A report on the faculty’s research publications including books, book chapters, articles in refereed journals and refereed conference papers.
The RMIT Business 2002 Research Report has been compiled by the Research Development Unit with input and assistance from the Schools and Centres in the Faculty.

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This report is available online at www.rmit.edu.au/bus/rdu/rp_report

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents Item</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Message from the Pro Vice Chancellor (Business): Research Context at RMIT Business</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message from the Associate Dean (Research): An Overview of our Performance</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Research Council (ARC) successes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Accounting and Law</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Business Information Technology</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Economics and Finance</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Management</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Marketing</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Management Quality Research</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC for Construction Innovation</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart Internet Technology CRC</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Dean</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In moving forward in today’s ever changing environment, RMIT Business has been pro-active in establishing close links with industry and addressing research issues that are relevant to business and the communities in which we operate. Through conducting research that has real world relevance, our collaborative ventures have yielded innovative research that has broad social, economic and cultural benefit and has dissolved some of the traditional boundaries that exist between university, business, industry and community.

Professor Robert Brooks
Acting Pro Vice Chancellor (Business)
MESSAGE FROM
the associate dean (research)

As we move to become a more knowledge-based society and economy operating in a global context, the need to be innovative in the use of knowledge and the application of research is paramount. Innovative approaches to scholarship and research that produce results that are relevant to the needs of industry and the community are what we strive for at RMIT Business. We are pro-active in forming collaborations with business partners, community groups and other organisations. Our research extends to provide far reaching benefit that engages with key stakeholders including regional communities. In 2002 the RMIT Business has embarked on a number of new ventures including the involvement in two Co-operative Research Centres (CRC’s). Further to this, we have undertaken new initiatives in our business and research practices that have yielded positive results and contributed to growth in our capacity to conduct research that is highly valued by industry.

In 2002 RMIT Business built on its past successes and continued to expand its research activity. Total external research income rose by almost 25% from $1,544,767 in 2001 to $1,914,486 in 2002. Publication output again increased to a total of 132 research publications in 2002, which has more than doubled over the past 2 years. The graphs over the page highlight the impressive improvement and growth in the capacity of RMIT Business to conduct research. Further, in keeping with the boarder strategic objectives of RMIT University, the Faculty remains committed to ensuring that this positive trend continues and that our reputation for engaging in research that is practical and industry focused is extended. We will continue to invest in building our research capacity to further strengthen our position and standing as a world class business research Faculty engaged in research that impacts on the organisations and communities in which we operate in a global context.

Whist the encouraging statistics and graphs presented over the page show the real and rapid growth that has occurred in our research output, they do not however fully reveal the remarkable achievements that have occurred at RMIT Business. In particular a research culture that prizes innovation, collaboration and community engagement as core values continues to develop. This is in part evidenced by the fact that the numbers of staff and research students contributing to the overall research output has increased significantly and continues to grow. In addition there have been some senior research appointments made within the Faculty, particularly as a result of our joining to two Co-operative Research Centres (CRC’s). In 2002 we welcomed Prof. Derek Walker who leads a major project with the CRC for Construction Innovation investigating knowledge management and information communication technologies diffusion. Also in 2002 Assoc. Prof. Supriya Singh who heads the user centred design project for the CRC for Smart Internet Technology joined RMIT Business. The Faculty’s involvement in these two CRC’s has enabled us to form new collaborative ventures with industry partners and other universities that has been a welcome outcome and will further lead to the generation of new opportunities in the future.
Not only within the Faculty is our emphasis on research apparent but also RMIT Business has become recognised for conducting research that is practical in its focus and engages with industry and the community.

In 2002 some of the new industry partners that the Faculty has become involved with in research projects include the Department of Industry, Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Southern Grampians Shire Council, Tenix Alliance, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, the Financial Planning Association, Universal Postal Union and the Financial Planning Association to name a few.

Within the Faculty our key areas of research are integrated and tie in with RMIT’s Virtual Research and Innovation Institutes (VRII’s). In particular the Faculty has research specialisation in the areas of organisational accountability, e-commerce, knowledge management, transport planning, financial markets, practice led research, health services management and entrepreneurship and innovation. Links from these areas of research specialisation into the University’s Virtual Research and Innovation Institute’s themed around the concepts of globalisation and global sustainability has also resulted in greater cross disciplinary research within RMIT. This is welcomed and is yielding some exciting results. The development of critical masses of researchers in areas of designated research priority plays a key role in the Faculty’s strategy of building its research capacity and reputation in these areas.

A major focus of the research activity at RMIT Business is centred on our commitment to excellence in research training. In 2002 the Faculty had 17 research students complete their research programs. The achievements and research interests of some of our research graduates are profiled in this Report and highlight the industry relevance of the research training undertaken at RMIT Business.

In 2002 the number of research publications, research student completions and external research income have all risen, thereby attesting to the fact that the strategic importance that has been placed on research at RMIT Business over the past few years is yielding some fruitful results. In this year’s Research Report we have taken the opportunity to share with you some of the exciting research that is being undertaken by researchers at RMIT Business. I congratulate all of our hard working staff and research students who are responsible for the achievements that we have made in increasing our research activity and reputation of research excellence with industry.

Associate Professor Pam Green
Acting Associate Dean (Research)
In 2002 the Faculty lodged 10 ARC Linkage applications with industry partners, of these a total of 6 were successful - 4 involved RMIT Business researchers teaming up with industry partners, and 2 involved RMIT researchers along with other Universities and industry partners. In addition to this, a total of 8 ARC Discovery applications were lodged by the Faculty. Furthermore, an application involving RMIT Business was lodged by Monash University which was accepted for funding.

The successful ARC Linkage applications involving RMIT Business that were accepted for funding commencing in 2003 include:

**Dr. Anthony Lowe** and **Mr. Geoff Christopherson** from the School of Marketing with industry partner Agribusiness (Department of Natural Resources and Environment) represented by Mr P. Hansford. Project title: *'A best practice supply chain model for exporting Australia’s fresh produce to global retailers in Thailand'.*

**Dr. Roslyn Russell** and **Prof. Robert Brooks** from the Research Development Unit along with Assoc. Prof. Gina Nicoletti from the Department of Biotechnology and Environmental Biology and Emeritus Prof. R. Borland from the industry partner BioDiem. Project title: *'Valuations and business models for biotechnology companies'.*

Assoc. Prof. Peter Smith from the Department of Statistics and Operations Research and currently the Head of the School of Creative Media along with **Prof. Robert Brooks** from the Research Development Unit for their project with the ANZ Bank and BPN Consulting. Project title: *'Censored regression techniques for credit scoring'.*

Dr. P. Smith, Mr. D. Stratton and Dr. J. Wharington from the University of Ballarat along with RMIT’s **Hossein S. Zadeh** from the School of Business Information Technology and industry partner Calytrix Technologies Pty. Ltd. Project title: *'Applying the lessons of the virtual battlefield to financial modelling - Investigating innovative use of distributed simulation.'*

**Assoc. Prof. Michael McKenzie** and **Dr. Amalia Di Iorio** from the School of Economics and Finance with Mr. R.B. Heeps from industry partner Midwine Consulting. Project title: *'Liquidity measurement and risk management in the Australian insurance industry.'*

Dr. Beth Webster and Dr. Jongsay Yong from the University of Melbourne, **Prof. Tim Fry** from the School of Economics and Finance and Mr. M. Klee and Mr. T. Harcourt from industry. This project also involves multiple industry partners including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Productivity Commission, IBIS World, the Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance and Austrade. Project title: *'The evolution of Australian enterprises, 1997 to 2007: An empirical analysis of the relationship between turbulence among firms, productivity, growth and exports.'*

The successful ARC Discovery application that RMIT Business was involved in was:

**Prof. Robert Faff** from Monash University, **Prof. Robert Brooks** from the Research Development Unit and **Prof. Tim Fry** from the School of Economics and Finance at RMIT. Project Title: *'A Complex Systems Approach to Modelling Time-Varying Risk in the Presence of Market Frictions.'*
The School of Accounting and Law has established a solid reputation in research across a number of fields, most notably in the areas of social and environmental accountability, corporate governance, public sector accounting, and accounting education. Whilst the School undertakes a variety of research projects, it is worth highlighting how a great deal of the School's research effort is directly embraced by industry.

