Undergraduate Dissertation Proposal Form

Student Name:	**Student ID Number:**

Degree Programme: please tick ✓

BA (Hons) International Business Strategy/Accelerated		BA (Hons) International Management	
BA (Hons) General Business		BA (Hons) International Business	
BA (Hons) Enterprise & Entrepreneurial Management		BSc (Hons) Accounting & Finance	
BA (Hons) Business Studies		BA (Hons) Management & Leadership	
BA (Hons) Marketing		BA (Hons) Human Resource Management	
BSc (Hons) Business Economics		BA (Hons) Tourism Management	
BA (Hons) Business Management			

Date of Dissertation Submission:

Please tick the most appropriate subject area for your Dissertation (one box only)

Accounting and Finance		Information Technology	
Business Economics		Enterprise	
Organisational Behaviour		Supply Chain	
HRM		Tourism	
Business Decision Making		Sustainability	
Corporate Strategy		General Management	
Marketing			

Dissertation Proposal Topic please ensure this is 750-800 words

Title

Research Problem

Research Question

Research Aim

Research Objectives

Key Literature

Methodology

Research Timetable

How to structure your dissertation proposal

Title

The title of your proposed research must fulfil a number of set criteria. First, it must reflect the nature of your study. For example, if you intend studying a particularly firm's financial performance, then something to this effect must be stressed in your proposed title. Second, it must be concise. Ideally, try not to exceed more than 10-12 words. Third, try to avoid unnecessary terms such as 'Case study approach'. Finally, try and keep your title clear and easy to understand. In other words, consider it from the layperson's point of view.

Research Problem

The research problem or the main focus of your research should be clearly set out within the introductory section of your proposal. As noted earlier, it is important that the nature of your topic is clear and easy to understand. Your introductory section should provide background to your study; while at the same time define any key words or terms. Ideally, brief reference should also be made to existing studies that are relevant to your own work. Of course, making sure that the Harvard referencing System is applied in the correct way.

Key Literature

This involves a shortened literature review that critically analyses the work by leading authors relevant to your own research issue. In short, it must be critical and not overly descriptive. The verbatim copying of previous studies also provides no evidence as to how existing work 'links' to your own study. Remember that at some point you also need to say how your own research fits in to the gap of current literature. This usually comes somewhere towards the end of your preliminary review.

Methodology

This part of the proposal should classify your research design; include your rationale behind your chosen research strategy, along with methods for collecting and analyzing your data. This is of course dependent on your research approach. Aim to provide support for your choice of methodology. This can be done on the basis of using academic references or referring to previous work that also used a methodology similar to your own. Clear support for the latter option is the ability to compare your findings with that of previous studies.

The importance of validity and reliability is something that one would also expect to see featured in this part of your proposal. In addition, use this as an opportunity to cite any potential limitations that you foresee with your research. Limitations are constraints in your research. For example, for most researchers financial and time constraints are potential limitations.

Research Timetable

Unlike your final research project, your proposal will not set out your research findings and conclusions. This part of the proposal is intended for you to develop your own research timetable. You might question the purpose of a timetable, as you prefer to work in an ad hoc manner. True, every researcher works in their 'own' way. However, the setting out of clear tasks, along with start and completion dates can help you to work towards a set research schedule. A Gantt chart often works best. This can set out the tasks e.g. literature review, data collection; writing up etc, along with a respective start date and completion date. A point worth mentioning is that when allocating time, it is better to be conservative, rather than too ambitious.

SOURCE: Adapted from Wilson, J (2010), 'The Essentials of Business Research: A Guide to Doing Your Research Project,' Sage Publications.

Anglia Ruskin University
Cambridge Chelmsford Peterborough

RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM (STAGE 1)

AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED THIS FORM WOULD THE SUPERVISOR PLEASE INDICATE HERE WHICH RISK CATEGORY THE RESEARCH FALLS INTO.
FOR STAFF RESEARCH, CAN THE RESEARCHER COMPLETE THIS.
Please delete as applicable:
GREEN / AMBER / RED INTERNAL / RED EXTERNAL

More information on ethics procedures can be found on your faculty website. You must read the **Question Specific Advice for Stage 1 Research Ethics Approval** form.

All research carried out by students and staff at Anglia Ruskin University and all students at our Franchise Associate Colleges, must comply with **Anglia Ruskin University's Research Ethics Policy** (students at other types of Associate College need to check requirements).

