical analysis of key issues of relevance to their course,

- through references to research literature and contemporary case studies;
- to enable students to work practically with a variety of research methods and to be able to build a research project using selected methods of their choice;
 - to develop student understanding of research methods, principles and applications;
 - to enable students to develop specific in-depth knowledge on a topic of interest to future work or research while identifying appropriate methods to analyse and present such a topic;
 - to enable students to develop technical skills for the exploration and analysis of research topics;
 - to develop student skills in conceiving, managing and completing a large written project with a practical methodological element.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The module will start with a lecture laying out the requirements and explaining standards and stages of work in the dissertation. To give students more time and support, the module leader will give the first lecture prior to the summer term, during term two. Students will also complete a 'Statement of research interest' document before the Summer term, which will be used to allocate supervisors but also to encourage students to begin thinking about the dissertation in advance of the Summer term.

Students will commence work on dissertations at the start of the third term. They will be advised to maintain regular contact with their supervisor, and to meet with them at least three times over the period of study. The supervisor will advise on specific aspects of the dissertation process (topic selection, research design, methodology, literature review, managing large written projects etc.).

The dissertation will be an original piece of research which analyses a cultural, political or social phenomenon using one or several concepts and methodologies presented during the students' course of study.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Identify and critically interpret different conceptual approaches and developments in the field of research;
- Produce independent research that demonstrates knowledge of a number of theoretical, practical and methodological perspectives studied during the degree;
- Articulate dissertation ideas orally (to supervisors) and to produce well-argued written material, supported by wide reading and advanced research;
- Formulate a sophisticated programme of research with an appropriate methodology.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Research element

The module is assessed solely by the production of an independent research project.

Interdisciplinary

As part of the research process, the module requires students to adopt a methodology drawn from a range of disciplinary backgrounds and to synthesise interdisciplinary forms of knowledge in the exploration of their topic.

Subject specific skills

- to develop a sophisticated understanding of one substantive topic of research;
- to connect theoretical, conceptual, technical and practical knowledge in relation to a topic and to be able to locate specific examples in relation to these knowledges;
- to develop practical skills in the application of one or more research methods.
- demonstrate an ability to critically analyse, interpret and evaluate historical and current research in relation to a specific topic;
- demonstrate the capacity to compare and contrast concepts from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and to identify a related methodological innovation;
- develop the ability to synthesise and adopt interdisciplinary forms of knowledge and relate them to a contemporary research topic;
- be able to formulate a sophisticated programme of research with an appropriate methodology.

Transferable skills

- written and oral communication skills: to articulate dissertation ideas orally (to supervisors) and to produce well-argued written material, supported by wide reading and advanced research;
 - the ability to respond to and incorporate feedback and to revise the project as required during the various stages of feedback;
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	3 sessions of 1 hour (0%)
Tutorials	(0%)
Project supervision	3 sessions of 1 hour (0%)
Total	600 hours

Type	Required
Supervised practical classes	3 sessions of 3 hours (2%)
Private study	585 hours (98%)
Total	600 hours

Private study description

Students will be required to undertake independent research , including formulating a research question (hypothesis), conducting a literature review, conducting any empirical research (dataset development, fieldwork, surveys etc), and writing their findings.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
10,000 word dissertation	100%		No
Dissertation: 10,000 words or equivalent research output (to be approved by supervisor).			

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Written summative feedback will be provided for the dissertation.\r\n\r\nFormative feedback will be given on the dissertation proposal. Formative feedback will also be provided during supervision meetings with the dissertation supervisors and lab sessions. Oral formative feedback will typically be via face-to-face meetings but may also be via phone or video conference. A detailed dissertation handbook will provide guidance on the dissertation procedures. \r\n

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- TIMS-L990 Postgraduate Big Data and Digital Futures
 - Year 1 of L990 Big Data and Digital Futures
 - Year 2 of L990 Big Data and Digital Futures
- Year 1 of TIMA-L981 Postgraduate Social Science Research
- TIMA-L99A Postgraduate Taught Digital Media and Culture
 - Year 1 of L99A Digital Media and Culture
 - Year 2 of L99A Digital Media and Culture
- Year 1 of TIMA-L99D Postgraduate Taught Urban Analytics and Visualisation

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of TIMA-L99A Postgraduate Taught Digital Media and Culture