The applied nature of business research in the School of Accounting and Law

The following activities, which involve commerce and industry utilising our research skills, were undertaken in the last 12 months by the School of Accounting and Law.

- Professor Craig Deegan compiled a report entitled *Environmental Management Accounting: An Introduction and Case Studies for Australia*. The research for this report was funded by a consortium involving Environment Australia, EPA Victoria, and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia. The report was launched in February 2003 by John Thwaites MP, Victorian Minister for Environment and Water. Following this, Professor Deegan was also commissioned by the Electricity Supply Association of Australia to undertake environmental management accounting work within a number of electricity suppliers and generators.

- Professor Craig Deegan, Professor Barry Cooper, and Ms Marita Shelly are undertaking research, sponsored by CPA Australia, on the verification of triple bottom line reports. A report is due for release in late 2003.

- Professor Barry Cooper and Associate Professor Philomena Leung have undertaken an extensive study funded by the Institute of Internal Auditors entitled *The Role of Internal Audit in Corporate Governance and Management in Australia*. A report is expected to be released in late 2003.

- Dr. Barry Hutton and Ms Christine Hutton were funded to undertake research into the business practices being adopted by an organisation under the control of Indigenous Australians. The research showed how social issues play an important part in aboriginal business, relative to Western-style business, and the research has been shown to have direct management implications in the areas of finance, strategy and general management.
A number of staff within the School of Accounting and Law also use their research expertise to directly provide input into the educational programs of the accounting profession and other industry bodies. For example, Associate Professor Phillip Lipton is Chair of the Subject Advisory Committee for Corporate Governance conducted by Chartered Secretaries Australia. In this capacity he is author and managing editor of the Corporate Governance course materials. Associate Professor Philomena Leung, Professor Barry Cooper, Professor Sheila Bellamy, Professor Craig Deegan, and Ms Marcia O'Neil all provide input into the education programs of the Australian professional accounting bodies.

Research Publications

A1 Books

Chapple, L., Lipton, P. (2002), *Corporate Authority and Dealings with Officers and Agents*, Centre for Corporate Law and Securities Regulation and CCH Australia Limited, Australia.

B1 Book Chapter


C1 Journal Articles


E1 Conference Proceedings


Research Student Completions

David Moore, Master of Business by Research
Thesis title: 'Environmental Management Accounting and Effluent Treatment and Disposal: An Investigation into the Classification and Allocation of Costs within a Water Authority'.

Supervisors: Dr. Barry Hutton and Dr. Pat O'Brien.
Completed: 22 May, 2002.

In March 2000, David commenced work as full time research student within the School of Accounting and Law at RMIT Business, courtesy of a scholarship provided by RMIT Business. Prior to undertaking his research program, he was employed as a secondary school teacher of Accounting at Patterson River Secondary College. David's main motivation for undertaking his research study was to pursue an academic career. The topic that he choose for investigation was Environmental Management Accounting and Effluent Treatment and Disposal. David's interest in this topic originated from the observation that effluent treatment is of concern to various stakeholders who obtain benefit from the coastal environment, such as surfers. Hence the challenge was to determine how accounting information could be used to manage, and possible mitigate, the associated environmental impact.
From a personal perspective, David found that completing the Master of Business taught him a great deal about the "mechanics" of research which he sees as being a significant benefit to him in completing a PhD in the future.

He has recently prepared a PhD proposal, 'Management Accounting and Water Management in Australia', with a view to officially commencing the PhD in 2004. For David, developing these research skills through his Masters program was just as important as the topic itself.

At present, David is employed as a lecturer in the School of Accounting and Law teaching Management Accounting and Accounting Theory. He has submitted an article for publication in the journal, Accounting Forum, which is presently under review.

Steven Dellaportas, PhD
Thesis title: 'The Effect of Accounting Education on Student’s Moral Reasoning and Development.'

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Philomena Leung and Prof. Barry Cooper.
Completed: 22 May, 2002.
The School of Business Information Technology focuses upon research that is relevant to industry, is collaborative and cross-disciplinary. Essentially our interest is in addressing industry problems that need to be solved and this has been reflected in our research activity during 2002.

During 2002 Hossein Zadeh was successful in his application with Dr. P. Smith, Mr. D. Stratton and Dr. J. Wharington from the University of Ballarat and industry partner Calytrix Technologies Pty. Ltd. for their project titled: ‘Applying the lessons of the virtual battlefield to financial modelling - Investigating innovative use of distributed simulation.’ This project that is now currently underway is investigating the development of distributed simulations as a part of training, scientific modelling and acquisitions in the defence community. While the benefits of simulation are well understood the actual development costs and complexity remain prohibitive, requiring expert programming skills and training. These limitations are greatly impeding the wider adoption of simulation in the broader business community. To address these issues this research project is investigating the means of applying simulation technologies to a domain in which user-configurable desktop tools, such as spreadsheets and word processors are the norm - as for example with financial modelling. The aim of the research is to extend the development of tools and techniques that support the desktop use of simulation and to assess the relative merits of these approaches. The eventual goal is to provide approachable simulation services, without adversely compromising the inherent power, to a wide range of application domains.

Professor Bill Martin’s work in supervising research students was recognized during the year when he was nominated for, and won an award for excellence in research supervision in the area of knowledge management. Professor Martin also supervises research in e-business and strategic information management.

Working closely with Professor Bill Martin, Dr. Hepu Deng has been concentrating on developing the research strength of the School, in knowledge management, a priority area identified by the Faculty. This has led to the submissions of two ARC Discovery applications and two ARC Linkage applications in 2002. Although ultimately not successful the putting together of submissions proved in itself to be a valuable learning experience that provided encouraging feedback which has further reinforced the desire to pursue research in this domain.
Dr. Elspeth McKay was instrumental in arranging for a week long e-learning conference hosted by the School in late October 2002. Sponsored by the RMIT Foundation and Macromedia Inc., this major event combined the expertise of American e-learning consultant Professor Carole Bagley, Australian academics and industry representatives. This conference promoted RMIT as a leader in online course development.

During March, the School hosted Ewan Sutherland, Chief Executive Officer from INTUG (International Telecommunications Users Group), based in Brussels. INTUG was formed in 1974 to represent internationally the interests of telecommunications user groups by penetrating corridors of power and propagating the cause of competition, as it has done through conferences and publications. Since INTUG’s inception the telecom world has been revolutionised to the benefit of all end users. Ewan’s presentation, titled ‘The Rise of Broadband Telecommunications: How Australia is Performing’, was recorded for ABC radio.

In 2002 the School again increased its measured research output and produced a total of 31 DEST approved research publications and had 4 higher degree students complete.

Research Publications

B1-Book Chapter


Dr. Mohini Singh
Dr. Mohini Singh successfully completed two funded research projects in 2002: Performance Evaluation of E-Commerce in Australia‘ and ‘E-Markets: An Investigation of Value Drivers and Business Implications‘. In her research Dr. Singh implemented and experimented with online surveys as an innovative research method with electronic data collection and collation tools. Her research findings on B2B E-Business Intermediaries (E-Markets) have forged a close link with 5 intermediaries operating in Melbourne as industry partners for further research. Dr. Singh has also developed a new industry link with Mobileworld Pty. Ltd. for research on mobile commerce.

