



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

MODULE HANDBOOK

ECDE7013

Exploring Contemporary Issues in Education
2: applying critical skills, contributing to
knowledge: leading improvement

Doctorate in Education (Ed D)

LEVEL 7

Institute of Education and Humanities

2020-21

Module Team

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We hope that you will enjoy the module and are here to help. You should:

- Make good use of the University facilities and resources
- Attend, prepare and participate in sessions
- Be self-directed and independent learners
- Manage your time and work to meet assignment deadlines

It is your responsibility to read the University [Regulations for Students](#), especially for regulations relating to assignments. These are available on MyDay.

All written assignments, apart from examination papers and oral presentations must be submitted electronically via TURNITIN.

Module Aims and Outcomes

This module builds on the research methods modules in year 1 and 2 of the Ed D programme. The year-long 60credit module is an opportunity to design and implement a full research project over the course of the academic year. The focus in this module is to develop the skills of data analysis and synthesis, using data collected in a live research project.

AIMS

- To apply critical skills to explore and investigate literature and practice relating to a contemporary issue in the workplace;
- To undertake a systematic literature review and a small-scale research project in the workplace in order to make recommendations for further research or practice development related to the issue;
- To engage fully with the research process, including the ethics process.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- Identify, access and synthesise relevant literature pertaining to a specific aspect of practice;
- Identify pertinent research question(s) related to a specific aspects of practice that are clearly framed and manageable;
- Plan and implement a small scale research project from conception to completion that effectively responds to the research questions;
- Report the research project appropriately, within ethical and research frameworks, and with an understanding of requirements of critical thinking.

Key dates

ECDE7013 Exploring Contemporary Issues in Education 2: <i>applying critical skills, contributing to knowledge: leading improvement</i>	Day 1: 10-10-20
	Day 2: 05-12-20
	Day 3: 23-01-21 Assessment component 1
	Day 4: 08-05-21
End of taught module <i>last online teaching/learning week; last opportunity for tutorial support</i>	17-06-21 final tutorial option 01-07-21 final webinar
Assessment deadline	Assignment component 1: 23-01-21
	Assignment component 2: 05-07-21

INDICATIVE CONTENT

- Undertaking an appropriate literature review, reading critically;
- Identifying gaps in knowledge and designing research question(s) to address these gaps;
- Research project methodology and design;
- Design and piloting of research tools;
- Understanding the specific ethical issues arising from researching one's own institution and co-professionals;
- Using research as a tool for developing their own practices and those of their colleagues;
- Analysing data with emphasis on the interpretation of data collected from familiar contexts;
- Critical evaluation of process, limiting claims;
- Reporting conventions.

Session Details

This module has a total of 60 hours scheduled learning over two semesters and 540 hours of independent learning. There are three or four days (to be confirmed on the first day) where participants and the module team work together and a programme of regular webinars/tutorials that include individual bookable tutorial time and group discursive sessions.

The webinar/tutorial normally takes place on Thursday evenings between 7-8.30pm.

Session	Date	Focus; pre-reading and follow up activity Highlighted text indicates guide for research report writing	Lead
1	10-10-20 All day DAY 1	Pre-reading: Review the literature pertaining to your area of interest for your research study Remind yourself of chapters related to ontology and epistemology: - chapter 7 Flick 5/6 th edition - chapter 1 Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011 or later - chapter 1 Gray 2018 Preparatory task: Review your proposal for a research project created at the end of year 2. Consider the following: - Is this a project you want to take forward? - What alterations might you make? - If not, then identify an area of research interest that you want to explore in this coming year. If this is an enquiry related to your work setting this will probably be helpful for time management. - Consider the question: <i>what gap in knowledge or understanding will your research fill?</i>	All: Self-study
		Key Questions: - What are the gap(s) in knowledge or understanding that the research project seeks to fill? - What are the research question(s) that will address these gaps? - What is the nature of the knowledge or understanding to be generated?	JW
		Key learning in this session: - We revisit the need to undertake an appropriate literature review, and if felt useful by the group we will put some time into making use of the library; - We recognise that some common terminology is contested and requires definition for our research purposes; - We review how we understand the term 'reading critically' and what behaviours that requires of us as researchers; - We seek to be explicit about the gap(s) in knowledge or understanding that our research seeks to fill; - We maintain a focus on coherence in our approach to research intentions and design; - We aim to have designed our draft research question(s) by the end of the session; - We consider research project methodology as the frame through which we understand what it is we are seeking to do.	

