

Module code: MOD011221	Version: 1 Date Amended: 17/Jun/2025
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1. Module Title
Applied Research (Methods) for Managers

2a. Module Leader
Christos Gerofotis

2b. School
Writtle School of Agriculture, Animal and Environmental Sciences

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Science and Engineering

3a. Level
7

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
15

4b. Study Hours
150

5. Restrictions			
Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:	MSc Crop Production; MBA in Agribusiness.		

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

This module introduces you to the world of research and research methods from the perspectives of the researcher, research manager or managerial user and will give you the opportunity to delve deeper into an area of your preference. In this module, you'll discuss the full research process, from identifying issues and problems; specifying research; systematic design, collecting and processing primary and secondary data and information; analysing findings using quantitative and qualitative approaches and producing conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further investigation. An emphasis will be placed on methods that are objective, systematic, reliable, valid, ethical, effective and efficient and guidance will be given on the preparation of research papers and reports. All students will initially share a generic overview that is appropriate for a postgraduate understanding of research and the methods that underpin it. Thereafter, you'll apply the principles of research in a more contextualised approach according to your area of interest. You'll have the opportunity to experience the whole journey of applied research and provide answers to real-life issues in food systems- from research design to dissemination to a wide audience.

6b. Outline Content

Aspects of the following topics will be delivered as appropriate to the needs of the course and the student:

PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF RESEARCH. Research questions and knowledge gaps; description, explanation, prediction, monitoring and evaluation in the context of problem solving and decision making; role of theory and models; scientific method; hypothesis testing; causality; potential and actual use of research and information by managers; importance of functional and actionable results.

RESEARCH APPROACHES. Evaluation of research; concepts of measurement (including attitude scales, reliability and validity); objectivity and subjectivity; error and bias; probability and risk; information quality for decision making; research ethic; comparative appraisal of research approaches (scientific and social science investigations, desk and field research, qualitative and quantitative methods, experimentation, action research, ethnographic and phenomenological approaches).

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY. Research process; issues, focus and problem definition, problem components and situation; research objectives and constraints; research questions and hypotheses, information requirements, secondary data collection (literature search and review, data sources and valuation); primary data collection (sample size and sampling methods); counts and observation; group, extended and structured interviews; projective techniques, repertory grids; questionnaires; pilot surveys; case studies, experimental design; timetabling and costing; emphasis will be placed on the appropriateness of methods and measuring instruments in relation to research objectives and constraints, representative rates, bias and cost.

ANALYSING AND REPORTING RESEARCH RESULTS. The need to build analysis into the early stages of methodological design; manual and computerised data processing (choice of method/package, data entry, verification and validation, data reduction and tabulation); descriptive, inferential and multivariate statistical techniques; analysis of qualitative data; distinction between results and interpretation; evidence and valid conclusions; effective presentation of research for academic and organisational use, tabular and graphical presentation; structure, style and format of papers, reports, dissertations and academic commentary.

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

6d. Specialist Learning Resources
None

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	Type	On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:
1	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Understand the principles of rigorous, ethically driven research and its role in informing practice, while critically evaluating and interpreting primary and secondary data sources.
2	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Develop and articulate a comprehensive research study, designing appropriate methodologies, and effectively analyzing data to draw evidence-based conclusions.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2026/7	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	Hours	Learning Outcomes	Details of Duration, frequency and other comments
Lectures	27	1-2	Lectures, seminars, workshops, tutorials
Other teacher managed learning	9	2	Preparatory work towards summative assessment.
Student managed learning	114	1-2	Independent study to include software use for statistical analysis and academic writing, wider reading to support their learning)
TOTAL:	150		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1	30 (%)	Fine Grade	40 (%)
Literature Review (1000 words) - Submitted through Canvas					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
011	Coursework	2	70 (%)	Fine Grade	40 (%)
Research Proposal (2000 words) - Submitted through Canvas					

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:

- (a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above
- (b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]