



ACST734

Financial Institutions Management and Regulation

S1 Evening 2016

Dept of Applied Finance and Actuarial Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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E4A 617

Thursday 1pm to 3pm

Administrator

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E4A Level 6

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

ACST834

Unit description

This unit will focus on special topics on financial institutions which fail. We will look at empirical studies of insolvencies from different countries and for different types of financial institutions (including life and general insurers, health funds, banks, superannuation funds, hedge funds, and other investment management and risk management organisations). We will consider factors such as product design, pricing, reserving, investment, asset-liability management, liquidity management, reinsurance, accounting issues, regulatory arbitrage, and corporate governance. We will also be looking at the effectiveness of regulation, both in preventing failures and dealing with the consequences of failures (eg, using guarantee schemes).

This unit provides students with essential understanding on insolvencies that develop the concepts and skills necessary for advanced research in finance and actuarial studies.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both market conduct and prudential regulation

Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks

Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of different types of risk

The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)

Understanding different theories of regulation, objectives of regulators and the causes of regulatory failure

Develop research skills appropriate to proposed MRes research topic

General Assessment Information

The grades and comments for assessment tasks will be posted on on iLearn. We will make an Announcement when the grades are available, so students should receive an email notification. Then students will be able to look at their marks via the Gradebook on iLearn. It is the responsibility of students to view their marks for each within-session assessment task on iLearn within 20 days of posting. If there are any discrepancies, students must contact the unit convenor immediately. Failure to do so will mean that queries received after the release of final results regarding assessment tasks (not including the final exam mark) will not be addressed.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
1. Reports	30%	April 4, May 2, May 30
2. Essay1	15%	April 26
3. Research Task	15%	Week 11
4. Final Examination	40%	Examination period

1. Reports

Due: **April 4, May 2, May 30**

Weighting: **30%**

Submission

Each week, the lecturer will provide some research questions which relate to the material covered in that week's lecture and readings. Students will be asked to choose one of these questions and write a 2-page report answering that question. As an example, in week 1 we cover Ponzi schemes. Students may choose to do a case study describing a Ponzi scheme from their own country, explaining how it was operated, how the authorities discovered the fraud, and how authorities might be able to prevent future Ponzi schemes.

Students must hand in five reports during the term, each worth 6% (total 30%). The reports are handed in electronically via the iLearn drop box. Two reports must be handed in by 5 pm Monday April 4 Two more must be handed in by 5 pm Monday May 2. The last one must be handed in before 5 pm Monday May 30.

Extension No extensions will be granted. Late tasks will be accepted up to five days late, but one mark will be deducted from the total awarded mark for each 24 hour period or part thereof (for example if the report is handed in 25 hours late, 2 marks will be deducted). The penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for special consideration has been made and approved.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both market conduct and prudential regulation
- Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks
- Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of different types of risk
- The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)
- Understanding different theories of regulation, objectives of regulators and the causes of regulatory failure

2. Essay1

Due: **April 26**

Weighting: **15%**

Submission Students will be asked to write an analysis of one case study of failed (or troubled) financial institutions. The case study will include a description of the events; the causes of the

failure (including any weaknesses in risk management); and evaluate the regulatory response to the failure (identifying any weaknesses in the legislation / prudential regulations and or the quality of supervision). Each essay is worth 15%. The maximum word length is 1500 words.

Essays must be submitted via the iLearn Dropbox.

Extension No extensions will be granted. Late tasks will be accepted up to one week late, but 10% will be deducted from the total mark for each 24 hour period or part thereof (for example, if submitted 25 hours late, a penalty of 20% will be applied). This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for special consideration is made and approved.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both market conduct and prudential regulation
- Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks
- Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of different types of risk
- The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)
- Understanding different theories of regulation, objectives of regulators and the causes of regulatory failure
- Develop research skills appropriate to proposed MRes research topic