There is no distinction between undergraduate, taught masters, research degree students and staff research.

All research projects, including pilot studies, must receive research ethical approval prior to approaching participants and/or commencing data collection. Completion of this Research Ethics Application Form (Stage 1) is mandatory for all research applications*. It should be completed by the Principal Investigator in consultation with any co-researchers on the project, or the student in consultation with his/her research project supervisor.

For research only involving animals please complete the **Animal Ethics Review Checklist instead of this form.*

All researchers should:

- Ensure they comply with any laws and associated Codes of Practice that may be applicable to their area of research.
- Ensure their study meets with relevant Professional Codes of Conduct.
- Complete the relevant compulsory research ethics training.
- Refer to the **Question Specific Advice for the Stage 1 Research Ethics Approval.**
- Consult the **Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University.**

If you are still uncertain about the answer to any question please speak to your Dissertation Supervisor/Supervisor, **Faculty Research Ethics Panel (FREP) Chair** or the **Departmental Research Ethics Panel (DREP) Chair.**

Researchers are advised that projects carrying higher levels of ethical risk will:

- *require the researchers to provide more justification for their research, and more detail of the intended methods to be employed;*
- *be subject to greater levels of scrutiny;*
- *require a longer period to review.*

Researchers are strongly advised to consider this in the planning phase of their research projects.

Section 1: RESEARCHER AND PROJECT DETAILS

Researcher details:							
Name(s):							
Department:							
Faculty:							
Anglia Ruskin email address:							
Status:							
Undergraduate		Taught Postgraduate		Postgraduate Research		Staff	
If this is a student project:							
SID:							
Course title:							
Supervisor/tutor name							

Project details:	
Project title (*not* module title):	
Data collection start date: *(note **must** be prospective)*	
Expected project completion date:	
Is the project externally funded?	
Licence number (if applicable):	

CONFIRMATION STATEMENTS – please tick the box to confirm you understand these requirements	
The project has a direct benefit to society and/or improves knowledge and understanding.	
All researchers involved have completed relevant training in research ethics, and consulted the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University.	
The risks participants, colleagues or the researchers may be exposed to have been considered and appropriate steps to reduce any risks identified taken (risk assessment(s) must be completed if applicable, available at: **http://rm.anglia.ac.uk/extlogin.asp**) or the equivalent for Associate Colleges.	
My research will comply with the Data Protection Act (1998) and/or data protection laws of the country I am carrying the research out in, as applicable. For further advice please refer to the **Question Specific Advice for the Stage 1 Research Ethics Approval.**	

Project summary (maximum 500 words):
Please outline rationale for the research, the project aim, the research questions, research procedure and details of the participant population and how they will be recruited.

Is your research ONLY a desk-based or library-based study that requires no direct or indirect contact with human participants; and which also is likely to have no impact on the environment?
Desk-based (or secondary) research involves the summary, collation and/or synthesis of existing research. For further information, see **http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secondary_research**

Yes/No If Yes, proceed to the Declaration in Section 5 and from there to the green channel.

Section 2: RESEARCH ETHICS CHECKLIST - please answer YES or NO to ALL of the questions below.

WILL YOUR RESEARCH STUDY?		YES	NO
1	Involve any external organisation for which separate research ethics clearance is required (e.g. NHS, Social Services, Ministry of Justice) *For NHS research involving just staff that requires NHS R&D Management Approval only and Social Care research please check with your FREP Chair whether this will be regarded as equivalent to Anglia Ruskin University's ethical approval.*		
2	Involve individuals aged 16 years of age and over who lack capacity to consent and will therefore fall under the Mental Capacity Act (2005)?		
3	Collect, use or store any human tissue/DNA including but not limited to serum, plasma, organs, saliva, urine, hairs and nails? Contact matt.bristow@anglia.ac.uk		
4	Involve medical research with humans, including clinical trials?		
5	Administer drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to human participants?		
6	Cause (or could cause) pain, physical or psychological harm or negative consequences to human participants?		
7	Involve the researchers and/or participants in the potential disclosure of any information relating to illegal activities; or observation/handling/storage of material which may be illegal?		
8	With respect to human participants or stakeholders, involve any deliberate deception, covert data collection or data collection without informed consent?		
9	Involve interventions with children and young people under 16 years of age?		
10	Relate to military sites, personnel, equipment, or the defence industry?		
11	Risk damage or disturbance to culturally, spiritually or historically significant artefacts or places, or human remains?		
12	Involve genetic modification, or use of genetically modified organisms above that of routine class one activities? Contact FST-Biologicalsafety.GMO@anglia.ac.uk (All class one activities must be described in Section 4).		
13	Contain elements you (or members of your team) are not trained to conduct?		
14	Potentially reveal incidental findings related to human participant health status?		
15	Present a risk of compromising the anonymity or confidentiality of personal, sensitive or confidential information provided by human participants and/or organisations?		
16	Involve colleagues, students, employees, business contacts or other individuals whose response may be influenced by your power or relationship with them?		
17	Require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the human participants (e.g. pupils/students, self-help groups, nursing home residents, business, charity, museum, government department, international agency)?		
18	Offer financial or other incentives to human participants?		
19	Take place outside of the country in which your campus is located, in full or in part?		
20	Cause a negative impact on the environment (over and above that of normal daily activity)?		
21	Involve direct and/or indirect contact with human participants?		
22	Raise any other ethical concerns not covered in this checklist?		

Section 3: APPROVAL PROCESS

Prior to application:

1. Researcher / student / project tutor completes ethics training.
2. Lead researcher / student completes Stage 1 Research Ethics Application form in consultation with co-researchers / project tutor.

NO answered to all questions
(Risk category 1)

→ Research can proceed.
Send this completed form to your relevant FREP/DREP for their records.

(STAGE 1 APPROVAL)
NO answered to question 1-13
YES answered to any question 14-22 (Risk Category 2)

→ i) Complete Section 4 of this form.
ii) ii) Produce Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and Participant Consent Form (PCF) if applicable.
iii) Submit this form and PIS/ PCF where applicable to your Faculty DREP (where available) or Faculty FREP.
Two members of the DREP/FREP will review the application and report to the panel, who will consider whether the ethical risks have been managed appropriately.

- Yes: DREP / FREP inform research team of approval and forward forms to FREP for recording.
- No: DREP / FREP provides feedback to researcher outlining revisions required.

The panel may recommend that the project is upgraded to Category 3 - please see below for procedure.

Yes answered to question 1 and / or 2
(Risk Category 3A)

→ Submit this completed form to your FREP to inform them of your intention to apply to an external review panel for your project.
For NHS (NRES) applications, the FREP Chair would normally act as sponsor / co-sponsor for your application.
The outcome notification from the external review panel should be forwarded to FREP for recording.

(STAGE 2 APPROVAL)
Yes answered to any question 3-13
(Risk Category 3B)

→ Complete this form and the Stage 2 Research Ethics Application form and submit to your FREP. FREP will review the application and approve the application when they are satisfied that all ethical issues have been dealt with appropriately.

Section 4: ETHICAL RISK (Risk category 2 projects only)

Management of Ethical Risk (Q14-22) *For each question 14-22 ticked 'yes', please outline how you will manage the ethical risk posed by your study.*

Section 5: Declaration

Student/Staff Declaration** ***By sending this form from My Anglia e-mail account I confirm that I will undertake this project as detailed above. I understand that I must abide by the terms of this approval and that I may not substantially amend the project without further approval.
****Supervisor Declaration** ***By sending this form from My Anglia e-mail account I confirm that I will undertake to supervise this project as detailed above.***

*Students to forward completed form to their Dissertation Supervisor/Supervisor.
** Dissertation Supervisor/Supervisor to forward the completed form to the relevant ethics committee.

Date: 10 March 2015
Version 5.5

Anglia Ruskin University

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET GUIDANCE

The form must be on Anglia Ruskin University headed notepaper or have the Anglia Ruskin University logo as the header.

Undergraduates and Masters students are strongly advised to use this as a template. You need to consider the best way of informing research participants about your research study and also take into account inclusivity for participants who may require the information in alternative formats and any cultural differences if doing the research outside the UK.

You are advised to show your participant information sheet to someone outside of your field to see if they are able to understand it and also to carry out a readability analysis, for example the Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula, which is available at:

http://www.readabilityformulas.com/flesch-reading-ease-readability-formula.php

It is important to remember to use only clear and accessible language and only the most necessary technical terms. Try and avoid the use of abbreviations, but if you do use them make sure you write the term in full in the first instance.

You also need to adapt your participant information sheet for different participants, for example children of varying age groups.

