



Academic Discipline: Psychology and Counselling



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Module ECPS5002

Research Methods II

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Module Handbook

2019-20

Module ECPS5002 Research Methods II

Module Leader: Stacey Coleman

Contact Details:

Tel: 01792 482126

Email: stacey.coleman@uwtsd.ac.uk

This handbook has been designed to provide you with the necessary information required for your progression throughout the module. It is very important that you keep this in a safe place as it is your essential guide to module content and the learning outcomes required to complete the module.

Good luck with your studies. If you have any queries regarding this module, please contact the module leader.

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ECPS5002 Research Methods II: Module Requirements

Module Code: ECPS5002

Title: Research Methods II

Module Leader: Stacey Coleman

Level: 5

Semester: 1

Credits: 20

AIM(S)

- To provide an in-depth exploration of qualitative and quantitative research design and the application of analysis techniques to further understanding of the ethical, practical, and theoretical issues in research and how these are applied in creating strong research studies.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of a variety of research designs including both experimental and non-experimental designs;
- Identify and apply a range of quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and methods across a variety of research settings;
- Demonstrate strong awareness of good practice in data management and the ethical issues associated with qualitative and quantitative research design;
- Take responsibility for their own learning and skill development; including effective personal planning, self-reflection and project management skills.

Allocations of teaching to deliver the module are:

Activity type	Hours	Percentage
Scheduled Learning: • Lectures = 20 hours • Workshops = 10 hours	30	14%
Independent Learning	170	85%
Total	200	100%

This module will be assessed through three assessment components, each worth a specific percentage of your overall module mark:

1. Your first assessment will be a 2,000 word qualitative study report. You will be required to analyse a provided transcript and write up as a 2,000 word qualitative study report (40%)
2. Your second assessment will be a 2,000 word quantitative study report. You will be required to design a study, collect and analyse empirical data, and complete a 2,000 word report involving a complex statistical analysis (40%)
3. You are required to submit a 1,000 word reflective log that demonstrates your awareness of the research topics and studies that you have taken part in over the course of the semester, including reference to their related ethical and design issues (20%).

Please see the individual Assessment Proformas on the Research Methods II Moodle page for specific information regarding the assessment questions, requirements, and submission deadlines.

For this module you must submit all three pieces of work for assessment and record a mark for each of the three elements of greater than zero, but to pass the module you require a combined mark of 40% or higher.

Module Core Text and Wider Reading

Essential Reading

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

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

Coolican, H. (2014). *Research methods and statistics in psychology* (5th ed.). London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2008). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, method and research*. London: Sage.

Further Reading

Beins, B.C., & Beins, A. M. (2012). *Effective writing in psychology: Papers, posters and presentations* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Harris, P. (2008). *Designing and reporting experiments in psychology* (3rd ed.). Milton Keynes: Open University Press

Pallant, J. (2010). *The SPSS survival manual*. Berkshire: Open University Press

Smyth, T.R. (2004). *The principles of writing in psychology*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Readings

Readings and preparation for this module are set out in the Module Information section of this handbook and are essential. There are two essential textbooks for this module that each have their own place in regards to the topics that will be covered throughout this module. There are multiple copies available in the library of each book, and the research methods and statistics textbook is also available online via the University library system. Some weeks will require you to engage with a chapter, or a number of chapters, from these books; please ensure you are aware of what is being covered each week and prepare accordingly.

Readings beyond the core texts for this module can be found through the University library system. When a reading is not widely available (e.g., a book chapter) it will be made available to you on the module Moodle site. However, journal articles that are freely available through the University system will not be made available on Moodle: you will need to retrieve them for yourself.

Lectures and seminars can only provide you with a scaffold of information – it is your wider reading that will help you to develop a comprehensive understanding of the topics discussed in. It is suggested that you carry out the essential readings as we go along as this will enhance your understanding of the overall topics. It is often best to consolidate your learning by reading the text again; not only will this help you learn it will give you the information to digest any information provided in the lecture/seminar in your own way. This module has been structured in such a way that the readings and lectures/workshops are integrated; someone who has prepared by carrying out the reading, attending the lecture and then reviewed the material should develop a good understanding of the material. A student who attends the lecture but does not carry out any of the readings will, in all likelihood, struggle to even understand what is being talked about in the lecture; they certainly will not develop the knowledge that will be required at more advance levels of their degree.

While the scheduled practical sessions are essential, it is also beneficial that you practice using the software as much as possible, whether that is at home or on campus. It has been shown experimentally that the best learning occurs cognitively when you reach a problem solution yourself. Please try to remember this when you feel stuck or frustrated (or both) during the practical workshops. Read the handouts carefully and in order. It is often a case of slowing down, going back over the steps of the procedure and making sure you haven't missed something out. It is much less useful to simply ask for help and an answer – you are much less likely to remember the solution or understand it that way! Therefore, when you are working practically try to find a solution before you ask for help. At certain points in the procedure (and specifically at the end of the session) we will all stop and consider the analysis together as a group, so you can check whether you feel confident of the analysis you have produced.