Dr. Hepu Deng
Dr. Hepu Deng has published more than thirty technical papers in refereed international conferences and journals. His research interests are mainly in the areas of knowledge management, decision analysis, fuzzy systems, and evolutionary computing and their applications in business. As well as his own research, Dr. Deng has been active in contributing to wider research communities. He was invited to be the Publicity Chair for the 9th International Conference on Neural Information Processing, the 4th Asia-Pacific Conference on Simulated Evolution and Learning, the 2002 International Conference on Fuzzy Systems and Knowledge Discovery. In addition he has refereed for the 2002 International Workshop on Intelligent Knowledge Management Techniques, the 36th Hawaii International Conference on Systems Science, and for the International Journal of Knowledge and Information Systems.


C1-Refereed Journal Articles


E1-Refereed Conference Publications


Research Student Completions

Chandanna Unnithan, Master of Business by Research

Supervisors: Prof. Paula Swatman and Prof. Robert Brooks.
Completed: 4 April, 2002.

In 2000 Chandanna received a RMIT scholarship to undertake a Master by Research degree in information systems within the School of Business Information Technology. Chandanna had recently completed her MBA at the time she applied for her scholarship and had previous Information Communications Technology industry experience. Through her Master by Research program she was able to combine her experiences and research to further the body of knowledge in the area as well as develop expertise for consultancy in the industry sector. The focus of Chandanna’s research emphasised by the rise of Nasdaq - the first electronic stock exchange, dotcom boom and the golden period of e-Businesses. Although the dot.com downturn happened soon after Chandanna commenced her
research degree, she was able to research constructively into the dot.com effect - affecting the telecom and banking sectors, across the two economies of Australia and India. Chandanna’s research thesis not only explored the impact of dot.com phenomenon, but also investigated the growth and diffusion of Information Technology Communications (ICT diffusion); Internet and telecommunication transformation; and the effects of ICT growth on the overall economic growth of Australia and India.

Half way through her degree, Chandanna was offered a part-time teaching position within the School, which further opened up opportunities and added to her motivation to pursue an academic career and present papers at international conferences. This then led Chandanna to pursue a full time lecturing position at Deakin University. One of the main benefits Chandanna cites about her research experience is that she has been able to use applied work experiences, along with the MBA skills and the research skills gained during the Master by Research degree to effectively develop her career as an academic.

Some of the highlights of conferences that Chandanna attended during the process of the degree and also with the support of Deakin University, include the International Federation of Information Processing (IFIP) Working group 8.4 Conference held at the Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, the IFIP 13E Conference on eCommerce, eBusiness and eGovernment held at the Technical University of Portugal in Lisbon, the 2nd European Conference on eGovernment (ECEG2002) held at Oxford University in England, the Australasian Conference on Information Systems hosted by Victoria University in Melbourne and the Seventh Annual CollECTeR (Collaborative Electronic Commerce Technology and Research) in Melbourne.

Penelope Barr, Master of Business by Research

Supervisors: Prof. Bill Martin and Mr. Stewart Adam.
Completed: 30 April, 2002.

Cynthia Moussi, PhD
Thesis title: ‘Approaches to the Adoption of E-business in Victorian Manufacturing Small to Medium Sised Enterprises (SMEs)’.

Supervisors: Prof. Bill Martin and Mr. Bill Davey.

The purpose of Cynthia’s thesis was to investigate the perceived low level of e-business adoption by SMEs. At the time of initiating the research the Australian Government was concerned that low adoption levels would be detrimental to Australia's competitiveness. Cynthia’s thesis specifically examined e-business in relation to Victorian Manufacturing SMEs (VM-SMEs). It investigated the benefits and impediments to e-business
adoption and also explored the experiences of various adopters of e-business. The aim was to enrich existing theory of e-business adoption by developing a practical and comprehensive e-business adoption model for SMEs.

The results of the study found that the low level of e-business adoption was not in fact detrimental to Australia’s prosperity. Often, bypassing certain building blocks of e-business was a strategic choice rather than purely the result of a lack of time, resources or knowledge. SMEs were not interested in the hype surrounding the Internet, however there appeared to be a willingness to play around and experiment for the sake of learning.

Cynthia is now a lecturer at Melbourne University in the Department of Accounting and Business Information Systems.

Emma Coath, Master of Business by Research

Supervisors: Dr. Mohini Singh and Prof. Bill Martin

Emma had been working as an export manager with a food export company in Melbourne, and felt that there was a need for more work to be done in the Australian food export industry to remove impediments for growth. She felt that this research had to be done at the “supply” end of the food chain, particularly in regional Victoria where most of our State’s food is produced. In March 2000, she received a scholarship to complete a Master of Business by Research at RMIT. This fulfilled her goal in providing the opportunity to remove some of the “impediments for growth” in her industry through research. In Emma’s Master by Research project she investigated “Regional agribusiness clusters: An Australian example”, this has subsequently extended into her ARC funded, current PhD topic “A best practice supply chain model for exporting Australia’s fresh produce to global retailers in Thailand”. During her candidature as a Masters’ student, Emma co-authored and authored a number of papers and posters presented at International and National conferences. Also she had the opportunity to attend the majority of these conferences, which allowed her to stay abreast with industry trends and extend her network of contacts.

Emma’s research has focused on the opportunity for networks of producers in the Australian agri-food industry to use the internet to enhance their activities. There is a growing awareness among those involved in the agri-food industry in Australia that collaboration has become a prerequisite for sustainable competitive advantage both on a domestic and international scale. Although not the only prerequisite for success, the Internet has become a useful tool for agri-food networks to achieve their objectives by enhancing their ability to keep up with current business practices. Emma’s research found that by the creation and utilisation of a
website, the Internet can be used as a marketing tool to capture new markets for its members, both individually and collectively. This enables a more efficient means of disseminating information to members and provides a platform for sharing information. Importantly, the Internet can be used to provide a more efficient supply chain by providing electronic feedback from further down the chain.
The School of Economics and Finance places a high value on research. Our research interests include financial markets, corporate finance and governance, empirical finance, public choice and applied econometrics. In 2002 the School continued to undertake research into these areas producing research outputs in both the professional literature and popular press reflecting our strong real world focus in applied research. Research interests are focused on both the domestic and international markets and the School continues to have great success in attracting international students to post-graduate research degrees.

In 2002 there were a number of highlights. In March the School hosted a lecture by Professor James Buchanan entitled "Politics as tragedy in several acts". Six students completed their research degrees. Two of our researchers Heather Mitchell (senior lecturer) and Juliana Yim (PhD student) were awarded equal first place for the Barclays Global Investors Prize for their paper "A comparison of Australian financial service failure models: Hybrid neural networks, logit models and discriminant analysis". Michael McKenzie and Amalia Di Iorio, along with their industry partner Midwine Consulting were successful in the 2002 round of Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage grants to fund the project "Liquidity measurement and risk management in the Australian insurance industry" that will commence in 2003.

Three new Professors were also recruited in 2002 to commence in 2003. Tim Fry joins the School from The University of Melbourne where he was Principal Research Fellow in Applied Microeconometrics. His interests are in empirical microeconomics and in 2003 will be working on two ARC funded projects. A Discovery project joint with Professor Brooks (RMIT) and Professor Faff (Monash) on microeconometric techniques in Finance and a Linkage project with Dr Beth Webster and Dr Jongsay Yong (Melbourne University) and partners the Australian Bureau of Statistics, AusTrade, IBISWorld, the Productivity Commission and the Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance on the dynamic performance of Australian industry. Tim will be the Research Director in the School in 2003.

