

MSc in Professional Accountancy

Timetable for GIFF, July 2019

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Global Issues for the Finance Professional (GIFFP) [PAM100]			
Week commencing	Week	Advisable topics to complete	
1 July 2019	1	1 – Corporate social responsibility	Theme 1: Selected issues in sustainability Shane O’Grady
8 July 2019	2	2 – Accountability and governance	
15 July 2019	3	3- Tax avoidance	
22 July 2019	4	4 – Concept, context and relevance <i>Coursework 1 brief released – selected issues from Themes 1 & 2 – Friday 1st February 2019</i>	Theme 2: Harmonisation of Accounting Standards Michael Donnelly
29 July 2019	5	5 – Implementation and challenges	
5 August 2019	6	6 – Some critical perspectives	
12 August 2019	7	7 – Consolidation of themes 1 and 2	
19 August 2019	8	8 – Systemic risk <i>Coursework 1 submission area opens – Tuesday 26th February 2019</i>	Theme 3: Financial risk management and the Basel Accords Shane O’Grady
26 August 2019	9	9 – The liquidity crisis and its impact on the banking industry <i>Coursework 1 submission deadline – 13.00 UK time Monday 4th March 2019</i>	
11 th March 2019	10	10 – Financial regulation and an overview of the Basel accords	
2 September 2019	11	11 – The investment environment, risk and return <i>Coursework 2 brief released – selected issues from Themes 3 & 4 – Friday 21 September 2019</i>	Theme 4: Required rates of return post-financial crisis Mick Bristow
9 September 2019	12	12 – The financial system and the Global Financial Crisis	
16 September 2019	13	13 – Valuing bonds in the post-Global Financial Crisis	

23 September 2019	14	14 – Consolidation of themes 3 and 4 and finalising coursework 2 submission	
30 September 2019	15	15 – Introduction to global mergers and acquisitions. <i>Coursework 2 submission area opens – Monday 15th April 2019</i>	Theme 5: Global Merges and Acquisitions Liam Doran
7 October 2019	16	16 – Measuring merger success: Acquirer’s perspective <i>Coursework 2 submission deadline: 13.00 UK time Monday 22nd April 2019</i>	
14 October 2019	17	17 – M&A Segmentation: spotting winning mergers’ critical characteristics	
21 October 2019	18	18 – Emerging M&A: Selected issues <i>Project brief released – selected issues from Themes 5 & 6 + integrated and reflective assignment – Friday 10th May 2019</i>	
13 th May 2019	19	19 – New International M&A Major Players: selected issues	
28 October 2019	20	20 – Company valuation techniques for social networking firms	Theme 6: Valuation techniques of social networking firms Michael Barry
4 November 2019	21	Working on project	Val Corbett
11 November 2019	22	Working on and finalising project submission <i>Project submission area opens – Monday 3rd June 2019</i> <i>Project submission deadline – 13.00 GMT Monday 10th June 2019 (Week 23)</i>	

Notes:

- All briefs/submissions/results are to be at 13:00 GMT
- **Dates are subject to change. Please check our final timetable online before course commencement**

MSc in professional Accountancy

This is an example of what was expected from the Students completing the exam in December 2018.;

Module: Global Issues for the Financial Professional [PAM100]

Some thoughts from the GIFF Team regarding Coursework 1 (September 2018)

Context:

You will be aware that this coursework draws upon selected issues from Theme 1: Selected issues in Sustainability (topics 1, 2, 3), and Theme 2: Harmonization of Accounting standards (topics 4, 5, 6).

At Masters level we often ask students to critically evaluate a situation. What is important is to **not just use materials located in the core study materials but to supplement them with further additional research you undertake**. You will therefore have enough information to set out arguments for and against the issues raised in the assignment requirement. You should demonstrate that you are able to select appropriate matters from the core and additional research materials, analyse them and present a cohesive set of arguments for or against the issues that have been raised in the assignment and come up with a solid conclusion.

