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Roles in the process

Several Laureate Online Education or University of Liverpool roles are referred to in this document according to their functions. The table below explains the part each role has in the consultancy project process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Administration Coordinator</td>
<td>AAC</td>
<td>The AAC confirms receipt of your final submission and arranges assessors for submitted papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessors</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>The people who grade the research project after submission. The Consultancy Project Advisor is the first assessor for the project. Laureate Online Education assigns a second assessor from a list of eligible advisors who are experts on the research field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy Project Advisor</td>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>The Consultancy Project Advisor is a member of the faculty who acts as the personal academic advisor for the student as he or she develops and writes the Consultancy Project Reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Dissertation Instructor</td>
<td>GDI</td>
<td>The GDI is the Instructor who teaches the Consultancy Methods module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Librarian*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>The online librarian is the University of Liverpool librarian assigned to assist online students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>The PD is the academic responsible for delivery of the programme of studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support Manager Team</td>
<td>SSM Team</td>
<td>Student Support is a student’s prime contact point for all non-academic issues. A student’s personal student support manager (SSM) would normally handle most complex queries (or if they were unavailable an SSM from their team with the same level of specialist knowledge), but other members of the support team would handle simple requests for support to ensure a rapid response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Administrator</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>The SA is responsible for class creation and registering students in class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Glossary

The following additional terms are referenced within the document:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy Methods module</td>
<td>CM</td>
<td>This is the module which all students must take before starting their Consultancy Project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Programme Ethics Committee</td>
<td>VPREC</td>
<td>A committee that conducts expedited review of ethics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool Online Research Ethics Committee.</td>
<td>LOREC</td>
<td>A committee that conduct full review of ethics applications (when required).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Your Consultancy Project is the culmination of your master’s programme. It offers you the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge you have acquired in your studies in an applied setting and thus justifies the award of a master’s-level degree.

The Consultancy Project is expected to be a competently structured and professionally implemented investigation into a real-world issue being faced by a real-life organisation and will combine a sound base of investigative theory with a pragmatic and practical application to the practitioner environment. It will demonstrate your ability to use learning derived from your past studies to confront and resolve a management problem or issue.

The final consultancy product will be a 15,000- to 20,000-word report in two sections:

- A practitioner-focused management report (approximately 5,000 words), which would normally be presented to the client organisation, and,
- A report detailing the stages of the consultancy cycle and the research and methodology techniques deployed at each stage, including a reflective piece on your personal development as a consultant. (10,000 – 15,000 words).

The overall submission should therefore be between 15,000 and 20,000 words in length, excluding appendices and references. It is a matter of academic judgment as to the quality of the work if the case of an excessively long submission, with this also applying in the case of a student submitting a particularly short consultancy project.

Specialisation students only: Specialisation students will need to complete a Consultancy Project in the area of their chosen degree specialisation (accounting and finance, marketing, human resources, etc.) where relevant.
An outline of the consultancy project process, and expected outcomes

These guidelines explain briefly how the Consultancy Project process works, the steps you need to take to embark on your Consultancy Project and the requirements which will be placed on you in this final stage of your master’s programme. The key milestones on the route to your Consultancy Project completion (subject to satisfactory progress) are described briefly in the following table, and in more detail in the sections that follow. Those elements marked with an asterisk (*) are formal evaluation points in the process, which you must achieve. Monthly milestones of progress (Months 3 – 7) are guides to expected progress.

The key milestones on the route to your CP (subject to satisfactory progress) are described briefly in the following table, and in more detail in the sections that follow.