Richard Heaney joins the School from the Australian National University (ANU) where he was a Reader in the School of Finance and Applied Statistics in the Faculty of Economics and Commerce. He is working on a Discovery grant with Professor Shirley Gregor and Professor Terry O’Neill at the ANU and Professor Doug Foster and Professor Robert Wood at the University of NSW.
This research focuses on the impact of the introduction of electronic trading systems. Other research interests include corporate finance, asset pricing, risk management, derivative pricing and use and international finance.

Tony Naughton joins the School from Griffith University where he held the positions of Professor of International Finance and Head of the School of Accounting and Finance. At the core of his research is the behaviour of security prices. In recent years he has extended his interests into corporate governance explanations of firm performance and the stock returns of IPOs. Much of the empirical work he does relates to the emerging markets of Asia. A new project he is involved with is the development and testing of a new instrument to examine behavioural biases in investor decision-making. The project involves a team of researchers in Japan, New Zealand and two other universities in Australia.

Research Publications

B1-Book Chapters


C1-Refereed Journal Articles


Assoc. Prof. Sinclair Davidson
Sinclair has broad interests in both economics and finance. He has published over 30 papers in academic journals and is also a frequent contributor to the media. He has supervised six PhD theses and three Master of Business (Research) theses to completion. His past research students occupy positions in universities and the private sector. Sinclair has been twice nominated for the Supervisor of the Year Award.


E1-Refereed Conference Publications


Research Student Completions

David Sokulsky, PhD
Thesis title: 'Development of New Sub-category Benchmarks on the Australian Stock Exchange.'

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Brooks and Assoc. Prof. Sinclair Davidson.

Jenny Diggle, PhD
Thesis title: 'When Cash is King - The Optimal Management of an Asset Allocation to Cash.'

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Brooks and Dr. John Shannon.
Completed: 9 April, 2002.

Jenny Diggle started her PhD on a part time basis in 1998 and completed in June 2002. When Jenny first began her thesis she didn't realise how alike she was to most other post graduate research students. Jenny had an idea of something that may prove to be interesting to the wider finance community, but not a solid concept of what she was going to do and how she was going to do it. When Jenny finished her thesis she had written about the importance of cash in a diversified portfolio. This topic suited her professional experience as a fixed interest dealer and product specialist but was also one that suited her own interests.
Jenny’s findings added to the body of knowledge by testing the original theory behind the benefits of diversification in a portfolio of investment assets. Unlike Markowitz, the founder of the diversification theory, Jenny found that a mix of at least 25% equities combined with 75% cash was the lowest risk portfolio to own over the 1990s. Whilst finding almost the exact opposite to a Nobel Prize winner was scary at first, Jenny recalls that it certainly made her check and re-check her data and calculations! Furthermore, Jenny also discovered that some well-held beliefs around trading and investing in cash did not hold when they were tested over the same period. Professional fund managers in Australia outperform retail investment returns from cash (such as term deposits), but could not outperform simple trading rules or a simple buy and hold of the 11am cash market. Whilst they competed well amongst each other and against benchmarks of simple trading strategies, all the managed funds investigated under-performed. Jenny's final contribution was to link changes in the official cash rates announced by the Reserve Bank of Australia to changes in the returns from other investment assets. The initial analysis showed a link between changes in the cash rates and changes in the returns from property. However, when drilled down to the Australian Stock Exchange indices, the strongest link was between changes in the cash rate and changes in the returns from the Tourism and Leisure index. Jenny interpreted this link as being that most of us use credit to pay for holidays and that we are less inclined to take holidays when interest rates are rising and the cost of living is increasing.

Jenny’s examiners were extremely encouraging, commenting that this work was a long time in coming and an interesting approach to the topic. This research has led Jenny to co-author a submission to the Federal Government Review of Bond Markets in Australia, and to having a full page article in the Australian Financial Review about the role of cash fund managers in Australia. It has also encouraged Jenny to become a second supervisor of a PhD student. Jenny gratefully acknowledges the excellent supervision she received from Prof. Robert Brooks and Dr. John Shannon. She hopes to be able to pass their skills and methods through her own supervision to research students.

Amalia Di Iorio, PhD

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Faff and Prof. Robert Brooks.
Completed: 10 April, 2002.

Amalia Di Iorio is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Economics and Finance, RMIT University, whose main research interests are concerned with international finance. Amalia’s PhD thesis investigated both the nature and the pricing of the exchange rate exposure of the Australian equities market for the period 1988 to 1998. The analysis was undertaken employing the returns on industry portfolios as classified by the Australian Stock Exchange and investigated primarily the effect of changes in the Australian dollar/US dollar (AUDUSD) and the Australian dollar/Japanese Yen (AUDJPY) exchange rate factor returns on these portfolio returns.
First, in a bid to gain some insight into the nature of the exchange rate exposure of Australian stock returns, Amalia conducted several investigations implementing a multi-factor framework based on the Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM). Within this framework, and employing both daily ‘base’ data and monthly ‘base’ data, a sensitivity analysis was undertaken examining a potential asymmetric response; intertemporal stability; the impact of intervaling; and a potential lagged response. Second, Amalia examined whether exchange rate risk is priced in the Australian equities market. Again employing both daily ‘base’ data and monthly ‘base’ data, this analysis was conducted in (i) an asset pricing model based on CAPM, and (ii) a Fama-French framework. The analysis undertaken in the thesis has led to further research in the area of foreign exchange exposure. Specifically, Amalia is currently investigating the equities markets of other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

John Anderson, PhD

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Faff and Prof. Robert Brooks
Completed: 3 May, 2002.

The notion of ‘market efficiency’ has dominated studies of financial markets for decades. John’s study provided an empirical analysis of market efficiency by testing a variety of quantitative trading rules for profitability in US Futures markets. The models included the commonplace such as moving averages and an old, but very exotic method, known as ‘Point and Figure’. John’s thesis also examined the use of a ‘fixed fraction’ betting strategy to determine how much money should be used to fund speculative trading. This method treats each trade as being analogous to a bet in any game, such as blackjack, and how to determine the optimal ‘bet’ size to maximise the returns from trading activities.

Having been a floor trader on the Sydney Futures Exchange, John had seen many things in practice that could not be explained by academic finance theory. The topic he wanted to undertake was theoretically controversial and the approach used was to be extremely unusual. John gratefully acknowledges the efforts of his supervisors, Prof. Robert Faff and Prof. Robert Brooks who demonstrated academic vigour in understanding the unusual approach and also handled his distance supervision with professionalism. John found his research studies with RMIT Business to be first rate with access to supervisors who are true leaders in their fields. John’s thesis was awarded "Pass" from two distinguished examiners who required no corrections or amendments to any part of the thesis.

John’s PhD has given him greater ability and confidence in tackling highly complex problems in his field of research - both academically and commercially. John is currently a Lecturer in Banking and Finance at the Queensland University of Technology. His current research activities include the use of credit models to determine price changes in share markets, technical analysis usage in financial markets and market
efficiency aspects to option hedging. John’s research has led him to become actively involved in consulting roles across the conventional funds management area, hedge funds and banking sectors. These have ranged from purely educational aspects to model design, risk management and position management activities.

Bruce Cowling, PhD


The aim of Bruce’s research was to establish whether or not the extent of competition faced by an organisation has any ramifications for its use of resources. Specifically, the hypothesis tested in Bruce’s thesis is whether public and/or regulated firms employ more capital than their unregulated counterparts. The Averch-Johnson methodology was used to determine the existence or otherwise, of excess usage of capital. Bruce’s study models the Averch-Johnson effect in three Australian Government Business Enterprises - Australia Post, Telecom (now known as Telstra) and Qantas over the period 1975 - 1988. These firms were chosen because they represent significant enterprises in the Australian economy and cover the spectrum of labour intensive (Australia Post) and capital intensive (Qantas and Telecom) organisations.

