

# International Consultancy

Module Number: TBA	Module Title: <b>International Consultancy</b>	
Module Status: Elective		
Semester: 2	Level: M (7)	Credits: 15
Module Leader: James D. Lynch		
Direct/Assisted Learning Hours: 44	Lectures: 24 Seminars/Workshops: 20	Independent Student Learning: 106
Assessment mode & Weighting: 10% Class Participation; 40% Coursework and 50% Examination		
Pre-requisites: Research Methods Module; Project Management Module Concurrent Module: Strategic Management Post-requisites: Incorporation of Student Learning into Dissertation and Personal/Professional Development Processes Advisory Constraints: None		

## 1. Rationale for Module:

Management in today's very dynamic, highly competitive, and increasingly global marketplace is becoming ever more complex, increasing the need for both internal and external consultancy requirements in organizations doing business internationally. Consequently, there is a growing strategic and operational need for managers, other professionals/specialists, and organizational change agents to be aware of the scope for value-adding consulting interventions in their organisation (whether of an internal or external nature). International managers also need to develop some consultancy skills and competences whether their role is that of a consultant or as a recipient of consultancy services. The module will explore the environmental forces driving the development of international consultancy and will seek to equip students with the requisite conceptual and practical skills (including relevant software skills) to be able to undertake the successful planning and management of complex international consultancy assignments (internal and external) in a variety of different organisational contexts. It will also encourage students to reflect upon their own organizational role, experience, knowledge, and competences as they become familiar with the particular attributes of the consulting profession. In doing so, the module will seek to enhance the analytical and deductive capabilities of students, and to broaden their organizational and managerial perspectives in ways that will: promote personal and career development; create a new professional outlet for future advancement; and assist in the planning and management of their research dissertation.

## 2. Principal Module Aims:

The principal aims of the module are to:

- examine the different theories underpinning modern consultancy, assessing their implications for interventions in the international business arena, and their relationship to organisational and management theory;
- heighten students' awareness of the growing strategic and operational significance of international consulting given, especially, the scale of the challenges posed for organisations doing business internationally by the emerging 'Information Society' phenomenon, which is presenting them with an environment laden with both opportunities and threats;
- examine the different consultancy typologies applicable to international business and assess the implications of each for the respective roles of consultant and client;
- examine and consider recent trends in the internal and external consultancy management environments, assessing their implications for international business;
- explore the principal steps in the consultancy management process to equip students with the requisite insights, knowledge, analytical and deductive capabilities, and other skills necessary for making effective consulting interventions in international organisations;
- provide students with practical experience of the international consultancy approach in a live organisational setting through a 'mock' consultancy assignment for a real client organisation;
- for the above purposes, to familiarise students with all relevant theories, frameworks, models, management concepts, personal development processes, practical consulting tools and techniques (including software tools), and best international practice.

## 3. Distinctive Features of the Module:

The distinctive features of the module are:

- as a specialist module it will offer students the possibility to develop their understanding and knowledge in key areas of today's very challenging international business environment to a degree not possible on more generalist

post-graduate programmes, while at the same time promoting the broad strategic perspective so essential in practice on consulting assignments;

- the forms of assessment employed on the module will be very organization, issue, problem, or market-oriented involving students in such activities as: detailed analysis of client contexts; client diagnostics; strategy evaluation and formulation; development of action plans; assignment planning, costing, and review exercises; development of critical success factors for implementation measures; development of client reporting arrangements; applying knowledge management principles to assignment-based learning to benefit both client and consultant; and post assignment review/follow-up activities (thus providing students with a very broad range of consulting competencies). The ‘mock’ consulting assignment envisaged will be particularly valuable to students in these respects;
- the module (through the medium of guest lectures and compulsory seminars/workshops) will give students access to experienced consulting practitioners who have successfully undertaken major problem-solving, change management, and international market development consulting assignments in, or on behalf of, their organisation;
- the module will also give students access to senior (non-consultant) managers in well-known companies who have successfully managed the ‘receiving’ end of major consulting projects on behalf of their organisations and will be in a position to offer students an effective view of the client perspective on the ‘client-consultant’ relationship;
- in consequence of the above, the module will equip students with valuable insights, skills, knowledge, and capabilities that will facilitate further specialist study at post-graduate level, promote career development, and also further students’ own personal development as international manager and potential internal/external consultants;
- the module will also equip students with new insights, knowledge, skills and capabilities that will assist them in planning and executing their own research dissertation.

#### **4. Principal Learning Outcomes:**

On completion of the module students will have:

- a keen awareness of the complex environmental factors compelling organisations to increasingly avail of consulting interventions in a wide variety of organisational contexts, and of the dynamics of modern client-consultant relationship; **(L1)**

- a very practical yet strategic perspective on how consultancy is helping organisations engaged in international business solve organisational problems, develop new international markets and market niches; increase market share; improve organisational performance; manage change successfully etc.; **(L2)**
- practical experience in the use of the principal techniques employed by successful consultants (traditional and emerging), and related software tools; **(L3)**
- a practical insight into the role of knowledge management in modern international consulting both in the client and consulting environments; **(L4)**
- a keen practical awareness of the ever-growing relationships in international business between project management, knowledge management, and research and development, and consultancy activities; **(L5)**
- the potential to further develop their professional capabilities in the consultancy arena through a process of post-graduate study and research; **(L6)**
- the potential to undertake the successful planning and management of international consulting projects in their future careers in a variety of organisational contexts. **(L7)**

## **5. Indicative Module Content:**

- The 'Information Society' Phenomenon and its Implications for International Consultancy;
- Roles in International Consultancy Management (internal and external);
- The Theoretical Basis underpinning Modern International Consulting;
- Consulting Methodologies and Methods;
- Exploration and practical experience of the use of Consulting Competencies;
- Consultant-Client Reporting Arrangements;
- The Detailed Consultancy Process: the preparation phase; the planning phase; the diagnostic phase; the strategy review and development phase; the implementation phase; the post-implementation phase;
- Computer Support for Consultancy Management;

- The role of Knowledge Management in International Consulting;
- The Politics and Ethics of International Consulting;
- Post-assignment Activities;
- Incorporation of Student learning from the International Consultancy Module and other relevant programme disciplines (which may constitute future areas of professional consulting expertise) into the Student Dissertation and Personal/Professional Development Processes.