		Structure: The session will be largely discursive, with individual and small group break out opportunities and tasks. There is an intention to develop a community of critical friends within and across the group. This community will support understanding and deepen our critical skills, by seeking to constructively probe thinking, understanding and coherence of each other's ideas. We will hear from the cohort who have just completed this module, they will present their projects to you. Think critically about their approaches as you listen and we discuss their work.	
		Follow up thinking/task: - How will you respond to your research questions? - Consider your research design and create a draft project plan. - This should articulate: • Your participants • Your research tools • Your timeline - Draft a justification for your research tools; outline the research decisions you have made in your choice of these tools, making reference to researchers who are expert in the use of these tools (and avoiding over-reliance on the generic research texts).	
		Follow up reading/task: - Review the literature pertaining to your area of enquiry - Scope out the shape of your literature review – this can be one side of A4 – ensuring that you lead the reader towards a clear identification of the gap(s) in knowledge or understanding that you seek to fill - Building your literature review from week one onwards will significantly help you with your research project and report writing. - Aim to have a complete draft of your literature review by end November.	
2	22-10-20 7-8.30pm	Preparatory task: Complete your ethics form for your proposed research project. Identify any areas of the form for which you need input or advice from your peers/ tutor; and any areas for discussion.	
		Online shared session: This evening is for discussion and advice in order that you complete your ethics proposals by EARLY November at the latest. Listening to the issues your peers have will deepen your understanding of the various ethical issues that may arise in education-related research. <i>The latest ethics committee date this term requires submission</i>	JW or AS

		of your proposal by 26th November. This requires sign off from module leads so you will need to submit to AS and JW by 12th November. If you can submit for the 29th October date, please do so, but ensure that you have worked with Jane/Alex to finalise the submission. The ethics e-cycle dates are below for reference.	
3	05-11-20 7-8.30pm	Identifying our gaps... You will have 8 minutes to present or talk through the key literature pertaining to your area of enquiry and lead the audience to understand the 'gap' that your research seeks to fill. You can talk with or without notes, or present via the webinar page. Think of 'the funnel' – you may structure your overview as follows: - Seminal work (<i>what is known?</i>) - Development or critique of the seminal work (<i>what is contested?</i>) - Recent, local or related work (<i>what do we know in similar /our contexts?</i>) - Areas of the field that are still unknown or weakly explored to date; or contexts in which little empirical work has been undertaken (<i>where are the gaps in this field?</i>) - The gap does your enquiry seek to fill and why... In summary your overview should tell us: why this enquiry and why now?	All online JW
4	19-11-20 7-8.30pm	Preparatory task: Read at least one of the following: • Chapter 13 Sampling in Uwe Flick (5th edition or later) • Chapter 9 Sampling strategies in Gray (3rd or 4th edition) • Chapter 8 Sampling in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (7th edition or later) Prepare to present the rationale for your own sampling strategy. Consider the rationale (identify the research decisions you have made and explain why you made them) and the limitations of your sample. Are there any ethical issues specifically related to your sample? Online shared session: We will critically consider the implications of the sampling decisions you make during this discussion. Please be prepared to engage with each other as constructively critical colleagues 😊.	