Both Australia Post and Telecom Australia had new legislation introduced in 1975 that remained in place until the Government’s corporatisation legislation of 1989 came into effect. During the period 1975 - 1988 (the period of Bruce’s study) these organisations were subject to a stable regulatory environment. All of these organisations have, however, undergone significant change in recent years. This issue of the potential excess use of capital is an important public policy issue.

Bruce found that for the three Australian Government Business Enterprises (GBEs) analysed in his thesis (Australia Post, Telecom and Qantas) all provided evidence in support of the contention that excess capital is used in the production process. This is an important finding as it not only provides support for the Government’s corporatisation policies of the 1990s but also provides further support for the introduction of competitive policies that continue to be introduced for Australian businesses.

Bruce is currently the Acting Director of Undergraduate Programs in the School of Economics and Finance at RMIT University.
Hoa Thuan Nguyen, PhD

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Sinclair Davidson and Prof. Robert Faff.

Hoa completed her Doctor of Philosophy in Finance with the School of Economic and Finance in December 2002. For the duration of her candidature, Hoa explored the use of financial derivatives as an important arm of corporate policies and examined the impact of risk management strategies employing derivatives on firm risk and firm value. Her work in this area has been internationally recognized by several publications in the Australian Journal of Management and the Journal of Multinational Financial Management. Hoa has also presented at local and international conferences where her work raised considerable interests among both academics and industry practitioners.

Upon the completion of her PhD program, Hoa continued to be actively involved in various research projects focusing on risk management and other finance disciplines, most notably corporate governance and mergers and acquisitions. She values collaborative research and maintains close research links with Professor Robert Faff and Associate Professor Sinclair Davidson who played instrumental roles in the successful completion of her doctorate.

Hoa is now a full time lecturer at the School of International Business, University of South Australia. She works towards the achievement of the University mission: educating professionals; creating and applying knowledge; and serving the community.
school of
Management
During 2002 the School of Management maintained a focus on research in the area of Health Services Management while developing significant achievements in the areas of Knowledge Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Reflective Practice. The Director of Research was Associate Professor Rosalie Holian, the joint Program Co-ordinators for the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) were Associate Professor Erica Hallebone and Associate Professor David Kimber. Associate Professor Carlene Boucher took up the role of Program Co-ordinator for the PhD and Master of Business by Research Programs. Lynne Koochew continued to manage the administration for the DBA, PhD and Master of Business by Research programs.

In 2002, a total of 100 postgraduate students were undertaking research programs within the School including 35 PhD students, 22 Master of Business by Research students and 43 DBA students. We congratulate our six candidates who completed during 2002, two Doctor of Philosophy candidates, Dr. Carol Gill and Dr. Bill Callaghan, and four Doctor of Business Administration candidates, Dr. Bill Dimovski, Dr. Shelia Doyle, Dr. Donald Fraser and Dr. Ayman Shrebati.

Health Services Management continued to be an area of strength, with ongoing external funding for research related to the National Allied Health Casemix work and the Service Weights Study, managed by Ian Woodruff and by Catherine Itsiopoulos. Associate Professor Carlene Boucher obtained external funding for a new project on Reflective Practice in Aged Care Service. She also conducted workshops for Health Services Industry participants on ‘Changing rules, changing roles, changing relationships, the new leadership imperative in Health’, and a ‘Conceptual Spa day for Health Services Managers’. Associate Professor Carlene Boucher also developed and co-ordinated a Workshop on Practice-Based and Practice-Led Research for the wider RMIT University community of scholars. Key researchers in the emerging focus areas of Knowledge Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Reflective Practice also included Associate Professor Sandra Jones, Marianne Gloet and Dr. Fang Zhao.
Staff and students within the School continued to be involved in a range of research topics. Research outputs in addition to academic publications listed in this report included articles in professional journals and presentations at international conferences. Areas of research covered in addition to Health Services Management, Knowledge Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Reflective Practice included Management Education, Strategic Planning and Strategic Thinking.

Decision Making, Corporate Governance and Ethics, Human Resource Management, Careers, Diversity, Gender, International and Cross-cultural Management issues. The School continued its practice of holding a series of Research Seminars on current issues delivered by a combination of staff, students and invited guests including Professor James Fleck from the University of Edinburgh, Dr. Martin Spring from UMIST, and Dr. Angela Brew from the University of Sydney.

Research Publications

B1-Book Chapters


Dr. Fang Zhao

Dr. Fang Zhao has a great passion for, and strong commitment to, management research. She has developed a wide range of research interests and expertise in management science, which include innovation and entrepreneurship; Total Quality Management; performance measurement; e-partnership and virtual organization; knowledge management; higher education management; and management education. She has successfully completed a number of research projects in her fields of interest. Her most recent research projects concern research commercialization in Australian universities that involved a survey of 20 universities; and innovation management at Siemens (Australia) drawing upon her 5 months industry placement with the company. She is pursuing discipline and cross-discipline partnerships with academics and practitioners to conduct collaborative projects.

Fang has published internationally over 20 refereed research works over the past few years. She has been recently awarded several research grants by RMIT. She was also awarded several scholarships and a fellowship for her Master, Doctoral and Post-Doctoral research. Fang is a Senior Supervisor to Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) students and is the MBA research adviser at the School of Management. She was a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow in the Centre for Management Quality Research at RMIT before she joined the School. Fang has been recently invited as an academic referee of the 4th International Conference of Multinational Alliance for the Advancement of Organizational Excellence.
C1-Refereed Journal Articles


E1-Refereed Conference Publications


Marianne Gloet

Marianne Gloet is Senior Lecturer and Program Director for the Bachelor of Business (Business Administration) for Hong Kong. She teaches in the areas of Human Resource Management, Knowledge Management and Management Development at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Marianne has lived and worked in North America, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Vietnam, and has 20 years experience as a Human Resource Development consultant and President of her own company. She has held senior administrative management positions in Canada (at The Centre for Curriculum and Instruction at the University of British Columbia), Australia (at the Australian Maritime College) and Malaysia (as Academic Head for RMIT University Programs at Metropolitan College).

Marianne has published widely in the fields of cross-cultural management, knowledge management and innovation, learning and the educational implications of information technology use. She is currently completing her PhD at Melbourne University on the topic of Knowledge Management: Approaches and Innovation Performance.


**Research Student Completions**

Carol Gill, PhD

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Sandra Martin and Assoc. Prof. Rosalie Holian.
Completed: 10 April, 2002.

In the 1990s organisations said that people were their most important asset whilst simultaneously downsizing large numbers of employees. As a result of downsizing there was an intensification of work and extension of working hours but there was little employee resistance to these changes. This gap between rhetoric and reality was identified by the UK Humanist Critical Perspective, who argued that at the rhetorical level many organisations espoused a ‘soft’ version of Human Resource Management (HRM) that focused on treating employees as valued assets and a source of competitive advantage. However, their initial research indicated that organisation reality was ‘hard’ with an emphasis on the quantitative and strategic aspects of managing resources.

Carol’s PhD research explored the gap between rhetoric and reality and contributed to the debate on the nature of HRM in organisations by developing a survey that was sent to Australian HRM practitioners in
organisations with more than 500 employees.

As a result of this research Carol has published three working papers and wrote two articles that have been submitted to peer reviewed journals in the UK and Australia. Carol has also wrote a number of practitioner articles that were published in Australian and New Zealand HRM journals. Carol has worked as a HRM practitioner, manager and consultant for 20 years before commencing her PhD. During her candidature Carol also taught in some of the undergraduate programs and also in the MBA program at RMIT. Currently Carol is working in a government research and policy role that promotes high performance work practices, including HRM practices and co-operative Industrial Relations.