Those elements marked with an asterisk (*) are formal evaluation points in the process which you must achieve. Monthly milestones of progress (months 3-7) are guides to expected progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to start</td>
<td>Assigned to your Consultancy Methods module</td>
<td>Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Week-3</td>
<td>Topic area of Consultancy Project approved</td>
<td>GDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assigned to a group classroom in your CPA’s class (Management Advisor Class)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Draft project proposal completed as assignment in the Consultancy Methods module</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Week-7*</td>
<td>Submit proposal for review in CM class (with written CPA’s agreement)</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Week-8*</td>
<td>After proposal approval, Ethics application is submitted by Student in the CPA’s Office class</td>
<td>Student/ CPA/ VPREC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultancy Methods module completed, end of module (EOM)</td>
<td>GDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultancy Methods grade awarded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month-3</td>
<td>Consultancy Project process designed</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data sources identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project plan aligned with situational requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 1 (contracting) requirements completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month-4</td>
<td>Phase 2 (discovery) process under way</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Requirements</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month-5</td>
<td>Phase 2 (discovery) requirements completed</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 3 (feedback) process in planning stages</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Month 5 Progress Report submitted</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month-6</td>
<td>Phase 3 (feedback) requirements completed</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 4 (implementation) process under discussion with client</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month-7</td>
<td>Phase 4 (implementation) requirements completed</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 5 (extension, recycle, termination) decision made and documented as part of the Final Report process</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Month 7 Progress Report submitted</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month-8</td>
<td>Submit draft consultancy project for comments</td>
<td>Student/CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 40 weeks</td>
<td>After 40 Weeks Final Consultancy Project submitted to Management Advisor Class Final Turnitin Link</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some of the more detailed requirements and procedures are detailed below.*
Eligibility and pre-work

The consultancy project can be undertaken as soon as you have reached 120 credits, the equivalent of eight modules. After finishing your final module, the maximum period of time you can wait to enter the CP classroom is 16 weeks. However, you are strongly advised to begin thinking of a potential topic for your CP well before you have completed the modules. As you are working through the programme, in particular during your previous research module (Module 8), be attentive to topics that have particular interest for you and make notes of how you may turn these areas into a CP topic. It is extremely important that you find a topic with which you can engage, as you will be expected to spend approximately 600 hours working on it over the 40 weeks months.

Enrolling for your project – the Consultancy Methods Class

If you meet the eligibility criteria listed above, and you are ready to begin your Consultancy Project, please do not hesitate to contact your SSM to discuss starting your Consultancy Project. You will also receive contact from your SSM regarding your Consultancy Project enrolment as you approach the end of your modules to discuss preparation for the Consultancy Project and to help you decide on an appropriate timeline for starting. Your SSM can help you enrol to an appropriate module and will discuss how and when that enrolment is confirmed.

The Final Research Project preparation materials in the Centre for Student Success (https://success.liverpool-online.com/FinalResearchProjectPreparation/index) are a suite of self-guided resources to help you start planning for your research as early as possible. By reading through these materials, you will learn what makes a good research question, what ethical considerations you will need to consider before you begin collecting data, what information literacy is and why it is important, what processes and policies are involved in the Final Research Project phase, what resources and services are available to help you, and about some research basics such as writing a literature review, choosing a research methodology, and how to maintain a good working relationship with your Consultancy Project Advisor.

You will join two types of classes when you are ready to begin your Consultancy Project. The first, which you will join at the start of the 40-week Consultancy Project period, is a Consultancy Methods module, led by a GDI. This module functions in a similar way to those you are already used to in your master’s programme. You will be enrolled with several other students embarking on the Consultancy Project at the same time as you. In this module, you will do the following:

- Choose your topic for the Consultancy Project and have it approved by the GDI.
- Learn about structuring your Consultancy Project, planning the consultancy process and gathering the data you need to address the chosen issue.
- Share your learning experience with your fellow students as you construct your draft Consultancy Project Proposal.
- Get feedback on your proposed topic, and on early drafts of your Consultancy Project Proposal (similar to the research projects you may have completed in your modules).
- Be evaluated on your understanding of basic consultancy processes.
You will be given lectures and assignments, you will participate in discussions and you will submit work for assessment just as in any other master’s module. Guidelines for participation in this module are exactly the same as for those of other modules. However, there are two important differences:

1. After Week 4, you also will join a Management Advisor Class where you will work, for the rest of your Consultancy Project, one-to-one with your CPA. We will describe this in more detail below.
2. The Consultancy Methods module will stay open at the end of 8 weeks and remain available to you for the duration of your Consultancy Project.

The advantage to you, as a student, of the Consultancy Methods module remaining open is that it allows you to maintain contact with your fellow students as you work through the Consultancy Project, further allowing you to share ideas and experiences with them and learn from each others’ progress. You also will refer to the Consultancy Methods module for all relevant Consultancy Project forms and documents.