## 6. Teaching and Learning Strategy:

The module will be taught through a combination of lectures and compulsory seminars/workshops (see timetabled hours above). Lectures will address the key module topics (as outlined indicatively above) especially in terms of covering all the relevant academic and conceptual issues arising in regard to same. The seminars and workshops will consolidate the material covered in lectures in a more pragmatic way focusing on specific consulting assignment contexts, and organisations, and using multiple means of communication (guest lectures/presentations by expert practitioners followed by student-driven question and answer sessions; case studies/videos; group-based role-playing exercises; examination of students' own research findings/homework; class debates etc.). The theory-practice link will be further copper-fastened by students' own directed independent learning during their private study time, by group-based homework outside the class-room, and by an increasing practical responsibility for their own learning as the module progresses.

## 7. Assessment Strategy:

Students will be assessed on the basis of their participation in compulsory seminars/workshops, on a major piece of coursework (a group-based 'mock' consulting assignment for a real client requiring the submission of a formal Consultants' Report as well as a formal group 'Powerpoint' presentation of the contents of same), and a final examination. The assessment will be weighted as follows:

- **Individual Participation in Compulsory Seminars/Workshops: 10%;**
- **Group Report and Presentation on assigned project: 40% (Learning Outcomes: L3; L6; L7)**
- **Examination: 50% (Learning Outcomes: L1; L2; L4; L5)**

**Coursework Wordlimits: 3000 words (min.) – 5000 words (max.)**

**Examination Format/Duration: 3 hour closed exam requiring students to answer three questions. The paper will be structured into two parts: Part 1 will contain 4 general questions from which students must answer one. Part 2 will contain 4 case-specific questions from which students must answer one. Students will be free to choose their third question from either part of the paper. The case study used for the purposes of Part 2 of the exam will be circulated a minimum of four weeks in advance of the exam to facilitate organisation and industry-specific background research by students.**

## **8. Indicative Reading/Research:**

### **Essential Texts/Articles:**

- Czerniawska, F., & May, P., “Management Consulting in Practice: Award-Winning International Case Studies”, MCA, 2004
- Mc.Gee, J., & Kitchen, S “The Consulting Industry in the New World of Information”, (case study published in “Connections in the Wireless World”), Warwick Business School, 2000
- Thomas, F., “High Performance Consulting Skills: The Internal Consultant’s Guide to Value-Added Performance”, Thorogood Publishing, London, 2003
- Wickham, P., A., “Management Consulting: Delivering an Effective Project”, 2nd. Ed., Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2004

### **Supplementary Texts/Articles:**

- Cornford, T., & Smithson, S., “Project Research in Information Systems”, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Palgrave Macmillan, 2006
- Daniels, J., “Globalisation and Business”, 1<sup>st</sup>. Ed, Prentice Hall, 2002
- Daniels, J., Radebaugh, L., & Sullivan, D., “International Business: Environments and Operations”, 10<sup>th</sup>. Ed., Prentice Hall, 2002
- Deresky, H., “International Management: Managing across Borders and Cultures”, Prentice Hall, 2002
- Information Society Commission: Published Reports to date; Govt. Publications Office, Dublin

- Margerison, C., “Managerial Consulting Skills: A Practical Guide”, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed., Gower, 2001
- McCauley, M.J. et al., “Consultancy: Theory and Practice”, Sheffield Business School, 2000
- Mc.Gee, J., Thomas, H., & Wilson, D., “Strategy: Analysis &Practice” (Text & Cases Edition), Mc.Graw-Hill, 2005
- Peppard, J., “Securing Value from IT Investments”, TCD, 1998
- Project Management Institute of the United States, “A Guide to The Project Management Body of Knowledge” (PMBOK Guide), 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ed., PMI Inc., 2004
- Render, Stair, & Balakrishnan, “Managerial Decision-Modelling with Spreadsheets”, 1<sup>st</sup>. Ed., Prentice Hall, 2002
- Reyemeni, D., “IT Investment: Making a Business Case”, Butterworth – Heinemann, 1999
- Reyemeni et al., “The Effective Measurement and Management of IT Costs and Benefits”, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, 2000
- Rugman, A., and Hodgetts, “International Business”, 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ed., Prentice Hall, 2002
- Shtub et al., “Project Management: Processes, Methodologies, and Economics”, Prentice Hall, 2005

### **Journals/Publications**

- Economist Magazine
- Financial Times Special Reports, including IT Review
- Harvard Business Review
- Irish Independent Business Section/Technology Supplements
- Irish Times Business Section/Technology Supplements
- McKinsey Quarterly
- Overseas Trade (UK Dept. of Trade & Industry)
- Sloan Management Review
- Technology Review (MIT)

**Organisations** (whose publications and/or websites should be monitored):

- ACCA
- Dept. of Trade & Industry (UK)
- European Commission
- Project Management Institute (especially the Ireland, U.K., and USA Chapters)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland
- Institute of Personnel Management (Ireland, & U.K.)
- International Chamber of Commerce