



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

LCMB7003

Research Methods Workshop

Week 1 (Part 2 of 2)

The Research Process

Defining Your Research Topic

DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT COMPONENT: Please review the submission deadlines which could be found in the LCMB7035's assessment brief

- 1. Proposal - 2000 words
- Students are required to produce a viable research proposal that provides a persuasive and convincing argument for the research to be undertaken, clear aims and objectives and an understanding of research design and project management.
- Total word count – 2000 words or equivalent
- 2. An ethics form must be submitted and approved before the data collection process could be started.
- The submission links are found in the LCMB7035 Dissertation module.

The research process

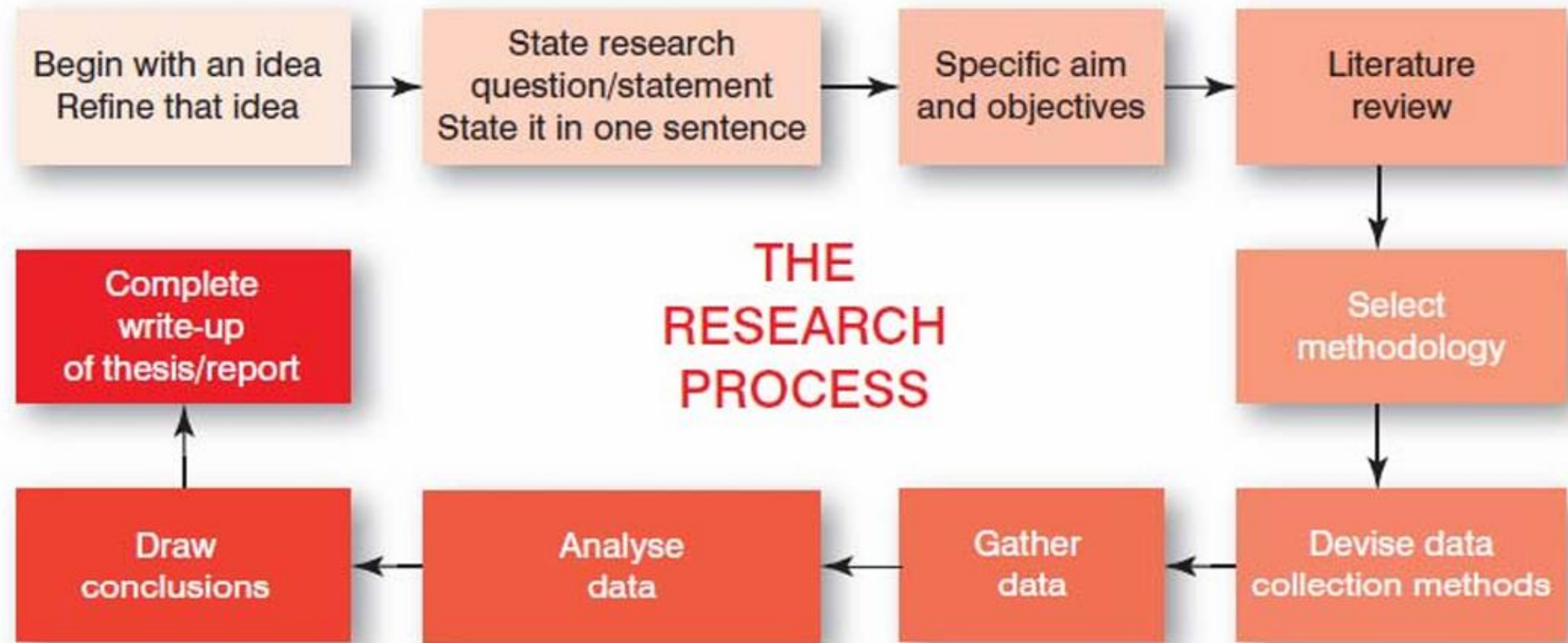


Figure 1.1 The research process

Types of research

- Applied research
 - Explores the value of basic research and
 - Delivers outcomes to policy-makers and practitioners
 - Utilises basic research
- Evaluation research
 - Evaluates specific activities/programmes or policies
 - Helps practitioners measure and understand outcomes

Topic Hunting

Method #1

Leverage the FRIN
(further research is needed)



Understanding the current state
of knowledge is essential.