A message about Research Methods II from the Module Leader

The Research Methods II module has been designed to give you a greater understanding of the research techniques required to carry out and understand research in psychology, and also to develop an appreciation of the elements of thought and practice that go into study design and report writing. No matter what the topic area or question, as psychological scientists it is our job to ensure that we approach research of it in the right way; understanding what questions we are looking to answer, what the best way is to address the issue, and how to control the research so that we can have confidence in the answers that we get. Similarly, by developing this knowledge it can also aid us in our critical thinking when we review the work of others; did the researchers in that journal article carry out the research in the most appropriate way? Were there weaknesses in their methodologies or analyses?

Research Methods, in general, is a module that many students approach in the wrong way; it is a 'dry' topic, it is difficult, it involves incomprehensible equations... these are common assumptions and are often incorrect if you approach it in the right way. Understanding how research works, from study inception to analyses, can give a whole new level of understanding to the exploration of every topic you cover. However, you need to be systematic and methodical in your approach to studying and understanding research methods; dipping in and out of the subject as and when you think something is interesting and/or important for you to learn for your assessment rarely works, and for this module certainly will not work.

The Module Series Information page of this document sets out what you will be doing across the course of Level Five and the suggested readings that go with each session. Before you engage in the readings for this module please consider three important points:

1. The 'core' SPSS book recommended for your readings is Brace et al. (2012), but if you prefer a different text that is fine (for example, some people prefer the Pallant [2010] over the Brace et al., text on using SPSS), just so long as it contains a similar level of coverage to the core text (you are not going to get the same level of understanding of a research methods and statistics book in a 'research for dummies' book). The Coolican (2014) and the Pallant books are available in our online library system whilst the Brace et al., book is only available as a hard copy, but your choices regarding access to these books should only play a small part in your choice.
2. The level of the readings and the classes for this Level Five module assume prior reading, engagement and understanding with materials that have been covered at Level Four (understanding basic descriptives and inferentials, how to carry out basic analyses, etc.) If you don't feel confident in your knowledge of these areas, the chapters that will help you are there in the very same core texts – read them! If you are feeling rusty in your use of SPSS, sit down at a computer with the programme and the book and work through it step by step. As long as you approach things in a logical, linear way then you should have no problems with this module.
3. If you do struggle with this module, if you hate statistics, if you don't understand design... that is even more of a reason for you to attend and engage with the

readings, lectures and workshops of this module. Research lies at the heart of all areas of psychology. Anywhere you go on to work, whether it be in science, mental health support, or an office job, will (or should) always use evidence-based policy and procedures. Research tells us what works and what does not work. It is a skill you should master and then use for the rest of your life.

Your developing academic skills and research knowledge will be assessed through two academic reports and one reflective log. For each written assignment you will receive guidance on the academic proforma which will be posted on Moodle and you will be expected to demonstrate appropriate academic standards and referencing in each assessment component.

In the Module Information section of this handbook you will see that time has been allocated to each of the three summative assessments for this module. This should provide you with ample time to complete your assessment but also emphasises the need to plan ahead and ensure that you spend the required time on your assessed work.

Please see the individual Assessment Proformas on the Research Methods II Moodle page for specific information regarding the assessment questions, requirements, and submission deadlines.

For this module you must submit all three pieces of work for assessment, but to pass the module you require a combined mark of 40% or higher.

Please note: Lectures will start promptly at 9:05am on Tuesdays. Late entry will only be permitted at points where the academic staff feel it is appropriate, as it is unfair on students who have arrived on time when their lecture is disrupted by late-attending students. Please also note that no materials will be repeated for those arriving late.

Assessment Criteria at Level 5

At Level 5 it is expected that students will demonstrate the following qualities:

- More highly developed ability to complete a variety of written tasks effectively, including discursive essay, reports, and case study presentations.
- Be able to participate orally in a variety of different groups and settings in a confident and articulate fashion.
- Be able to use language with increasing complexity and sophistication.
- Be practised in hypothesis formation and knowledgeable about the means for testing hypotheses.
- Have the capacity to develop a major research interest evolving from the course and to prepare for an involvement with it.
- Be able to apply a range of theoretical models.
- Be able to synthesise theories, concepts and information in relatively novel ways.
- To have become more practised in critically appraising the competing claims of alternative primary and secondary sources.
- A growing ability to manage learning in a self-organised manner with a particular view to the importance of achieving desired outcomes within limited time periods.

The following pages set out the lecture structure for this module. This handbook and the associated Moodle folder should be used to keep track of what is being covered each week and what you are required to do to prepare for lectures and seminars each week.

