

EQ301-45 Individual Research Projects - Dissertation

23/24

Department

Education Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Sarah Dahl

Credit value

45

Module duration

24 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module builds on developing a deeper understanding of those module aims from the Research Methods module in Year 2, culminating in a 10,000-word dissertation project in an education topic of your choice. It focuses around understanding the process of formulation of research questions and hypotheses, and the need to match the research questions to appropriate research methodologies. Support will be offered to students to formulate and calibrate their research questions for their own project, and develop the research design that best fits the question and the purpose of their research through discussions around the advantages and disadvantages of different methods of data collection. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabs will be presented, and ways of interpreting and writing up the results will be discussed.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The module aims build on developing a deeper understanding of those module aims from the Research Methods module at level 5:

Understanding the process of formulation of research questions and hypotheses

Appreciation of the need to match the research questions to appropriate research methodologies
Procedures employed with SPSS for statistical analyses, e.g., descriptive statistics, cross-tabs, and the rationale for choosing them

Use of qualitative software (e.g. NVIVO) for analysis of qualitative data

Interpretation and writing up of the results

Development of instruments for qualitative and quantitative data collection (e.g. questionnaires; interview schedules, observation schedules);

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Formulate research questions and develop the research design - To support students to formulate / calibrate their research questions for their own study / dissertation and develop the research design that best fits the question and the purpose of their research

Consider purposes of and processes involved in reviewing the literature.

Development of the instruments for data collection, ie, questionnaires, interviews schedules, case study materials, observation schedules - To present and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different methods of data collection and discuss issues regarding population and sample, generalisability, validity and reliability. Present the process of constructing questionnaires and interview schedules, as well as observation materials

Data collection: organise and code data for inputting and analyses - To present and discuss practical ways of collecting and organising data. Also, the development of a coding scheme to code data before doing qualitative / quantitative analyses will be presented

Quantitative analyses using SPSS - To introduce students to SPSS, which is a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for quantitative analyses. Specifically, descriptive statistics and cross-tabs will be presented, and ways of interpreting and writing up the results will be discussed

The use of NVIVO software for qualitative analyses - To introduce students to NVIVO software for the purpose of qualitative analyses, or thematic analyses of qualitative data. Also, ways of interpreting and writing up the results will be discussed.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Describe and apply theoretical and methodological understandings underpinning research, from formulating research questions to data collection and analyses to writing up the results. Research skills appropriate to the discipline: quantitative, qualitative data collection, coding and analyses. Analyse and articulate key theoretical and methodological concepts relating to the process of forming research questions, developing appropriate research designs to address them, engaging in the process of data collection, analysis and interpretation. Develop research skills and methods appropriate to conducting qualitative and quantitative research; Provide justifications regarding the methods chosen for qualitative and quantitative analyses. Apply this knowledge and understanding to formulating research questions and developing research designs. Recognise the advantages and disadvantages of certain methods for data collection and analyses. Develop ICT Presentational and research skills

Indicative reading list

- Bell, J. (2010) *Doing your Research Project: A Guide for First Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*. Fifth Edition. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, Open University Press.
- Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods*. Third Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Christensen, P. and James, A. (Eds.) (2008) *Research with Children. Perspectives and Practices*. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K (2011). *Research Methods in Education*, 7th Ed, London: Routledge
- Denscombe, M. (2010) *The Good Research Guide for Small Scale Social Research Projects*. 4th Edition. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, Open University Press.
- Creswell, J. (2013) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th Edition. London: Sage
- Greig, A., Taylor, J. and MacKay, T. (2012) *Doing Research with Children*. Third Edition. London: Sage.
- Harcourt, D., Perry, B. and Waller, T. (eds.) (2011) *Researching Young Children's Perspectives. Debating the Ethics of Educational Research with Children*.
- Lewis, A. and Lindsay, G. (2000) *Researching Children's Perspectives*. Buckingham, Oxford University Press.
- Mac Naughton, G., Rolfe, S. A. and Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2010) *Doing Early Childhood Research. International Perspectives on Theory and Practice*. 2nd Edition. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, Open University Press.
- Muijs, D (2004). *Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS*. London: Sage.
- Punch, K. (2009) *Introduction to Research Methods in Education*. London: Sage
- Roberts-Holmes, G. (2011) *Doing Your Early Years Research Project. A Step-by-Step Guide*. 2nd Edition. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, Open University Press.
- Robson, C. (2011) *Real World Research. A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers*. Third Edition. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Scott, D., and Usher, R. (1996). *Understanding Educational Research*, London: Routledge.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

Students complete an independent research project with supervision, on an area of education they would like to investigate further.

Subject specific skills

- examine, evaluate and deploy the findings of empirical and theoretical studies related to education
- reflect upon the ethics of studying aspects of education
- generate and explore suitable research questions
- carry out empirical or desk-based studies ethically
- use appropriate methods of data collection to answer research questions
- analyse data
- present and evaluate research findings

Transferable skills

- Analysis and decision making • Communication skills • Critical thinking • Data handling • Emotional intelligence • Intellectual ability • Judgement and decision making • Negotiation • Planning and organisational skills • Problem solving • Reasoning • Using IT effectively
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Study

Study time

Type	Required	Optional
Lectures	7 sessions of 1 hour (2%)	
Project supervision	6 sessions of 30 minutes (1%)	4 sessions of 30 minutes
Private study	440 hours (98%)	
Total	450 hours	

Private study description

Data collection outside the University, background reading, completing reading/other tasks in preparation for timetabled teaching sessions and independent research, undertaking desk and empirical research including data collection and analysis, the completion of draft chapters and the final dissertation.

Other activity description

Opportunity to submit drafts of work for comment by supervisor and then use the feedback to redraft work.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Dissertation (10,000 words)	100%	250 hours

You will complete 10,000-word dissertation project in an education topic of your choice. This will enable you to demonstrate your understanding of the research process, from formulating

Weighting**Study time**

research questions, through design and implementation, to presenting results and providing conclusions to your study.

Feedback on assessment

Comments given on draft work; written feedback sheet for dissertation.

Availability**Courses**

This module is Core for:

- Year 3 of UEQA-X35B Undergraduate Education Studies