5	05-12-20 All day DAY 2	Pre-reading Read in detail Uwe Flick's chapter 7 (provided); - Consider carefully the understandings of the world that you are bringing to your research project and try to articulate how these frame the study. Read either chapter 6 (QUANT) or 7 (QUAL) of Gray's research design section. Preparatory task Draft a diagrammatic outline of your research design. This might take the form of a flow diagram, a timeline or a table. It should show the research activity of the project and, where needed, indicate where there are dependencies (for example, when the outcomes of a survey will inform the question design for an interview). Try to get this onto a PPT slide in order to present to colleagues. Consider your theoretical frame – what understandings are framing /guiding your project design and intentions? - Can you respond to Flick's questions on page 92?	All: Self-study
		Key Questions: - What is methodology? - How does the theoretical frame shape the analysis of data? - What does a report of the methodology look like? - Piloting research tools – why bother?	JW
		Key learning in this session: - Exploring what is meant by methodology, method, research design and how we report these elements of the research project - Understanding and locating the theoretical and analytical frame Activity: - <i>Analysing what we see – using affordance theory and theoretical lenses from students' projects (LUCAS 11 months)</i> - <i>Analysing what we read – using grounded theory and theoretical lenses from students' projects (interview transcript)</i> - See also abstracts from theses (JW, AS, ARP, HL, AC)	JW (AS)
		Structure: This session will involve you sharing your preparatory work with each other and contributing to discussions related to the key questions. There will be some exposition though this is limited, and you may opt for some time in the library or working on your own drafts with the support of peers	

		and module tutors.	
		Follow up thinking/task: Draft your methodology chapter. This includes: - your theoretical frame, - the research design and the justification for it, - the research tools and justification for them, - your approach to analysis (your analytical frame) Consider what piloting activities you will need to undertake and how you will approach these. Identify time in your calendars and research timeline. Do you need to pilot your approach to analysis as well? Aim for a draft methodology chapter by the end of January.	
		Follow up reading: Recommended: Read Methodology chapters in existing PhDs; use the repository of PhDs https://ethos.bl.uk/Home.do Gray: research design section chapter 6 (QUANT) or 7 (QUAL).	
6	23-01-21 All day DAY 3	Assessed presentations Part 1 assessment Individual seminar presentation (25 minutes each) Present your small scale research project design, offer a critical justification for your methodological choices, the research tools adopted and the ethical processes adopted. You should also include an outline of the intended approach to data analysis.	JW/ AS
Independent study period with bookable tutorials (see below).		Undertake your data collection before Easter	
7, 8, 9, 10,	Bookable tutorials 04-02-21 18-02-21 04-03-21 18-03-21	Tutorial sessions: You are encouraged to share your developing projects with each other and act as critical friends for one another. These weeks of tutorial sessions are bookable by email to the module tutors. You can book in the daytime or an evening appointment between 7-8.30pm. Make use of these tutorials of AT LEAST one occasion to discuss the progress of your project. It is expected that you will have completed your data collection by	With module team

		the end of this period if individual working/ tutorial support.	
11	08-05-20 All day DAY 4	Preparatory task: Prepare your dataset so that it is ready for analysis (export quantitative data into suitable format; transcribe interviews/focus groups; ...) Make a <u>start</u> with your analysis – use the analytical frame you have identified. Prepare a short update for your peers on how this is going; prepare questions if you want their advice/views/comments. Key questions: - What does my data tell me? - What research decisions am I making in analysing my data – and what are the implications and limitations of these decisions? - What warrant do I have for the strength of my findings? - What might my responses to my RQs be? Key learning: - Data analysis involves making research decisions - Robust data analysis is systematic, thorough and should be easily explained - Your approach to data analysis frames what is found and will have various implications and limitations - Part of being robust as a researcher is acknowledging the limitations in the warrant for your claims Structure: This session will be hands-on throughout. You will be presenting your data analysis as a work in progress and have time to undertake further work with your dataset during the session with the support of peers and modules tutors. By sharing the various analytical approaches adopted by the	All: Self-study

		members of the group you should develop an increasing awareness of the range of approaches available, the relative merits for different kinds of enquiry and also create a deeper understanding of the limitations of research activity and the warrant we can claim for our findings. Follow up tasks: Complete your data analysis process and draft your findings chapter. Draft your discussion chapter: Consider: - What do you want to unpack further as a result of your study? - What have you learnt in relation to your RQs? - How does this sit in relation to the field and the material in your literature review? - How robust was your research? What are the limitations? - How does your study address the 'gap' you identified? - What further research is needed? Follow up reading: Read according to your research tools and analytical process. You should seek to ensure that you read material from researchers who have used similar approaches as well as material in research texts in order to consider deeply the implications of your own research/analysis decisions.	
12.13.14	Bookable tutorials 20-05-21 03-06-21 17-06-21	Tutorial sessions: You are encouraged to share your developing projects with each other and act as critical friends for one another. These weeks of tutorial sessions are bookable by email to the module tutors. You can book in the daytime or an evening appointment between 7-8.30pm. Make use of these tutorials of AT LEAST one occasion to discuss the progress of your project and write up.	With module tutors

15	01-07-21 Final online session	Celebratory sharing session: We will share the headline summaries of the research projects (the 3 minute challenge!) Review of programme to date Outline of the next stage... An outline of the next steps for progression to the thesis stage is provided, Q&A session and next steps	All
Assessment deadline: Part 2: 05-07-21			

Institute Ethics Committee dates in 2020-21:

You should aim for the earliest possible e-cycle in order that you have time to carry out your research AFTER you have had ethical approval.

YOU MUST NOT BEGIN ANY DATA COLLECTION PRIOR TO GAINING ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR YOUR RESEARCH ACTIVITY.

Date of Meeting	Submission Deadline
1.00pm Wednesday 4 th November 2020	10.00am Thursday 29 th October 2020
1.00pm Wednesday 2 nd December 2020	10.00am Thursday 26 th November 2020
1.00pm Wednesday 6 th January 2021	10.00am Thursday 31 st December 2020
1.00pm Wednesday 3 rd February 2021	10.00am Thursday 28 th January 2021
1.00pm Wednesday 3 rd March 2021	10.00am Thursday 25 th February 2021
1.00pm Wednesday 7 th April 2021	10.00am Thursday 1 st April 2021
1.00pm Wednesday 5 th May 2021	10.00am Thursday 29 th April 2021
1.00pm Wednesday 2 nd June 2021	10.00am Thursday 27 th May 2021
1.00pm Wednesday 7 th 2021	10.00am Thursday 1 st July 2021

Details of Assessment

Assessment Component 1 – 25%

DEADLINE: 23-01-21

Individual seminar presentation (25 minutes)

Present your small scale research project design, offer a critical justification for your methodological choices, the research tools adopted and the ethical processes adopted. You should also include an outline of the intended approach to data analysis.

Assessment Component 2 – 75%

DEADLINE: 05-07-21

Written research report (12000 words)

Present a research report of your small scale research project; the report should include a literature review, justification of methodology and research tools employed, description of method and data analysis, findings, critical discussion of the implications of the findings for practice or future research and an evaluation of the research process.

KEY READING:

e.g.