Bill Dimovski, DBA

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Brooks and Mr. A. Wheeler

In 2002 Bill Dimovski completed his DBA dissertation that focused on the anomaly of investors being able to make substantial returns buying into new share issues and selling on the first day of listing. This anomaly is called underpricing. The study also investigated some characteristics that contributed to the relatively poor long term return performance of IPOs. To date one paper has been accepted for publication from the thesis in Applied Financial Economics. Since completing the thesis, Bill has continued to work with Prof. Brooks and two further papers have been accepted for publication; one in The Journal of International Financial Markets, Institutions and Money, and another in Applied Financial Economics. Also two other papers with Prof. Brooks have been accepted at the Management Conference 2003 for publication as part of the refereed proceedings from the conference.

Bill is a lecturer at Deakin University and continues to work with Prof. Brooks and is now researching property trusts in Australia.

Bill Callaghan, PhD

Supervisor: Prof. Clive Morley
Completed: 4 October, 2002.

The core objectives of Bill's research were to investigate the lack of congruence between segmentation theory and management practice and subsequently to determine the nature of improvements required to develop a more effective strategic approach. The research was largely based on marketing practitioners' input and Bill considers this practice based approach has much potential in research into marketing theory.
Bill found the PhD experience to have a profound and unanticipated, impact on both his approach to teaching and research. Bill found that immersing oneself in a specific area over a long period demands reflection on a range of perspectives that provide insights beyond the narrow area of study. He suggests that it is such benefits that makes research enjoyable.

Bill is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Marketing.

**Donald Fraser, DBA**

Thesis title: 'IT Governance: Australian Company Directors and IT Decision Making.'

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Rosalie Holian and Mr. Eugene Falk


Donald Fraser's DBA research study was specific in scope and following from his background, focused upon Information Technology. Primary data for this study was obtained by interviews with Australian Directors selected primarily from large publicly listed companies in the Finance/Banking and Insurance sectors. A total of fifteen board members were interviewed included Directors sitting on multiple boards, and as such those interviewed comprised extensive experience from board membership on over 150 organisations, including 15 of the top 50 Australian companies, 30 of the top 500 companies, 14 of 24 industry sectors, and over 30 not-for-profit, government organisations and small business enterprises.

Donald found that whilst a few directors considered IT (and e-Commerce) of particular importance, most directors in the study regarded IT as merely one of a range of issues that was not deserving of or requiring, specialised expertise at the board level. Directors appeared to approach IT matters with the same well-developed decision-making and governance techniques as used for other business matters. However, it still appears that the shortage of IT expertise within the board impacts how well directors execute this responsibility. Am aim of Donald's thesis was to make a contribution towards assessing and improving board composition and performance.

Donald commenced his DBA studies in 1998 with the multiple goals including to extend his business studies beyond the MBA that he completed some years ago; to engage with a group of challenging peers; to undertake a qualitative research project; and to raise his credentials in regard to further senior management consultancy and directorships. Donald found that the DBA satisfied all his stated goals and objectives for undertaking a research program.
Sheila Doyle, DBA

Thesis title: ‘Challenges and Success Strategies for IT Management: Evidence from a Global Case Study.’

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Erica Hallebone and Mr. T. Vu.

Sheila Doyle’s research examined how rapid IT change, diversity in the workforce, globalization and IT outsourcing impact the way IT managers perform their role. The research identified 12 challenges for IT management and outlined practical guidelines to help cope with these challenges. The research also highlighted success strategies for managing IT-Business relationships, IT supplier relationships and leveraging IT for business success. Rich descriptions of the practices and tactics used by IT Managers in order to achieve each strategy were provided. These descriptions aid understanding and provide practical and useful insights for IT Managers and for their suppliers.

A major theme underpinning Sheila’s work is the notion of relevance in information systems (IS) research. The notion that such research has a credibility gap within the business community is the subject of some debate in IS academic circles. In particular, questions are being asked as to whether IS research produces the knowledge that today’s IT professionals can apply in their daily work, whether it focuses on current technological and business issues and whether it is accessible to IT professionals. Sheila’s study seeks to produce output that is current and useful for IT Managers. However, it acknowledges the arguments put forward by critics and does not seek to abandon rigor in place of relevance.

Sheila Doyle has worked in the IT industry for over twenty years. During that time she has lived and worked in Europe, Asia and Australia. She has performed many IT roles spanning operations, programming, consulting, project management, electronic commerce and IT management. Sheila is currently working at BP London’s head office as General Manager of IT for a set of global Business Units and BP’s New Markets. Sheila plans to build on her experience and accomplishments from industry and academia and produce future work that is useful to her peers in the IT industry.

Ayman Shrebati, DBA

Thesis title: ‘Barriers to Customer Orientation in the Luxury Hospitality Environment: The View from the Frontline.’

Supervisors: Prof. Clive Morley and an external industry supervisor.

Recently Ayman Shrebati completed the professional doctorate DBA program with RMIT’s School of Management, in which he investigated the barriers to customer orientation at the frontline employee level in the luxury hospitality industry. Frontline employees, especially in the luxury
hospitality business, are recognised to be the strategic interface between the organisation and its customers, since it is the frontline employee who translates the corporate marketing plan into concrete actions during his or her interactions with the organisation's customers. Ayman's main research interests are in enhancing the delivery of top-quality service in industries where the intangible service provided is the key for business success.

Ayman's research enabled him to build on his in-depth knowledge in the areas of management, particularly in relation to structuring and re-organisation of large departments and companies; change plan design; impact assessment; negotiation; and implementation of change with consideration given to the gap that may exist between senior management, operational management and frontline staff perspectives. Also Ayman found that his research complemented his marketing experience in terms of assessing the degree of market orientation needed by the firm to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in its market; evaluation of the firm's services and its human resources policies congruence with a customer-oriented strategy; identification of barriers to customer orientation at the organisational, structural, and behavioural/cultural levels and the suggestion of pragmatic solutions to circumvent them.

Ayman Shrebati is the principal of Marketing France Management, a consulting firm specialised in strategic human resources management as a competitive marketing advantage in service firms. Ayman has extensive experience working with blue chip multinationals and has held substantial responsibilities for organisations' management and marketing strategies. He has comprehensive awareness of complex organisational change; professional and personal cultural backgrounds consequences for service businesses operational activities; and human resources policy implications for marketing strategy.
school of
Marketing
In 2002 the School of Marketing embarked on a number of initiatives that focused around research. The School put in place a comprehensive Masters of Business Research Methods Course. As well, the School compiled a handbook for Masters by Coursework and Honor’s students, a comprehensive compendium. The School’s Research Committee was reconstituted meeting on a regular basis. Matters relating to the fostering of the research culture and research concentrations of the School, staff development, and student supervision, amongst other issues were discussed. Research profiles and research interests of HE and VET staff were undertaken.

In 2002, a number of staff education and development programs were commenced, with the aim of enhancing staff research skills, including:

- A colloquium series for staff and postgraduate students. The colloquium was conducted weekly during Semesters 1 & 2.

- A research support and training program for HE and VET staff and also postgraduate research students was established, involving a series of laboratory-based workshops.

- A systematic process for assessing School support for staff conference attendances and assessment of Higher Degree by Research applications was instituted.

The School continues to develop applied collaborative ties with industry partners. During 2002, the School completed 3 major Industry-based research projects: the ANZ Bank project, the BRW Fast 100 study (cover story); and the Boyd Partners National Survey of Family and Private Businesses.

- Over $55,000 was secured to carry out the ANZ Bank investigation, a marketing bank spend project, that involved working with the Slater Marketing Group and senior ANZ marketing management personnel.
- The BRW Fast 100 study culminated in cover story, a unique database, and will result in a number of refereed journal articles.
- Boyd Partners provided $27,000 sponsorship for a national survey of Family and Private Businesses. A report has been completed and will be released in early 2003.

