IP108-15 Qualitative Methods for Undergraduate Research

23/24

Department
> Liberal Arts

Level
> Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader
> William Rupp

Credit value
> 15

Module duration
> 10 weeks

Assessment
> 100% coursework

Study location
> University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The module will introduce first year students to a range of social, historical and cultural research methods, and offer opportunities to practise using some of these methods in practical assignments.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The module aims to introduce students to key theories and debates around research in the arts, humanities and social sciences but will also equip them with a practical 'toolkit' of interdisciplinary research methods and practices which they will put to use throughout their degree.

Students will explore different philosophical approaches to qualitative research, and its practical application across a range of disciplines including literary studies, history, cultural studies, visual studies and social research. They will be introduced to the ambiguities associated with the truth-claims made by qualitative research methods, as well as the opportunities they offer for a richer interpretation of (the) human condition(s).

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.

1. Introduction to qualitative research methodologies
2. Fair use of sources: Citation and plagiarism
3. Does truth matter? Subjectivity, mediation and persuasive interpretation
4. Theoretical approaches
5. Social research: Ethnography and ethics
6. Social research: Interview methodologies
7. Historical research: Archival methodologies
8. Historical research: Using sources
9. Cultural research: Creative expressions
10. Cultural research: Cultural studies

Learning outcomes

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

- Demonstrate a good understanding of what constitutes sound scholarly practice, distinguish instances of plagiarism and correct them
- Search through a range of archival sources using a systematic and precise method, and evaluate the potential usefulness of these sources
- Demonstrate a good understanding of the process of planning and conducting an interview, and the implications of the decisions made by the researcher
- Identify the ethical factors that must be taken into consideration when undertaking data collection with human participants, and follow departmental ethics policy
- Identify and engage with the various discourses embedded in a range of primary historical, social and cultural sources
- Demonstrate an understanding of methodologies used in analysing primary sources, including critical theory
- Demonstrate the ability to interpret primary and secondary sources, and use them to build a persuasive argument
- Demonstrate the ability to find and evaluate the usefulness of creative expressions and other cultural sources

Indicative reading list

Please see Talis Aspire link. Indicative reading list is extensive as students engage with a range of sources, and are given optionality.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

This is a core research methods module, which aims to equip students with the primary and

secondary research skills and knowledge they need to succeed on an interdisciplinary programme and to conduct independent research with confidence. In their assessments students demonstrate their ability to both find/generate data (Assessment 2, the Portfolio) and to interpret it (Assessment 3, the Research Essay).

Interdisciplinary

This is a core module on the interdisciplinary Liberal Arts degree programme. It teaches methodologies, perspectives and philosophies from a range of disciplines that engage in social, historical and cultural research.

International

While the focus of the course is not explicitly international, a range of examples, sources and case studies are used, including those beyond the UK context. Assessments 2 and 3 enable students to research a topic that is of interest to them, and student may choose to focus on research questions that concern different global regions or cultures.

Subject specific skills

Skills of scholarly practice, including the ability to distinguish instances of plagiarism and correct them.
Ability to search through a range of archival sources using a systematic and precise method and evaluate the potential usefulness of these sources.
Skills in planning and conducting an interview for research purposes.
Skills in finding and evaluating the usefulness of creative expressions and cultural sources.
Skills in applying and analysing the usefulness of theoretical frameworks and research philosophies.
Skills in selecting and using relevant primary research skills for interdisciplinary research.
Skills in combining primary and secondary research to develop an academic argument.

Transferable skills

Oral and written communication skills; in seminars and in assessments.
Team work skills; group work in seminars
Critical analysis and evaluation; in seminars and in assessments
Research skills

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 2 hours (36%)
Total	55 hours

Type	Required
Private study	35 hours (64%)
Total	55 hours

Private study description

Seminar preparation: reading, engaging with online material, and activities.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A5

	Weighting	Study time
Portfolio of 3 tasks	40%	43 hours

1 x portfolio of 3 tasks (approx. 1500 words plus audio recording plus ethical approval paperwork). Tasks include: 1) Social research: interview task; 2) Historical research: archival task; 3) Cultural research: creative expressions task. This assessment focuses on finding/generating data.

	Weighting	Study time
Research Essay	40%	37 hours

A research essay that must include: 1) Primary data from at least one of the portfolio research tasks; 2) Secondary research. This assessment focuses on interpreting data.

	Weighting	Study time
1 hour online test	20%	15 hours

Online plagiarism test.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in writing through Tabula; an answer key will be provided for the online test on plagiarism; students will be encouraged to make use of advice and feedback hours to receive oral feedback.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 1 of UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts