

MODULE CODE:M7X01448
TITLE:Applied Psychology Research Dissertation
DATED:18/05/2015

LEVEL: 7
CREDITS:60

JACS CODE:C831

AIM(S)

- To develop higher order research skills by identifying and undertaking a piece of primary research related to applied psychology which demonstrates scientific and ethical rigour in all respects.
- To enable students to demonstrate self-direction, autonomy, and originality in identifying, tackling and solving issues of relevance to an applied research question in social and/or health psychology.
- To provide students with the ability to demonstrate a professional standard of presentation skills through the presentation of their work at an internal conference.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of the module students will be able to:

1. Conduct an in-depth systematic literature review critically appraising the evidence-base relevant to the dissertation topic.
2. Design a research project identifying appropriate hypotheses/research questions and research methodology.
3. Carry out primary data collection using appropriate tools and methodology in compliance with relevant legal, ethical and data requirements.
4. Analyse data using appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative methods.
5. Interpret and critique the project results and findings and report them in the required format.
6. Reflect on the research process and methods, demonstrating clear understanding of ethical and research frameworks and lessons learned for future research/practice.
7. Present and discuss their work appropriately to an academic audience.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

The student will be required to work on his/her own initiative in the production of the dissertation on a specific research area under appropriate supervision.

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

The student is expected to take full ownership of their own dissertation project under appropriate supervision, and to manage their time appropriately to ensure completion within the timescales. Workshops and small group tutorials associated with this module will provide students with an overview of research methodology including design, data collection methods and analytical processes. Each student will be allocated a supervisor. In accordance the Academic Quality Handbook 2014/15 7.17.6 (5) the student may receive up to 15 hours of group tutorial supervision and up to ten hours of individual supervision.

SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The research proposal will be discussed by the course team. The Programme Director will meet with the student to discuss the recommendations of the team and the options - continuation with acknowledgement of recommendations, with significant revision or in exceptional cases, mutual agreement to discontinue the dissertation. On the basis of the research proposal a relevant supervisor will be appointed as well as a second adviser where appropriate. The supervisor will be allocated so as to reflect the specific area of focus of the dissertation and provide effective and knowledgeable support. After this process students will register their dissertations for examination by the University of Wales using standard forms and procedures.

Subsequently a programme of individual and, where appropriate, small group tutorials will be agreed between the student and the tutor, defining the nature and frequency of meetings.

Allocation of teaching to deliver the module are:

Activity type	Hours	Percentage
Scheduled learning	25	4%
Independent learning	575	96%
Placement learning		
TOTAL	600	100%

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Component 1

30 minute individual presentation (25%): Students will be required to present their dissertation to peers at an in-house mini-conference and will be assessed on their presentation skills, engagement and ability to demonstrate understanding of their dissertation.

Assessment Component 2

Written dissertation (75%): Students will be required to write up their study and submit a 12,000 word written thesis following standard psychology reporting conventions through three core chapters preceded by a brief summary of the thesis.

- Executive Summary (500 words)
- Systematic literature review (4,500 words)
- Research paper targeted at appropriate journal (4,500 words)
- Reflective chapter (2,500 words)

Assessment Summary

Activity type	Percentage
Written Exam	
Coursework	75%
Practical	25%
TOTAL	100%

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)

Does the module contribute to ESD?	Yes
If yes please provide brief details (no more than 100 words): Research supervision expertise within the School directly contributes to the sustainability agenda, including a focus on understanding the causes of prejudice and discrimination, developing cost-effective and easily accessible interventions to improved psychological and physical health, and exploring the role of the media in influencing the public's attitudes towards key policies. Students will also develop key problem-solving skills and critical reflective skills in the line with the QAA (2013) Education for Sustainable Development guidelines.	

Reading list

Students will be expected to make use of the research methods and academic writing books used during Part One of the programme to inform all stages of their dissertation including the research proposal.

READING LIST (EXEMPLI GRATIA)

Essential Reading

Students will be expected to identify and engage in extensive use of appropriate primary source materials in the form of academic journals, specialised texts and policy documents of relevance to their chosen topic

APA (2010). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). APA: Washington, DC.

<http://www.bps.org.uk/what-we-do/ethics-standards/ethics-standards>

Recommended Reading (depending upon chosen methodology).

Brace, N., Kemp, R., & Snelgar, R. (2012). *SPSS for Psychologists*. (5th ed.). Hants: Palgrave Macmillan.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101

- Coolican, H. (2014). *Research methods and statistics in psychology*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Field, A., & Hole, G. (2003). *How to design and report experiments*. London: Sage.
- Howell, D. C. (2012). *Statistical methods for psychology*. (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Pallant, J. (2007). *SPSS survival manual*. (3rd Ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Richards, L. (2005). *Handling qualitative data: a practical guide*. London: SAGE
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2008). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. London: Sage.

Background Reading (depending upon chosen methodology).

- Biggam, J. (2011) *Succeeding with your Master's Dissertation: A step-by-step handbook*. (2nd edition) Maidenhead: Open University Press. Available as eBook.
- Beins, B. C., & Beins, A. M. (2012). *Effective writing in psychology: Papers, posters and presentations*. (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Smyth, T. R. (2004). *The Principles of writing in psychology*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Woods, P. (1999). *Successful writing for qualitative researchers*. London: Routledge