Module Series Information and Assessment Plans

Date	Lecture Title	Workshop Topic	Preparation	Time Allocated
Tues 1 st Oct	Introduction to module Variables, design and ethics recap	SPSS refresher		4 hours
Tues 8 th Oct	Qualitative recap: Design and methods	Designing qualitative studies	Coolican Ch. 10 & 18 Smith et al. Ch. 2 & 4	4 hours
Tues 15 th Oct	Qualitative Analysis: Introduction to types of thematic analysis	Interviewing skills	Coolican Ch. 10 & 12	4 hours
Tues 22 nd Oct	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis	Analysis of focus group transcript	Smith et al. Ch. 3, 4 & 5	4 hours
Reading Week				
Tues 5 th Nov	Reporting Qualitative Findings	Reporting IPA	Smith et al. Ch 6	6 hours
Tues 12 th Nov	Multi-level Analysis: One-way ANOVA	Experimental designs	Coolican Ch. 20	4 hours
Tues 19 th Nov	Multi-factorial Designs	Two-way ANOVA	Coolican Ch. 21 Brace et al Ch. 8 Pallant Ch 19-20	6 hours
Tues 26 th Nov	Reporting multi-factorial designs: Results section	Writing a results section	Coolican Ch. 20, 21 & 22 Brace et al. Ch 8 Pallant Ch 19-20	8 hours
Tues 3 rd Dec	Correlation to Regression	Correlation and Linear Regression	Coolican Ch. 19 – p520-555 Brace et al., Ch 2 & 4	4 hours
Tues 10 th Dec	Regression	Multiple Regression	Coolican Ch. 19 – p556-567 Brace et al. Ch 9 Pallant Ch 13	6 hours

Suggested plan for Assessment One: Qualitative Report		
Task	What it entails	Time assigned for task
Topic readings	Reading related to the area of research; basic articles/books and more advanced specific journal articles	Basic reading = 10 hours Advanced reading = 8 hours
Data analysis – reading and re-reading of focus group transcript	Reading and re-reading of transcript; making initial notes in margins of the transcript	6 hours
Data analysis – exploratory comments	Continue making notes on descriptive, linguistic and conceptual elements within the transcript; reflect and refine ideas	Practiced during workshops but will require an additional 10 hours of independent work
Data analysis – emerging themes	Focusing on themes and creating ‘map’ of themes; organising quotes related to these themes where appropriate. Shift to work primarily with your previous notes rather than the transcript itself	
Report first draft	Write main sections of report; Introduction Method Results Discussion	8 hours
Report second draft	Check for coherence of each section of the report; add abstract	4 hours
Report final draft	Constructing the version that is to be submitted, complete with citations and full reference list in APA style, and map/table of themes included in appendix	2 hours
Proofread and check	Proofread for structure and errors, check for correct formatting and presentation	2 hours
Total allocated to assessment = 50 hours		

Suggested plan for Assessment Two: Quantitative Report		
Task	What it entails	Time assigned for task
Topic readings	Reading related to the area of research; basic articles/books and more advanced specific journal articles	Basic reading = 10 hours Advanced reading = 8 hours
Completion of ethics form	Complete required parts of ethics form and submit by the stipulated deadline	Around 2 hours per research group member
Study design using SuperLab and creation of all materials for study	You will be required to design your study according to the question, and	Approximately 10 hours with testing and perfecting

	collect data in groups for this assessment	
Data collection	You will carry out data collection from your participants in a laboratory environment	Per research group member = 3 hours
Data analysis	Enter data into SPSS; analyse data to report descriptive and inferential statistics	This will be practiced during workshops and will required an additional 5 hours of independent work
Report first draft	Write main sections of report; Introduction Method Results Discussion	8 hours
Report second draft	Check for coherence of each section of the report; add abstract	4 hours
Report final draft	Constructing the version that is to be submitted, complete with citations and full reference list in APA style, and all appendices included	2 hours
Proofread and check	Proofread for structure and errors, check for correct formatting and presentation	2 hours
Total allocated to assessment = 54 hours		

Suggested plan for Assessment Three: Reflective Log		
Task	What it entails	Time assigned for task
Recording studies you have participated in	Making notes following each study you take part in; record details of study, design flaws and ethical considerations	2 hours
Consolidation of research design and ethics knowledge	Revisiting information delivered throughout the module and engaging with textbooks	4 hours
First draft of reflective log	Write up initial draft of reflection including details of a number of studies you have participated in	4 hours
Second draft	Refining reflection and including a solid conclusion	2 hours
Final draft of reflective log	Writing final version that will be submitted, complete with citations in the text and a full reference list in APA style	2 hours
Proofread and check	Proofread for structure and errors, check for correct formatting and presentation	2 hours
Total allocated to assessment = 16 hours		

Total time required to complete this module = 200 hours