Consultancy Methods module: Learning Objectives

The Learning Objectives of your Consultancy Methods module are as follows:

- Apply consultancy intervention to diagnose and analyse client problems and issues, using a variety of consultancy tools.
- Use a consultancy cycle process to engage with a client organisation with the aim of formulating and investigating a current workplace problem.
- Address challenges of the client/consultant relationship such as ethical issues, politics and resistance.
- Synthesise data from a wide variety of sources and interpret results in order to resolve client problems and issues.
- Prepare and present the consultancy findings, conclusions and recommendations in formats acceptable to the client.

Proposal submission and approval

Before the end of the eighth week of your CM class (the end of your second month) you will need to have obtained approval for your consultancy project proposal. Once you have agreed your proposal is ready with your CPA, the CPA will post an approval note in the CPA class. You will copy this message and submit it with your proposal to the CM class, for a final review (by the GDI), using the format and structure provided (using the Consultancy Project Proforma template accessed via Handouts in the CM class).

This should be done no later than the end of the eighth week of your CM class.

This is the first formal checkpoint on your CP journey, and your progress will depend on getting through it. Final approval of proposals is given by the GDI. The key criterion for judgement is whether the GDI believes you have demonstrated sufficient knowledge of research methods to be allowed to embark on the rigor of the CP itself. It is vitally important that you realise the responsibility for your work on
your CP is entirely yours. Your CPA will act as just that — an advisor — and you are strongly recommended to follow their advice. However, it is ultimately up to you to submit the required work on time and to the standards laid down in the student handbook. Failure to do so cannot be blamed on your CPA.

You can find the link for the research project page for your programme in the right-hand menu of your programme homepage (either under ‘Dissertation’ or ‘Final Research Project’).

If you don’t already have the homepage for your programme bookmarked you can find it by going to the Management Programmes web page and selecting your programme from the list, taking care to select the correct link if there are different links for your programme according to the date you started your programme.

Once your proposal has been approved, then you will be allowed to continue with your Ethics application.

**Ethical policy**

The University of Liverpool and Laureate are fully committed to the advancement of high-quality academic research, and to ensuring that all research activities involving human participation are conducted in a way that safeguards the dignity, rights, health, safety, and privacy of those involved.

*Conducting research without ethical approval is likely to constitute research misconduct. Any final research projects (dissertations / consultancy projects) that contain data collected without ethical approval will be classified as not having been submitted, will not be assessed and will be treated as a non-submission. This applies to dissertations containing any data collected prior to ethics approval or data collected beyond the scope of the ethics approval. In such cases the Board of Examiners will normally award a mark of zero and require a re-take on a new topic. However, students will only be entitled to re-take if the breach occurred during the first attempt to academic entitlement.*

As a University of Liverpool student, you must conduct your research in accordance with some fundamental ethical principles. These *principles* are:

- Except where the nature of the research makes this impossible, researchers and participants must be fully informed about the purpose, methods, and intended possible uses of the research. Based on this information, they must give their voluntary consent to take part in the project, free from coercion.
- The confidentiality of the information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected. Wherever possible data is anonymised and there is full compliance with the principles within the Data Protection Act. Personal information can only be disclosed when permission to disclose is part of the consent procedure.
- Risks to those involved in the research must be minimised, and harm to research participants and researchers must be avoided. Participants must be warned about any potential risks of harm.
- The independence of the research must be clear, and any conflict of interest or partiality must be explicit.
The research must conform to all relevant statutory requirements and to the requirements of the institution in which the research is undertaken.

You can find more information about the ethics procedure in the Centre for Student Success: http://success.liverpool-online.com/ethics.

**Dialogue between Student and Consultancy Project Advisor**

The target turnaround time for the CPA’s response to questions posed by the student is within four days, and within ten days for feedback on draft chapters and the draft full CM. Past experience has shown that work should proceed in well-planned steps and intermediate results should be shown to the CPA. Hence a key early activity for the student is the completion of their own research timetable: specifying milestones agreed and signed off with their CPA. As has been already emphasised, all discussion should be carried out/recorded in the CPA classroom. This is very important as the quality of teaching and student effort may be monitored by the Lead Faculty, Programme Director, Director of Online Studies, and subsequently by the University of Liverpool Monitors and the External Examiners.