During 2002, the School submitted 2 ARC Discovery grant applications and one ARC Linkage (APAI) grant application. In relative terms the School was successful with one of the ARC Discovery grant applications placed on the Reserve list while the ARC Linkage (APAI) grant application was approved for funding to commence in 2003.
Research Publications

B1-Book Chapters


C1-Journal Articles


Foster, D., Jonker, J., (2002), 'Third generation quality management, the role of stakeholders in integrating business into society', *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on ISO 9000 and TQM*, Ho, S.K.M. & Dalrymple, J., (Eds), Hong Kong Book Registration Office, Hong Kong.


Research Student Completions

Colin Arrowsmith, PhD
Thesis title: 'Modelling New Opportunities for Sustainable Nature-based Tourism'.

Supervisors: Dr. Robert Inbakaran and Assoc. Prof. Betty Weiler

Colin Arrowsmith is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geospatial Science; Faculty of Applied Science at RMIT University. Colin's thesis established a method for identifying and planning new opportunities for sustainable nature-based tourism. The method uses a spatial tourism potential model that has been developed using predicted environmental resilience and tourist attractiveness. Planners can now use the method to identify and plan new opportunities for sustainable nature-based tourism.

Since that time, Colin has undertaken research into understanding how tourists are utilising nature-based tourism resources to ensure that tourist attractions, and associated facilities and services provided in parks are not over-used or become over-crowded, and therefore diminishing the tourist experience.
Colin has extended his research with Parks Victoria, using GPS and on-site surveys at Port Campbell National Park. He has investigated patterns of behaviour and movements of tourists through Port Campbell National Park. Colin is currently senior supervisor for four Master of applied science by research students and four doctoral students researching in the areas of mapping experiential landscapes, understanding the different requirements of international and local tourists in natural areas, the potential for using LBS in nature-based tourism, particularly in non-urban Australian environments and into the planning of new pathway topologies in natural locations.
Centre for Management Quality Research

CRC for Construction Innovation

Smart Internet Technology CRC
The Centre for Management Quality Research (CMQR) has a mission to strive for recognition as a national and international centre of excellence in the field of Management Quality Research through applied research and scholarship. The nature of management quality is such that it permeates all aspects of organizations and individuals in industry, commerce and the public sector. The CMQR has maintained very healthy interaction with the international academic and professional communities through the organization of conferences and involvement with scholarly journals. Over the years the Centre has attracted a steady stream of international visitors including Dr. Martin Spring from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) who visited the Centre for three months and is an expert in Supply Chain Management. Another visiting Associate, Graham Dwyer from the Irish Management Institute joined the CMQR from June 2002 to June 2003. Also during 2002, the Centre had visitations for shorter durations from Professor Doug Hensler of University of Colorado and Dr. John Peters chief editor of Emerald group of academic journals.

The CMQR has been involved in a number of project including ‘Benchmarking Best Practice in Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) Sector’. Initially the feasibility of the application of 'UK Benchmarking Index' in the Australian SME environment was investigated. This project was successfully completed, with the participant companies enthusiastic about the value that they had gained. A subsequent project followed to investigate 'Achieving Employment Growth in Small Enterprises'. The aim was to identify strengths in a group of SME sector companies and develop a business growth plan and an implementation action plan for each company with the aim of assisting the participant companies to achieve profitable growth. Also a current project that is underway in the CMQR is ‘Improving International Competitiveness in (SME) Sector Companies Through Product and Process Innovation’.

Part of the role of the CMQR has been to bring international conferences and events to Melbourne. In 2002 the Centre hosted two conferences. The ‘7th International Conference on ISO9000 and TQM’ held in April attracted about 240 delegates. Then in October the ‘7th International Seminar on Quality in Higher Education’ was attended by 120 delegates. In all, the CMQR has organised four international conferences with a total participation of 640 delegates.

These events have enabled researchers from RMIT and other Australian institutions to showcase their research in the international arena as well as providing networking opportunities with a range of key researchers in the international community. Part of the CMQR’s international networking activity has included the Centre’s International Visiting Scholar Program.
which has been considerably enhanced by being able to host participants as Visiting Scholars before or after their participation in the conferences hosted. Students and staff were, thereby enabled to interact with leaders in their field for an extended period, enriching their experience of scholarship.

Other highlights from 2002 include the University Research Award for the best contribution to refereed conference publications in 2001 that was awarded to Professor Dalrymple. Also the CMQR continued its role in the editorship of one international journal - Quality Assurance in Education - and has a membership of the Editorial Board of two further international journals. Furthermore in the professional activities area it has the membership of the Board of Directors of the Quality Society of Australasia as well as the membership of the National Steering Committee for review of the Australian Business Excellence Framework.

Research Publications

**C1-Referred Journal Articles**


**E1-Referred Conference Publications**


Winning a $64 million, 7-year project with the CRC for Construction Innovation in 2001 involved a core team of four proposal writers that included Professor Derek Walker from the Research Development Unit. During 2002, RMIT University has been granted over $1 million of cash for research projects being undertaken by the Faculty of Business and the Faculty of Engineering. The major project that the CRC for Construction Innovation is involved in is, ‘Delivering improved knowledge management and innovation diffusion project’. This project is due for completion in mid-2004 and involves Professor Derek Walker for approximately 40% of his time, Dr. Andrew Finnegan from the School of Business Information Technology for 20% of his time and Dr. Andrew Wilson and Mr. Peter Goldsmith as full-time research fellows from the Research Development Unit. Additionally, Mr. Vachara Peansupap and Mr. Tayyab Maqsood, who are both fully funded by the CRC are full-time PhD students working on this project.

The project is investigating how Information Communication Technologies (ICT) innovation is diffused in the construction industry and how knowledge management (KM) can be enhanced and improved. Specific outcomes for this project being developed include an ICT diffusion model to guide best practice and the development of a knowledge advantage guide (K-Adv) that helps organisations, using soft systems methodology, to audit and map their innovation processes for KM and use this knowledge for benchmarking and strategic planning. Further, a digital-dashboard type tool is being developed that enables firms to identify and access strategic knowledge assets when making a decision to tender. This project is being undertaken in collaboration with Queensland University of Technology, the University of Newcastle, two major contractors from the construction industry and three government departments representing the client interest. The best practice K-Adv guide and the tool for identifying and deploying knowledge assets will yield commercial benefits for project participants.

Project Leader
Professor Derek Walker

Research Fellow
Andrew Wilson

Research Fellow
Peter Goldsmith

The project started with Professor Derek Walker who leads the 'Knowledge Management and Information Communication Technologies (ICT) Diffusion' project at the Research Development Unit. In early 2002, Derek had already worked closely with other researchers in the Unit to win a further $100,000+ research project being led by Professor John Dalrymple in an investigation of best value for construction tendering and the development of outcome performance measures. Further, working closely CRC Research Fellow Dr. Andrew Wilson, Professor Walker has assisted Dr. Wilson with two project proposals in advanced stages of development through the CRC approval process to deliver a further $300,000+ in research projects for 2004. Professor Walker sees his role as capacity building in the Research Development Unit to win cutting edge and valuable research projects through the CRC in Construction Innovation.

Professor Derek Walker is also the program director for the Doctor of Project Management (DPM) and links knowledge created through the DPM to enhance CRC outcomes. During 2002 the DPM had 13 candidates enrolled in this, its second year of operation as an innovative and groundbreaking professional doctorate in project management that is principally delivered via the Internet across the globe with candidates from Canada, USA, Argentina, Taiwan, and across Australia. The link between project management, particularly ICT and management innovation processes have enriched the cross-disciplinary nature of the CRC interactions.
Research Publications

C1-Refereed Journal Articles


E1-Conference Proceedings

The Smart Internet Technology Co-operative Research Centre (SITCRC) is a multi-university, multi-disciplinary research program that is funded by the Federal Government along with corporate and academic partners. SITCRC aims to develop technologies that will enable Internet services to become an integral part of human lives. SITCRC has five programs: the User Environment; Smart Personal Assistants; Natural Adaptive User Interface; Smart Networks and the Intelligent Environment. These programs interact and build on each other.