Classification	Reading List entry	Electronic*
Essential	Cohen, L. Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2013 or 2011) <i>Research Methods in Education, 8th or 7th editions</i> London: Routledge. 2017 ed available on DawsonBks	☐
Essential	Flick, U. (2014) <i>An Introduction to Qualitative Research</i> , London: SAGE.	☐
Essential	Gray, D.E. (2018) <i>Doing Real World Research</i> , London: SAGE.	☐
Further	Punch, K.F. (2009) <i>Introduction to Research Methods in Education</i> . London: SAGE.	☐
Further	Aubrey, K. & Riley, A. (2017) <i>Understanding and Using Challenging Education Theories</i> , London: SAGE.	☐
Further	Alderson, P. & Morrow, V. (2011) <i>The Ethics of Research with Children and Young People: A Practical Handbook</i> , London: Sage.	☐
Further	Arthur, J. (Ed.). (2012). <i>Research methods and methodologies in education</i> . Sage publications.	☐
Further	Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. <i>The qualitative report</i> , 13(4), 544-559. Available freely online.	☒
Further	Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds), (2011) <i>The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research</i> , London: Sage Publications Ltd. 2017 ed. Available from DawsonBks	☐
Further	Gorard, S. (2010). <i>Quantitative methods in educational research: The role of numbers made easy</i> . London: Bloomsbury Publishing.	☐
Further	Israel, M (2014) <i>Research Ethics and Integrity for Social Scientists: Beyond Regulatory Compliance</i> , Washington: Sage.	☐
Further	Lewis, V., Kellett, M., Robinson, C., Fraser, S. & Ding, S., (2006) <i>The Reality of Research with Children</i> .	☐
Further	Mauthner, M. L., Birch, M., Jessop, J. & Miller, T. (eds), (2012) <i>Ethics in Qualitative Research</i> , London: Sage Publications Ltd.	☐
Further	May, T. & Perry, B. (2011) <i>Social Research and Reflexivity: Content, Consequence and Context</i> , London: Sage Publication Ltd.	☐
Further	Salkind, N. J., (2010) <i>Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics</i> , London: Sage Publications Ltd.	☐

Further	Thomas, G. (2013). <i>How to do your research project: A guide for students in education and applied social sciences</i> . London: Sage.	☐
Further	Wellington, Jerry (2015) <i>Educational research: contemporary issues and practical approaches</i> . London: Bloomsbury	☐
The following journals, as well as others held within the library will be a valuable source of reading for you.		
Essential	Journal: British Educational Research Journal	☐
Further	Journal: British Journal of Educational Studies	☒
Further	Journal: Educational Action Research	☐
Further	Journal: International Journal of Action Research	☐
Further	Journal: International Journal of Research and Method in Education	☐
Further	Journal: Journal of Educational Research	☐
Further	Journal: Wales Journal of Education	☐
The following websites, as well as others, will be a valuable source of reading for you.		
Essential	British Educational Research Association. Accessed at: http://www.bera.ac.uk/	☒
Essential	British Educational Research Association. (2011). <i>BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research</i> . BERA. Accessed at: https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf?noredirect=1	☒
Further	Disability Rights Commission. Accessed at: http://www.drc-gb.org/	☒
Further	Equal Opportunities Commission. Accessed at: http://www.eoc.org.uk/	☒
Further	National Assembly for Wales/Welsh Assembly Government. Accessed at: http://www.wales.gov.uk/	☒
Further	Office of Public Sector Information. Accessed at: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/	☒

It is highly recommended that you re-read the following text as an orientation to some seminal theory that is often used to frame education research:

Aubrey, K. & Riley, A. (2017) *Understanding and Using Challenging Education Theories*, London: SAGE.

- Ch.1 Maslow
- Ch. 6 Bourdieu
- Ch. 7 Foucault
- Ch. 8 Noddings
- Ch. 9 Stenhouse
- Ch. 14 Mezirow

The following texts are research-tool specific; they will be more useful as you progress your doctoral studies and are listed here for reference. You may wish to read them if pertinent to your chosen research design(s).

Further	Creswell, J. W. (2012). <i>Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches</i> . Sage.
Further	McNiff, J. (2013). <i>Action research: Principles and practice</i> . Routledge.
Further	Field, A. (2016). <i>An Adventure in Statistics: The Reality Enigma</i> . SAGE.
Further	Fink, A., (2003) <i>How to Ask Survey Questions</i> , London: Sage.
Further	Fink, A. (2017) <i>How to conduct surveys: a step by step guide</i> . Sage.
Further	McKernan, J., & McKernan, J. (2013). <i>Curriculum action research: A handbook of methods and resources for the reflective practitioner</i> . Routledge.
Further	Yin, R. K. (2013). <i>Case study research: Design and methods</i> . London: Sage.