**Students who fail to achieve proposal approval after 8 weeks.**

Students are expected to have their proposals approved by the end of Week 8 of their CM class. Failure to do so will reduce the amount of time that you have to work on the chapters of your CP.

In the event that the student has failed to achieve proposal approval at the end of Week 8 of the CM class, the CPA should indicate the reason for the delay to the GDI.

**Students who are absent from the CPA class, or who otherwise fail to meet the minimum participation requirements**

If the CPA finds during any given month that the student has been unacceptably absent from the class, the CPA will refer the case directly to Student Support for follow up with the student.

**Consultancy Project Submission**

**Submission of draft consultancy project**

You will be expected to submit a full draft of your research project to your CPA’s class one month before the deadline for final research project submission. The CPA will review for formatting and structure only at this stage.
You will find in your CPA class a link to submit your draft research project through the Turnitin plagiarism checking tool. This is to enable you to review your draft for compliance with our plagiarism guidelines and make any minor adjustments to your citation practices before your final submission. As this is a draft submission, your research project will not be added to the main Turnitin database and will not be matched against your final submission. Please note that this checking process is your responsibility and will not involve your CPA.

**Submission of final consultancy project**

You should submit the final version of your research project or consultancy project to the Turnitin link by clicking on the 'Final Submission tab' in your CP’s class before the end of the 40th week of your research project period.

**Consultancy project deadlines**

The research project deadline is also referred to as the submission date. The official submission date for all students is **40 weeks of the start of the CM module.** Previously, the time used to determine if a final research project was submitted by the deadline or was late was based on the time used by our online classroom (US Eastern Standard Time). Now, with effect for any submission with a deadline after 28 December 2016, the time used will change to the time zone of your country of residency (i.e. midnight, your local time) as recorded in the University records or as otherwise notified by the student (in the case of a student travelling outside their home time zone).

For more information see:

(i) The **Final Research Project: Submission, Deadlines and Extensions** section of the CSS:
   http://success.liverpool-online.com/finalresearchproject/submission

(ii) The **module calendar** for your programme:
   http://success.liverpool-online.com/modulecalendars/2019

**Extensions**

Extensions will not normally be granted except in clearly unexpected circumstances beyond student control, such as in cases of real personal/family/medical/work emergencies, or in instances where the **Disability Centre** have authorised an extended deadline following a review. Please contact student support or view the support website for details of making a claim for **Extenuating Circumstances** to be taken into consideration, or to learn about the **Disability Centre**. More information You can find more information in the Centre for Student Success: http://answers.liverpool-online.com/faq/129457
Late Submission

1. All student research projects submitted up to 10 calendar days after the official submission date will be assessed.
2. Research projects submitted after the official submission date, but before the end of the 10-day penalty window will have their CPs graded on merit by their assessors.
3. Where a student’s research project is found to have been submitted late, the penalties described in this document will be automatically applied to the work after it has been graded.
4. For every two calendar days after the official submission date, 5% of the total marks available for the research project component shall be deducted from the assessment mark, up to a maximum of 25% (i.e., for work marked out of 100, five marks per two days will be deducted; for work marked out of 20, one mark per two days will be deducted);
5. If the student work has reached a passing standard on merit, the late penalty will not reduce the grade for the work below the Pass mark for the assessment.
6. Work assessed below the pass mark on merit will not be penalised for late submission of up to ten days.
7. All work submitted ten calendar days after the official submission deadline will receive a mark of zero.

Marking your consultancy project

Your research project will then be marked by your CPA, as the first assessor, and by a second assessor. Once the final submission has been made, you will receive an email confirming the receipt of your project. This contains the final acceptance of your research project and marks the point at which communication between you and your CPA should end so that the grading process can begin.