At RMIT Business, under the leadership of Assoc. Prof. Supriya Singh we are involved with the User Environment program, particularly with the User-Centred Design (UCD) project. The aim of the project is to engender a culture of UCD so that the user is at the center of the design of smart Internet technologies. Research into UCD led by Associate Professor Singh has built on her expertise and substantial experience in the use of information and communication technologies.

Associate Professor Supriya Singh leads the project titled, ‘Establishing a Culture of User Centre Design’. This project aims to support and encourage a culture of user-centred design (UCD) in the CRC. In particular this project will continue to address the key question of how can the intended outcomes of the technology programs best meet user needs. The project will directly assist the design and implementation of research in the technology programs, and focus on demonstrators and products with commercial opportunities.

In addition the project has three subsidiary objectives:

- To explore and record ways of communicating, first within the multi-disciplinary User Needs group, and secondly between the user needs group and the researchers in the technology programs;
- To continue to conduct user research as input into the technology programs and future demonstrators. The initial segments are SMEs, young people, and people with disabilities and other special needs. In this phase the study will be extended to corporates and government, and also residential users.

Assoc. Prof. Supriya Singh
Senior Research Fellow at the Research Development Unit in the Faculty of Business at RMIT University. She leads the User-Centred Design (UCD) project in the Smart Internet Technology Co-operative Research Centre (SITCRC). Supriya is the President of the Association for Qualitative Research, a Research Affiliate without term at the Program on Information Resources Policy at Harvard University, and a Director of the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne).

Supriya’s current research places the user at the centre of the design of new technologies. She is involved in studies of User Centred Design (UCD) methodology, particularly its multi-disciplinary aspects. Another project she is involved in aims to ensure that mobile devices have the kind of privacy people want for different activities. Supriya is also contributing to a project that will make virtual communication more ‘real’ through the use of Smart Networks. A substantial body of her research deals with the social shaping of money, with a focus on electronic money.

At the Research Development Unit, she co-ordinates the Business Research Interns Seminar Series and supervises Masters and PhD students.

Key activity areas include: learning, tourism, electronic commerce, collaborative work, emergency services, financial services, health, leisure/entertainment and, personal communications. These user studies will help identify areas where the Smart Internet may be constrained, or have particular opportunity, due to likely responses of potential users.

Examples of key areas include boundaries of acceptable natural language interaction, trust, security, universal design, cross-cultural variations, organisational characteristics, and particular applications requirements for activities.

To continue developing the UCD methodology, extending it from the discovery phase of design to product development. This will be done through interaction with the technology programs and demonstrator projects. This methodology will be communicated and tested in internal and external training programs.
Office of the Dean
In 2002 the Office of the Dean continued to place a strategic focus on building the research capacity of the Faculty. In particular in 2002 the Faculty become involved in two Co-operative Research Centres (CRR's) - the CRC for Construction Innovation and the CRC for Smart Internet Technology. Our involvement in these CRC's augments the existing research synergies that exist within the Faculty and has resulted in further new partnerships in research being formed. The Faculty's commitment to research remains reflective of the overall University level objective to become a highly innovative learning and research institute. The Research Development Unit which is headed by the Associate Dean (Research), Assoc. Prof. Pam Green, continues to provide resource infrastructure and support research within RMIT Business.

In 2002 with impetus provided by Associate Professor Supriya Singh, the Faculty launched the Business Research Interns Programme which provides an informal forum for a broad range of researchers from RMIT Business, including both staff and postgraduate students as well as industry representatives to discuss current research. The goal of this initiative is to provide a relaxed and informal forum for the discussion of current research projects and developments. The Business Research Intern Programme has helped reduced some of the loneliness that is often associated with conducting research and has already resulted in a number of successful collaborative projects and associations. Also in 2002 the Research Development Unit developed a Research Student Seminar Programme - this is a Faculty wide seminar program that provides students with a greater opportunity to network with their peers from across the different Schools and discipline areas within the Faculty. Additionally, the Research Development Unit continued to run its Supervisor Training Program to address the needs of supervisors in business disciplines at a Faculty level.

In relation to research training, as part of the Faculty's on-going Higher Degree Improvement Process a new system of candidature review was introduced whereby students present their research proposal at a Candidature Review Conference organised by the Faculty's Research Development Unit. This initiative has proved most successful and has been welcomed by our students. Also following the success of the Research Student Support Fund that was established in 2001 the Office of the Dean extended this fund in 2002 to provide funding to research students for expenses associated with their research and also for their professional development as researchers to attend conferences where they had papers accepted. On top of the funding support provided at the

Acting Pro Vice Chancellor (Business)
Professor Robert Brooks

Acting Associate Dean (Research)
Associate Professor Pam Green

Lecturer Research Methods
Bronwyn Coate
Research Officer
Liz Merlot
Research Officer
Libby Hess
Administrative Officer
Kalpana Lalji
Administrative Assistant
Laszlo Romer
Acting Research Student Administration Officer
Ebony Rea

Prof. Robert Brooks obtained his PhD from Monash University in 1993 and his area of expertise is in financial econometrics. He has published 81 articles in refereed journals, 7 conference papers, 1 book chapter and 2 books. He has also been actively involved in the supervision of research students with 17 Doctoral and 2 Master completions. He currently holds 1 ARC Discovery grant, 2 ARC Linkage grants and has previously completed an ARC SPIRT grant.
School level to research students, in 2002 the Research Development Unit awarded $42,878 through this fund.

In addition to the existing research programs within the Faculty - Masters by Research, Doctor of Philosophy and the Doctor of Business Administration, the Faculty also commenced a new research program the Doctor of Project Management. The Doctor of Project Management program which is led by Professor Derek Walker is an innovative program combining coursework with a major research thesis component and equips candidates with skills in project management and establishes within candidates a sense of principles in professionalism.

Other highlights from the Office of the Dean in 2002 include the contributions to the Faculty's DEST publication output by some of the Faculty's non-academic staff members from RMIT Business Online around the area of online teaching and learning technologies.

Research Publications

B1-Book Chapter


C1-Refereed Journal Articles


E1-Conference Proceedings


Research Student Completions

Kwok Hung Charles Lau, PhD
Thesis title: 'A Cellular Automation Model for Urban Land Use Simulation.'


Charles found doing a PhD to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. In retrospect, Charles regards it more a process of learning how to become an analytical person than a mere pursuit of knowledge and a certificate. While it is true that Charles has acquired new knowledge and research techniques in his field of study, he reflects that he has also learned about how to explore a research problem from different perspectives and to remain independent and objective in thinking. Charles emphasises the need to be prudent and sceptical in analysing the available data and facts as part of doing research is to formulate a problem and to find the answer in a systematic and organised way. Charles found through his research that the means was just as important as the end. In modelling, the jargon term GIGO (Garbage In Garbage Out) is often used, referring to the case that incorrect input leads to incorrect output. Charles believes that this concept is equally significant when also considering the process that is followed as processes that lack rigour will produce doubtful outcomes that lack validity.

Charles considers his PhD study to be more like an intensive training exercise in life than a mere academic pursuit. The problem solving skills and crisis management techniques that he acquired in the process, he believes are fairly generic and can be applied to other areas such as career development and nurturing of human relationships. In this regard, Charles agrees with the ancient Chinese wisdom that says, "Studying is to understand how things work. Understanding how things work is to become a better person."