Participants should be given a copy of the participant information sheet and consent form to keep. Consent must be viewed as a process, during which you discuss the research with the participant. Participants should usually be given as long as they need to decide whether to take part in the research, within the time-frame of recruitment for your study. If there is any doubt that a participant can give fully informed, voluntary consent you must not proceed with the research.

If you are planning research with any participants aged 16 years of age and over where there is any doubt about their ability to give consent, you must ensure that you are familiar with the Mental Capacity Act (2005). For further information regarding this, please see Section 6.3 of the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University, available at:

www.anglia.ac.uk/researchethics

Anglia Ruskin University

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Section A: The Research Project

1. **Title of project**

2. **Brief summary of research.**
Provide a brief summary of your research, in order to help participants decide whether they are interested in taking part in the study. You will provide more details about the research later on.

3. **Purpose of the study**
You need to state whether this is part of your:
   - Undergraduate degree at Anglia Ruskin University
   - Masters degree at Anglia Ruskin University
   - PhD/DProf at Anglia Ruskin University

or in your capacity as a member of staff at Anglia Ruskin University
or for Associate Colleges give the name of the college and state that it is for an Anglia Ruskin award (please specify which type of award e.g. Undergraduate degree) if this is the case.

4. **Name of your Supervisor** *(student research only).*

5. **Why have I been asked to participate?**
For example, are people bring approached because they are members of a particular group or organisation or have a certain condition or illness?

6. **How many people will be asked to participate?**

7. **What are the likely benefits of taking part?**
It is unlikely that there will be any direct benefits to participants and this must be made clear. The study may yield some useful information, but be careful not to make claims that the research is very important or may lead to changes in the field (unless this is the case). For Undergraduate/Masters research the main benefit is likely to be educational.

8. **Can I refuse to take part?**
It must be made clear to participants that they can refuse to take part without giving a reason. Under no circumstances should participants feel coerced into taking part.

9. **Has the study got ethical approval?**
You need to say that the study has ethical approval from an ethics committee at Anglia Ruskin University. If you are carrying out research outside the UK and were also required to obtain ethical approval from that country, you must also provide the name of that ethics committee.

10. **Has the organisation where you are carrying out the research given permission?**
If you are carrying out research in an organisation, you must clarify that permission from them was obtained for your research. You need to make it clear, though, that

this constituted general permission to approach participants and it is the decision of each person whether they would like to take part in your research.

11. If your research falls under specific legislation e.g. the Human Tissue Act (2004), you need to state that your research complies with it.

12. **Source of funding for the research, if applicable.**
If the research is funded you must name the organisation/funding body.

13. **What will happen to the results of the study?**
You need to state where your research will be disseminated e.g. written up for your degree/thesis/published in journals/presented at conferences.

14. **Contact for further information**
Only an Anglia email address must be given. If possible, also provide an Anglia telephone number, but if this is not feasible a personal mobile number (but not a landline number) is permissible.

Section B: Your Participation in the Research Project

1. **What will I be asked to do?**
This is where you describe your research in more detail. Participants need to know what they will be required to do if they take part. You need to ensure that you describe this in sufficient detail. You should include the number of times you will need to see participants, where this will be and for what duration. Describe what participants will be asked to do e.g. complete tests or procedures, give details about what these will involve and how long they will last.

2. **Will my participation in the study be kept confidential?**
It is important to be clear about the distinction between confidentiality and anonymity. If something is confidential it is given in confidence i.e. it is secret or private and is usually marked 'confidential'. If something is anonymous, it means that an individual cannot be identified from the information. Statistical data is an example of anonymous information.

You need to give details about who will have access to participant data (e.g. your Supervisor) and whether or not this will be in anonymised format (it should be wherever possible).

Participants' personal data or sensitive personal data would usually not be included in dissemination. If you are using data that can identify anyone, such as photographs, special care must be taken and you would need to obtain the consent of all individuals that may be identified and retain a record of this.

The results will be written up in anonymised format. You need to make it clear that every attempt will be made to ensure anonymity, but be clear that it may not be possible to guarantee complete anonymity. It is possible that participants may be identified by their colleagues or peers if not by the general public. The likelihood of this may increase if you are writing your research up as a series of case studies.

Please refer to Sections 3.2 and 6.1 in the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University for further information about consent and the Data Protection Act (1998).

3. Use of quotes. If you are planning to use quotes from participants in dissemination, this increases the likelihood that participants could be identified and therefore you need to let them know that you plan to do this. You also need to include this as a separate statement on the consent form.

4. Use of recording equipment. If you are carrying out interviews and planning to record them, you must include this in both the participant information sheet and consent details, including details of how the transcripts will be kept secure (refer to Section 12 below).

5. **Will I be reimbursed travel expenses?**
If participants are required to travel will they be reimbursed expenses? If not, you need to make participants aware that it is not possible to do this. If participants will be reimbursed expenses, you need to explain the process via which this will happen verbally.

6. If participants will be offered incentives to take part in the research, state this here. If using incentives, take care to ensure that this is appropriate for the type of research you are carrying out and your intended participant group and that the incentive does not invalidate consent.

7. **Are there any possible disadvantages or risks to taking part?**
You should include any possible disadvantages or risks. This includes risk of boredom, fatigue or participants becoming distressed, as well as risks to confidentiality (e.g. the chance of participants being identified from dissemination) and that of physical harm. What will be done to ensure participant's well-being/safety? (e.g. rest breaks or in the case of serious effects, the study must be stopped immediately). You should also state that agreement to participate in the study does not affect participant's legal rights.

8. **Whether I can withdraw at any time, and how**.
Participants need to be informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. You need to take into account that participants may not feel comfortable telling you directly that they would no longer like to take part in your research and give them other options (e.g. emailing you) to let you know. Also, will the data you have collected from the participant up to that point be useful? If so, you must have permission from participants to use this data. Therefore, you can give participants the option to withdraw from the study and have their data removed or to withdraw, but still be happy for you to use any anonymised data that you have collected up to that point. You should also make it clear to participants the last approximate time it will be possible to withdraw their data, given it will not be possible once you have written the research up for your degree or published findings.

   It must also be made clear to participants that they do not have to answer any questionnaire or interview questions they do not wish to.

9. **Whether there are any special precautions you must take before, during or after taking part in the study.**

10. If there is any information that participants may tell you that you would need to disclose to someone else (e.g. if you feel they are at risk, if they reveal anything of an illegal nature or if you are researching in an organisation and they reveal anything of an unprofessional nature) you need to state this on the participant information sheet. For further information, please refer to Section 3.14 of the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University.

11. **What will happen to any information/data/samples *(delete as applicable*) that are collected from you?**
You must ensure that data is securely held and state this on your participant information sheet. You also need to state how long the data will be held for and when it will be destroyed. Personal identifiable information (e.g. consent forms) should be kept separately from the data. Participants must be assigned a code number and identifying information separated from the data at the earliest opportunity.

12. If carrying out qualitative interviews with participants, will they be shown a copy of the transcript? If so, state this and the process via which this will happen.

13. Summary of research findings. It is good practice to send participants a summary of research findings wherever possible. This would be a summary rather than their individual results. If you will do this, explain the process via which this will happen.

14. **Contact details for complaints.**
If participants have any complaints about the study, they should be encouraged to speak to you or your Supervisor (for students) in the first instance. They should also, however, be given access to details about Anglia Ruskin University's complaints procedure.
Email address: complaints@anglia.ac.uk
Postal address: Office of the Secretary and Clerk, Anglia Ruskin University, Bishop Hall Lane, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1SQ.

Students from Associate Colleges need to check what their procedures for complaints are and provide details to participants.

Version control
Your participant information sheet, consent form and other documents should have a version number and date. This is in order that should any changes be required by the ethics committee, it is clear which documentation has ethical approval.

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF THE CONSENT FORM.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

The form must be on Anglia Ruskin University headed notepaper or have the Anglia Ruskin University logo as the header.

Undergraduate and Masters students are strongly advised to use this as a template.

Not all the below statements may be applicable to your research and you may need to add others.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

Title of the project:

Main investigator and contact details:

Members of the research team:

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet (add date and version number of Participant Information Sheet) for the study. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason.

3. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

4 I understand what will happen to the data collected from me for the research.

5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

6. I understand that quotes from me will be used in the dissemination of the research (delete as applicable).

7. I understand that the interview will be recorded (delete as applicable).

Data Protection: I agree to the University[1] processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me*

Name of participant (print)…….Signed……..….Date……

PARTICIPANTS MUST BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP
ADD DATE AND VERSION NUMBER OF CONSENT FORM.

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY.

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please speak to the researcher or email them at (add email address) stating the title of the research.
You do not have to give a reason for why you would like to withdraw.
Please let the researcher know whether you are/are not happy for them to use any data from you collected to date in the write up and dissemination of the research.

[1] "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its Associate Colleges.