

## **Dissertation proposal**

An important part of the MANG6033 Foundations of Research course is the preparation of a proposal for the Master's dissertation that you are required to write in the period from June to September. To get you started and put you in touch with the person who will act as your supervisor, you should complete the attached form with some ideas for possible research topics. You will then be matched with a supervisor who may be interested in your research topic, or at least in the general area in which you would like to research. The process is as follows:

1. Wednesday 22 February 2006 (Week 3): Dissertation topic form available.
2. Wednesday 1 March 2006 (Week 4): Completed dissertation topic form returned to Professor Napier, who will match supervisors, students and topics.
3. Wednesday 8 March 2006 (Week 5): Notification of name of

**supervisor and preferred topic to students.**

**4. Weeks 6 and 7: Supervisors will organise group meetings with students whom they will supervise, to discuss research topics in more detail. These meetings should provide you with more detailed guidance on feasibility of research topic, possible research methods, some key reading.**

**5. Weeks 8 to 11: Supervisors will probably organise at least one further group meeting with the students whom they will supervise. Supervisors will not read draft proposals, but are likely to give guidance on what a good proposal should contain.**

**6. Thursday 25 May 2006 (Week 12): Completed dissertation proposal must be submitted.**

**7. Immediately after examinations: Supervisors will be able to provide feedback on proposals and guidance on actual dissertation research.**

**In selecting research topics, it is a good idea to look at the School of Management Website and get an idea of the current research**

interests of possible supervisors. Note that students taking the MSc in Accounting and Finance, and the MSc in Accounting and Management Sciences, will almost certainly be supervised by an Accounting teacher.

On the next page, you will find some examples of the level of detail that you should be giving at this stage for your research proposal.

#### Examples of research proposals

“An investigation of the information content of earnings for companies listed on the Athens Stock Exchange. The research will use publicly available accounting and share price data for the period 1995-2005”

“A case study of a Chinese company’s use of activity based costing. The main research methods will be interviews and review of documents.”

“A comparison of financial reporting standards in country X with International Financial Reporting Standards, examining problems of harmonisation. I shall use information about Country X from PricewaterhouseCoopers, and get information about harmonisation

from reading the press and some interviews.”

“ An examination of the success or failure of mergers and acquisitions. I shall look at a sample of European companies in the period 1990-2005, and compare the returns before and after the date of acquisition.”

“A survey of methods of capital investment appraisal in Egypt. I shall send a questionnaire to a sample of companies asking about the methods they use (e.g. net present value, payback, accounting rate of return) for assessing capital investments.”

“A critical review of the arguments for and against including brand names on the balance sheet. I shall look for books and papers on the topic through a bibliographic search and through the internet.”

“What do people think of accountants? I shall interview a sample of people and ask them about their attitude to accountants and other professionals (for example, do the public think that accountants are more trustworthy than lawyers or doctors?).”

“A comparison the financial statements of companies in a given

industry but based in different countries. This will test whether there are “industry effects” that lead companies in the same industry to report in similar ways even though they are subject to different regulations.”

“ An experimental study of how managers use accounting information. I shall ask fellow students to respond to an accounting report which will be in two different forms, and test whether their responses are significantly different.”

“ A study of a major fraud, involving misleading accounts, to investigate why it was possible for the company to issue false accounts. I intend to use press reports and look at books on the fraud.”

Possible dissertation topics

Name:

**Student ID Number:**

**Degree Programme:**

**E-mail address:**

**Please give THREE research topics, in order of preference, for your dissertation. You should give some information about the research question and research method, but do not go into detail. Note that the examples given are for guidance only and are not acceptable as they stand for your research topics.**

**Topic 1**

## Topic 2



## Topic 3



Please return this form to Professor Christopher Napier at the MANG6033 lecture on Wednesday 1 March 2006. You may download the form from the course Blackboard site if you prefer to type your topics.