COURSE OUTLINE

BUS703 Evidence-Based Decision Making

School: School of Business and Creative Industries

2026 | Session 6

UniSC Sunshine Coast	BLENDED LEARNING	Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.
Online	ONLINE	You can do this course without coming onto campus, unless your program has specified a mandatory onsite requirement.

Please go to unisc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

As professionals you make decisions on a daily basis. A 'good' decision is based upon credible information and research. This course will provide you with knowledge and skills in business research that will allow you to propose research projects which provide the support for evidenced based decision making, as well as evaluate the quality of research conducted by others. This course covers all stages of the research process from problem definition to analysing, reporting and interpreting results.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Interactive online learning activities.	2hrs	Week 1	6 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Scheduled face to face workshops.	3hrs	Week 1	6 times
Information session – Additional Information Sessions	1hr	Week 1	2 times
ONLINE			
Learning materials – Interactive online learning activities.	2hrs	Week 1	6 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Scheduled online workshops (Recorded).	3hrs	Week 1	6 times
Information session – Additional Information Sessions	1hr	Week 1	2 times

1.3. Course Topics

The Process of Good research

Crafting a Clear Problem

Primary Data

Secondary Data

Exploratory, Descriptive and Causal Research

Sampling

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

Trends in Research

2. What level is this course?

700 Level (Specialised)

Demonstrating a specialised body of knowledge and set of skills for professional practice or further learning. Advanced application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
1 Demonstrate advanced communication skills in business research	Engaged	PC1.1
2 Critically evaluate the research of others	Creative and critical thinker Empowered	PC3
3 Analyse and synthesise relevant research theories and frameworks to develop applied research proposals	Creative and critical thinker Empowered	PC3.1
4 Applies knowledge of ethical frameworks, theories and concepts and responsibilities when proposing and evaluating research	Ethical	PC4.1

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
ASSOCIATION TO ADVANCE COLLEGIATE SCHOOLS OF BUSINESS	
PC1.1	Written Communication
PC3	Creative and Critical Thinking
PC3.1	Problem Solving
PC4.1	Social Responsibility and Sustainability

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the UniSC Glossary of terms for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

Enrolled in any PGRD Program

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

MBA703 or EMB753

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

5.5. Microcredential Information

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Formative feedback will be provided using various methods in the first few weeks of semester.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Artefact - Professional, and Written Piece	Individual	50%	1000 words	Week 4	Online Submission
All	2	Artefact - Professional, and Written Piece	Individual	50%	1,500 words	Week 7	Online Submission

All - Assessment Task 1: Consultant Memo – Diagnostic Brief

GOAL:	Write a professional memo that defines a business problem, explains its context, poses a decision-focused question, and identifies the evidence needed to support informed action.
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Professional, and Written Piece
FORMAT:	You are a consultant preparing a diagnostic memo for a prospective client. The client is seeking clarity on how to achieve a specific business objective. Your role is to help clarify what is at stake and what kind of evidence might be useful in guiding their decision. \Write a professional memo addressed to the executive team of an organisation you are familiar with (e.g., current or past employer, internship host, or professional network). In the memo, you must: 1. Identify the management problem • Clearly define a problem or opportunity facing the organisation. • Avoid vague or overly broad issues. • Note: You may not use job satisfaction as your topic. 2. Provide background and context • Briefly describe the organisation and relevant business environment. • Highlight any known constraints, uncertainties, or biases that may affect decision-making. • Reference any relevant data sources or gaps. 3. Frame the question • Present a clear question that would help explore the problem • Use reasoning (deductive, inductive, or transpositional) to explain how you shaped the question 4. Outline the evidence needed to answer the question • Provide 2–3 specific objectives that would help clarify the problem and inform decision-making. • These should be measurable, relevant, and aligned with the organisation's strategic needs. Submit via Canvas in the designated assessment area. Word count must not exceed 1000 words
CRITERIA:	

No.		**Learning Outcome assessed**
1	Demonstrate an understanding of the background to management problems	2
2	Accurate identification and articulation of linked management problem, research questions and objectives	3
3	Effective written communication skills	1

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Information literacy

All - Assessment Task 2: Analytical Reasoning Memo – From Question to Recommendation

GOAL:	To reason through how different analytical techniques could be used to explore business or policy questions, and to present recommendations based on the strengths, limitations, and uncertainties of those approaches. This task focuses on methods and decision-making under 5.
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Professional, and Written Piece
FORMAT:	You may either build on the management question you framed in Assessment 1 or frame a new question. Write a method brief that explores how different techniques could be used to address the question. Instead, focus on reasoning through the following: 1. Technique Exploration • Consider how various methods could be applied to your question. • Explain which techniques are better suited than others and why. • Discuss whether a hybrid approach might be appropriate. 2. Identify gaps and limits • Identify what each technique could help uncover—and what it would likely leave unanswered. • Discuss assumptions, blind spots, and constraints that may affect interpretation. 3. Decision implications • Reflect on what kind of decision could be made based on the evidence each technique might produce. • Acknowledge uncertainty and bias, and explain how they affect confidence in the decision. 4. Recommendations • Present clear recommendations for how the organisation should proceed. • Justify your advice based on the strengths and limitations of the techniques discussed. • Include any caveats or conditions that should be considered.
CRITERIA:	

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Critical analysis of desktop research relevant to the managerial problem	2
2	Critical evaluation of the research process	3
3	Application of relevant research theories and frameworks	4
4	Advanced organisation and structure of written content	1
5	Development and articulation of informed arguments	1
6	Advanced referencing of sources of information used within the body of the document and in a reference list using Harvard referencing style	1
7	Advanced accuracy and presentation of written work (including English expression, discipline-based vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation).	1

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Information literacy

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

> There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the online induction training for students, and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:
(a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
(b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:
(a) One day: deduct 5%;
(b) Two days: deduct 10%;
(c) Three days: deduct 20%;
(d) Four days: deduct 40%;
(e) Five days: deduct 60%;
(f) Six days: deduct 80%;
(g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:
Less than 15 minutes: No penalty
From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty
More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

10.4. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching

10.5. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The Student Charter sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.6. General Enquiries

For course-specific questions, contact your teaching staff or Course Coordinator.

For other enquiries or to access support, please contact Student Central:

- UniSC Student Central
- UniSC Adelaide Student Central