

FP031-30 Inquiry and Research Skills for Science and Engineering

24/25

Department

Warwick Foundation Studies

Level

Foundation

Module leader

Rachel Evans

Credit value

30

Module duration

25 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The IRS for Science module aims to ensure that students develop the necessary competencies and skills to succeed in science and related courses in the United Kingdom. It will provide bespoke skills training and support for students aiming at progressing to an undergraduate degree in the United Kingdom. It will provide competency training in reflective and critical thinking, team-working, and raising the awareness of self to develop greater ability in learners to engage with academic debate in science and take responsibility to critically inquire and evaluate issues in science and engineering. The module aims to ensure that students become independent learners and researchers who are equipped to think for themselves.

Module aims

1. Develop students' independent-learning and research skills.
2. Practice and reflect on skills in academic, scientific research.
3. Apply research skills through undertaking a self-led, scientific research project.

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. Foundations of Research – The first part of the module will develop students' skills in information literacy, evaluating sources, effective search strategies and reflection to enable students to access reliable academic sources.
2. Solving problems in Science – Students will take part in learning tasks in which they will develop their research skills, such as communication and team-working.
3. Research Project – Students will design an independent research project. They will plan and manage the research process, and analyse and communicate the findings.

Learning outcomes

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

- Identify and select relevant academic sources relating to a range of issues facing science and other related fields today.
- Demonstrate a range of transferable skills including project planning, data analysis, relevant digital literacy skills and presentation skills as applicable to research in related fields
- Plan, undertake and reflect on self-directed research using methodologies appropriate to science and other related fields.
- Present analysis, evaluate and draw conclusions based on a self-directed research project.

Indicative reading list

Cottrell S (2008) *The Study Skills Handbook* (3rd edition) Palgrave Macmillan

Cottrell S (2011) *Critical Thinking Skills: Developing Effective Analysis and Argument* (2nd edition) Palgrave Macmillan

Cottrell S (2014) *Dissertations and project reports : a step by step guide* Palgrave MacMillan

Dane, C (2018) *Evaluating research : methodology for people who need to read research* (2nd edition) SAGE

Humphreys P (2016) *Oxford Handbook of the Philosophy of Science* Oxford University Press

Kennett, B (2014) *Planning and managing scientific research : a guide for the beginning researcher* Australian National University Press

Yeong, FM (2014) *How to read and critique a scientific research article : notes to guide students reading primary literature (with teaching tips for faculty members)* University of Singapore

The New Scientist

IEEE International Symposium on Ethics in Science, Technology and Engineering (Journal)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

Students will design and conduct an independent research project on a scientific topic.

Interdisciplinary

Students will use the knowledge and skills they have gained from the academic modules they are studying on the IFP in order to choose, plan and carry out a research project.

International

This module will look at scientific issues from a global perspective. Students will be given a free choice of what they would like to investigate for their research project in order for them to explore international problems or scientific issues that interest them.

Subject specific skills

- Information literacy skills - library skills, effective internet searching, use of databases.
- Inquiry Skills - asking questions, seeking and analysing different answers, coming to your own conclusion
- Group work skills
- Independent learning skills - planning, time management
- Research skills - e.g. planning research, data collection and analysis
- Reflective thinking/ writing
- Critical thinking

Transferable skills

- Information literacy skills - library skills, effective internet searching, use of databases.
 - Inquiry Skills - asking questions, seeking and analysing different answers, coming to your own conclusion
 - Independent learning skills - planning, time management
 - Research skills - e.g. planning research, data collection and analysis
 - Reflective thinking/ writing
 - Critical thinking
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	64 sessions of 1 hour (21%)
Supervised practical classes	4 sessions of 2 hours (3%)
Private study	168 hours (56%)
Assessment	60 hours (20%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Students are expected to prepare for seminars by reading and practising of ideas taught in class.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A4

	Weighting	Study time
IRS Project Proposal	25%	15 hours
1150 word project proposal to include: proposed question with detailed rationale on the back of reading that has been conducted; methodology explanation, and project plan. Students will also be asked to explain how they plan to make use of digital tools (including AI) as part of their project. Reflection on progress of the research project.		
Academic Poster Conference Presentation	40%	24 hours
This presentation of academic poster with Research Project outcomes at an academic conference.		
Academic Poster	35%	21 hours
Creation of academic poster of research project undertaken.		

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback will be given on Tabula and verbal feedback in seminars. Tutorials are available for students who wish to have further guidance

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- FIOE Warwick International Foundation Programme
 - Year 1 of FP19 Warwick International Foundation Programme - Engineering
 - Year 1 of FP21 Warwick International Foundation Programme - Life Sciences
 - Year 1 of FP22 Warwick International Foundation Programme - Psychology