3. Research Task

Due: **Week 11**

Weighting: **15%**

Students enrolled in the Master of Research will work on a research task which is related to their own research interests (e.g. preliminary research relating to the topic of the thesis in the second year of the MRes program). Please consult the lecturer in charge during the first week of term to discuss your research interests.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both market conduct and prudential regulation
- Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks
- Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of

different types of risk

- The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)
- Understanding different theories of regulation, objectives of regulators and the causes of regulatory failure
- Develop research skills appropriate to proposed MRes research topic

4. Final Examination

Due: **Examination period**

Weighting: **40%**

The final exam will be held during the University exam period between June 14 and July 1. The examination timetable will be posted on the University website later in the term.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both market conduct and prudential regulation
- Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks
- Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of different types of risk
- The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)
- Understanding different theories of regulation, objectives of regulators and the causes of regulatory failure

Delivery and Resources

Classes

- Lectures are held on Wednesday evenings between 6 and 9 pm (3 hours) in C5A 404
- The timetable for classes can be found on the University web site at: <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au>

Required and Recommended Texts and/or Materials

Required texts

There are no compulsory textbooks for this unit. We will be reading case studies from a variety of sources. Readings will be placed online (via the iLearn system) where possible. For example we might look at some of the case studies on the eRISK website <http://www.erisk.com/Learning/Casestudies.asp>.

Technology Used and Required

Students will find it useful to look up material using the electronic databases available via the University library page (e.g. Factiva).

Unit Web Page

- Course material is available on the learning management system (iLearn)
- We will be distributing lecture notes, readings, and assignments via iLearn.
- Students will need Internet access in order to obtain some of the readings which are available online and /or via the Library's electronic databases. Internet access is available at the University library.

Teaching and Learning Activities

Each week we have a 3-hour lecture on Wednesday evening. We will look at one or more case studies each week. In some weeks we will also be watching DVDs about certain events. This will be followed by a class discussion of the issues. A set of course notes and/or readings will be provided for each topic. Students are expected to participate in class discussions and read the required readings.

For each topic, we will provide a set of questions which will allow students to extend their knowledge by reading and summarising additional readings. Students are expected to hand in 5 reports over the term. Students will have a choice of topics.

Students will also be expected to research two case studies, and prepare an essay on each one.

Students may be asked to do a short (5 minute) presentation of one of the topics covered in their report (if the class size is large, then it will not be possible for every student to do a presentation, but we will try to give this opportunity to as many students as possible).

Changes in 2015

This year we have updated the course material to reflect new developments in the financial services industry. The student feedback for this unit was quite positive so we have not made any other significant changes to the unit.

Unit Schedule

Please refer to the iLearn website for the unit schedule.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students

should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Supplementary Examinations Policy -

Further information regarding supplementary exams, including dates, is available here:

http://www.businessandeconomics.mq.edu.au/current_students/undergraduate/how_do_i_special_consideration

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)

- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both market conduct and prudential regulation
- Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks
- Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of different types of risk
- The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)
- Understanding different theories of regulation, objectives of regulators and the causes of regulatory failure

Assessment tasks

- 1. Reports

- 2. Essay1
- 4. Final Examination

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both market conduct and prudential regulation
- Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks
- Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of different types of risk
- The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)
- Understanding different theories of regulation, objectives of regulators and the causes of regulatory failure
- Develop research skills appropriate to proposed MRes research topic

Assessment tasks

- 1. Reports
- 2. Essay1
- 3. Research Task
- 4. Final Examination

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understanding of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, including both

market conduct and prudential regulation

- Understanding of common causes of banking failures; how systemic risks can destabilise financial systems; management of credit risks
- Understanding of common causes of insurance company losses; management of different types of risk
- The role of auditor, actuaries, accounting standards and actuarial standards in managing solvency (including case studies on financial reinsurance)
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- Develop research skills appropriate to proposed MRes research topic

Assessment tasks

- 1. Reports
- 2. Essay1
- 3. Research Task
- 4. Final Examination

Research and Practice

This unit will

- (a) provide students with an opportunity to do their own research, with flexibility to focus on areas which interest them
- (b) present research papers written by Macquarie University staff
- (c) present research findings from other academic sources as well as research papers from regulatory authorities