Grading will continue for several weeks once the research project is complete. Final grades will be released to you as soon as possible after the Board of Examiners has met and agreed on a final award. This could mean a wait of several months, depending upon the deadline and submission date of the project. You will be contacted with official confirmation of the results once the Board of Examiners has made its decision.
Consultancy Project Assessment Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% to 100%</td>
<td>Design and execution of the project is in line with the highest professional standards with strong evidence of successful implementation with positive impact. Both the main report and practitioner focused report are of exemplary standard with the discovery strategy and methods of inquiry demonstrating appropriate choices and complementing each other. These are also fully justified and analysed appropriately and accurately. Any possible weaknesses of the approach are presented and the potential impact of these is explained. There are clear, understandable and convincing conclusions that are consistent with the findings. Clear and detailed recommendations for practice that can be implemented directly from the report are evident. Presentation of the main report and practitioner focused report is of the highest professional standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% to 89%</td>
<td>Professionally designed and executed project with convincing evidence of successful or potentially successful implementation with positive impact. Excellent project design utilising discovery strategy and methods of inquiry that suit the project and are fully justified and skilfully analysed. Any possible weaknesses of the approach are presented and the potential impact of these is explained. Clear understandable conclusions, detailed recommendations for practice and direct implementation are apparent. Excellent practitioner focused report and with high professional standard of presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% to 79%</td>
<td>Very carefully designed and executed project. The problem is framed and explained very clearly and understandably. Carefully formulated approach incorporating discovery strategy, methods of inquiry and analysis that are clearly and appropriately justified. Any possible weaknesses of the approach are presented and the potential impact of these is explained. Clear conclusions, with detailed recommendations for practice that are implementable. Excellent practitioner focused report. High standard of presentation is evident in both the main report and practitioner focused report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% to 69%</td>
<td>Well designed and executed project. Good framing of the problem. Clearly explained discovery strategy and methods of inquiry that are suitable for the project and these are appropriately justified. Demonstration of ability to reflect upon weaknesses in approach. There are clear conclusions and detailed recommendations for practice with good potential for implementation. Good presentation in both the main report and practitioner focused report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% to 59%</td>
<td>Generally adequate design and execution. Generally adequate framing of the problem and presentation of the background to the study. Attempt to apply discovery strategy but may contain minor weaknesses in approach, for example, inadequacies in the choice and/or justification of discovery strategy, and possible incongruence with the methods of inquiry. Acceptable analysis but with possible minor flaws in the approach. Reasonably well-presented practitioner focused report and main report. Makes some convincing recommendations for implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40% to 49%</td>
<td>Weaknesses that impact the credibility of the report in one or more of the following areas: incomplete practitioner focused report; inappropriate or incomplete discovery strategy; inappropriate methods of inquiry and analysis that possibly lack justification, weak discussion and conclusions, sub-standard presentation of the main report and the practitioner focused report. Conclusions are weak and recommendations for implementation are weak and unconvincing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30% to 39%</td>
<td>Makes some attempt to provide an informed consultancy report but is significantly deficient in one or more of the following: adequacy of practitioner focused report;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% to 29%</td>
<td>Submission contains serious weaknesses on more than one of the following counts: adequacy of practitioner focused report; discovery strategy; methods of inquiry, analysis, discussion and conclusions and general standard of presentation of the main report and the practitioner focused report. Conclusions and recommendations for implementation are missing or inadequate, irrelevant and/or inconsistent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions are weak and/or inconsistent and may lack recommendations for implementation.
Outside help with language skills

The writing of the research project, as well as the work presented within it, should be the students own. It is acceptable to ask your CPA or a friend / colleague to point out unclear sentences, problematic paragraph structure, etc., when reading a draft chapter, but it is unacceptable to give the text to a professional editor for corrections. The University of Liverpool will treat the use of a professional editor as unauthorized collusion. However, your SSM can advise about services offered by the University to improve writing skills.

Even the most minor assistance with any aspect of the writing up of the Consultancy Project should be clearly acknowledged in the CP acknowledgements.

It is not permitted under any circumstances to write the Consultancy Project in another language and have it translated into English.

Guidance on the action to be taken if the student is unhappy with their Consultancy Project Advisor

If a student is unhappy about any aspect of his/her supervision, s/he should consult their Student Support Manager as soon as possible. The SSM will contact the Programme Director and/or Lead Faculty to discuss the issues. Every effort will be made to ensure that the student-CPA match works well. However, if a change in CPA is requested, the Programme Director will make the final decision considering the supporting evidence for a change.

Some Questions and Answers

You said it must be an original work. What does that mean?