The readings and material you have been given, articulate a number of the potential benefits – at least theoretical benefits - of IFRS in general and of harmonization of IFRS specifically, whilst identifying some associated issues. The potential benefits include improvements in the rigour and quality of financial reporting, not least in the determination of earnings in a financial period. Other research literature reflects the benefits and challenges. Not surprisingly therefore, your essay should reflect aspects of your study of those materials, **together with any additional research you undertake**.

Each of the core readings in on Corporate Social Responsibility, will also be important for the assignment highlighting its development and growing importance in the financial world.

The essence of the two paragraphs immediately above could be viewed as a dichotomy: IFRS should improve financial reporting quality, and yet despite the presence of a number of standards and their applications, it is still possible for some corporations to undertake earnings management which will, expose them to accusations of playing games and not taking their corporate social responsibility as seriously as they should.

Some thoughts on process for this essay

You need to be aware that there is in effect no one set answer – your critical evaluation may be different from that of another student. The essay will be judged on the merits

of the scope and relevance of the materials selected, the arguments and evaluation put forward, and the flow of the work.

The assignment requires you to critically evaluate the issues. To reiterate, critical evaluation is not just setting out the points but explaining their significance and showing how and why they help you to answer the question that has been set.

Please note – the assignment gives three example firms that have “failed” and had issues with reporting and CSR highlighted in their subsequent investigation into failure.

You ARE NOT required to provide a case study review of the causes, anatomy or timescale of failure of the three companies. You may include relevant examples to support any points you make in the answer, but these should only be used as support and **NOT instead of analysing points made.**

It is one matter to identify relevant materials and set out key points, it is another to assemble them in a way which makes sense. It is not uncommon for individual paragraphs to read well on a standalone basis but to lack an ongoing thread - a flow – which promotes a well-constructed assignment which makes it easier for the marker to award higher marks. In this assignment you should consider the following:

- i. Set out an introduction clearly outlining what it is you are looking at, why you are looking at it, and how you intend to set about looking at it.
- ii. You should also address the potential benefits of harmonization of IFRS especially in the area of financial reporting and reviewing the function of CSR. Do these concepts provide a set of “rules” for the way companies should conduct business?
- iii. What improvements would you make to the two concepts / implementation of the two, to ensure that investors and markets are protected?
- iv. Draw a conclusion based on the evidence you have produced.
- v. Ensure that all of the points above that you include together with any others, are set within a piece of writing which is integrated and coherent and ‘flows’. Do not put forward a set of standalone paragraphs which, the work must flow, and build up to a clear set of recommendations at the end of the work. Work that does not “flow” is likely to lead to a lower mark.
- vi. Key points to remember: a) adhere to the word count, and instructions regarding use of charts, diagrams, tables, etc., and b) incorporate ‘proper’ referencing - whether we like it or not ‘proper’ referencing is considered an **essential** ingredient of Masters-level work. Harvard-style referencing is preferred but other valid ones may be used in its place. Apply your referencing consistently.
- vii. Do not use Wikipedia or Investopedia – they are not considered as “academic” references at this level of study.
- viii. Please refer to my announcements on plagiarism and ensure that you have completed your Study Skills module and correctly use in-text citations.
- ix. Do not use any previous assignment answers that have been set in the past. This is a unique assignment and needs a new answer – failure to adhere to this requirement is likely to lead to failure of the assessment.

Of course, in addition to the core study materials there are potential many additional sources you might locate and investigate. Some will prove of little value to your essay and will be discarded, whereas others may prove to be goldmines. For example:

International accounting/reporting standards, illustratively:

http://www.ifrs.com/updates/aicpa/ifrs_faq.html and

http://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/09-102_1bc06d7-7340-4f0a-b638-e23211a40c41.pdf

The nature and scope of sustainability, illustratively:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

Do note that the illustrative references detailed above may be drawn upon but as the GIFF Team has already located them for you and the strong advice is certainly to seek out others.

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