The Consultancy Project must constitute an original application of theory to a business problem or situation. Originality implies that you should contribute something to the knowledge of the topic area, often through the work involved, such as interviewing, using a questionnaire, observing a situation or obtaining and analysing data from a source such as a government department. Usually the practical work that you do, such as interviewing people in your workplace, will ensure that the study is original. It must, of course, be original also in the sense of not being copied from anywhere.

Does the research project have to involve doing practical work? Can I just study something and write about that?

If you simply studied something, for example the present state of the economy, then it would most like not comply with our understanding of what business management consultancy is all about. However, if your project applied previous knowledge to a new workplace situation then it could possibly comply with that understanding.
I am not in business. I work in the not-for-profit sector. Is this a disadvantage?

Although we often speak of the business or the firm, this normally includes the public sector, charities, colleges, universities, etc. You should not find this to be a disadvantage, as there is ample scope to apply the business disciplines to these areas.

I am a management student and I work in the computing department and want to do something in this area. Is computing a business discipline?

Consultancy Project that studies the implementation of a system would be within the scope of the Management Masters, if it is concerned with, for example, financial appraisal or employee motivation, but if it was concerned only with computer programming, for example, it would not be. It is the application of principles and processes to organisational management that our students should be interested in, more so than the nature of those principles and processes per se.

I have looked in the library and there is nothing on Bluetooth technology, which is what I want to write about.

We assume you are not writing about Bluetooth technology as such because that would be a computer topic, so we assume your Consultancy Project is about a business application of Bluetooth technology. If you are studying the effect of the new technology on marketing a product, then there is material in the library on marketing an innovative product. If you are studying the effect of a new technology on competitive position, then you could look up disruptive technology. Every topic has a theoretical foundation that can be found in the literature, but it may not be easy to identify. You should refer back to your Information Literacy course, ask your CPA and, if still stuck, ask the Online Librarian.

Do I have to use primary data? Can I use other people’s data?

You do not have to have numerical data at all, and you can make use of data collected by, for example, government departments or any other reliable source. You can also use work done by other people, but this must form a minor part of the research project and must be clearly denoted and not form the main research.

Can I publish or sell my research project?

The University of Liverpool’s policy on the intellectual property rights of student Consultancy Projects is that, while all postgraduate students are required to assign all intellectual property rights to the University, the students are the effective copyright holders of their Consultancy Projects. The University will not publish a student’s work without the author’s consent.

In cases where students wish to publish or sell their Consultancy Projects, the University has no rights over such a publication. However, the work should be viewed as a collaboration between the student and CPA, and the student and CPA should reach an agreement regarding authorship and acknowledgements.
It is expected that the author will include the University of Liverpool Laureate Online Education, and the CPA in the acknowledgements.

Students are required to notify the University/Laureate if any commercial exploitation of their Consultancy Project work is planned. The University will not assert any claim of intellectual property rights, however, unless there is a reasonable argument that the CPA should share in the benefits of any exploitation. In a case where a student’s Consultancy Project is sponsored by his or her employer or relates directly to his or her employment, the University will not make any claim on the property rights of the work.

In short, it is not in the interests of the University to forcibly claim rights over a piece of work or information. At most, the University will request acknowledgement that the work was carried out as part of the student’s studies with the University.

**My employer wants my research project kept confidential.**

Confidentiality can be offered only to a limited extent. All Consultancy Projects must be made available to CPAs, Second Assessors, and members of the Board of Examiners. Our policy of transparency allows the classroom to be read by all Instructors.

**Can I send a questionnaire to all the other students as part of my research?**

We agree in our contract with students to use their personal data including email addresses only for the purposes of the course, so we cannot allow consultancy project students to use their Liverpool Online Office 365 email accounts (online.liverpool.ac.uk) for sending out questionnaires generally. However, students may ask for volunteers by posting a message in the Laureate LENS Student Community - please see [http://answers.liverpool-online.com/faq/130118](http://answers.liverpool-online.com/faq/130118).

**My Consultancy Project concerns some private products. Is that a problem?**

Students should seek advice from the University through the Director of Online Studies if any ethical problem is at all probable. This should emerge from your completion of the Ethical application, as part of your proposal approval process. Some, but not all, of the areas to be aware of are questionnaires that ask for personal, medical, sexual or racial data, or where you are expecting to work with children.