How to skim articles:

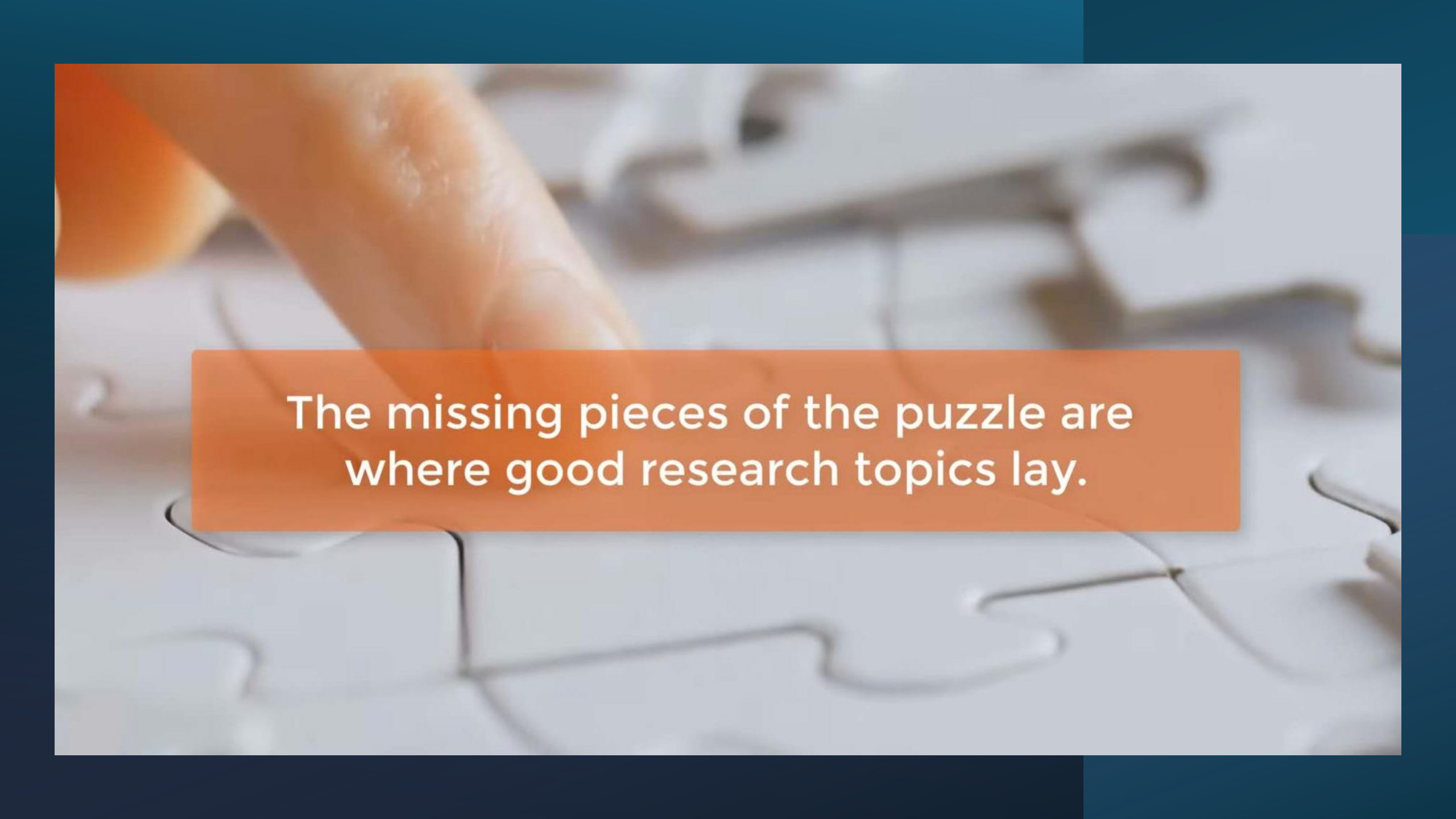
Review the following:

Executive summary
or abstract

Introduction section

Conclusion section

Limitations and directions for
future research

A close-up photograph of a person's hand placing a white puzzle piece into a larger assembly of white puzzle pieces. The background is slightly blurred, showing more puzzle pieces and a dark blue surface at the top and bottom. An orange rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

The missing pieces of the puzzle are
where good research topics lay.

Topic Hunting

Method #2

Assess an "old" topic within a new, unique context.

Potential contextual opportunities:

A **country** that differs from previously research countries.

A unique **industry**.

A unique **demographic** group.

A environment with unique **socioeconomic** conditions.

Example: Consumer trust

Existing research:

American context

First-world context

Specific products
and services

New research needed:

Third-world context

Developing country

Different products
and services

Topic Hunting

Method #3

Freestyle brainstorming and
mind mapping the area.

Generating research ideas

Rational thinking

Creative thinking

Searching the literature

Scanning the media

Brainstorming

Relevance Trees

Exploring past projects

Discussion

Keeping an ideas notebook

An example:

- 
- **General Topic:** Time management
 - **Matchmaker:** Time management and college students; Time management and entrepreneurship
 - **Variable keywords:** MBA students Undergraduate students
 - **Mutual Relationships:** Impact or effect
 - **Working Topic:** Impact of time management on MBA students
 - **Ask questions!**
 - Impact - what type of impact? Effect - how is it affecting these students?
Time management - what type of time management? MBA students - who are they? Ethnicity? Age? Race? Region? Studying?
 - **Your Refined working topic:** _____

Examples of how to narrow down:

BROAD AREA: Social media marketing

NICHE AREA: Facebook marketing OR YouTube marketing

BROAD AREA: Reputation management

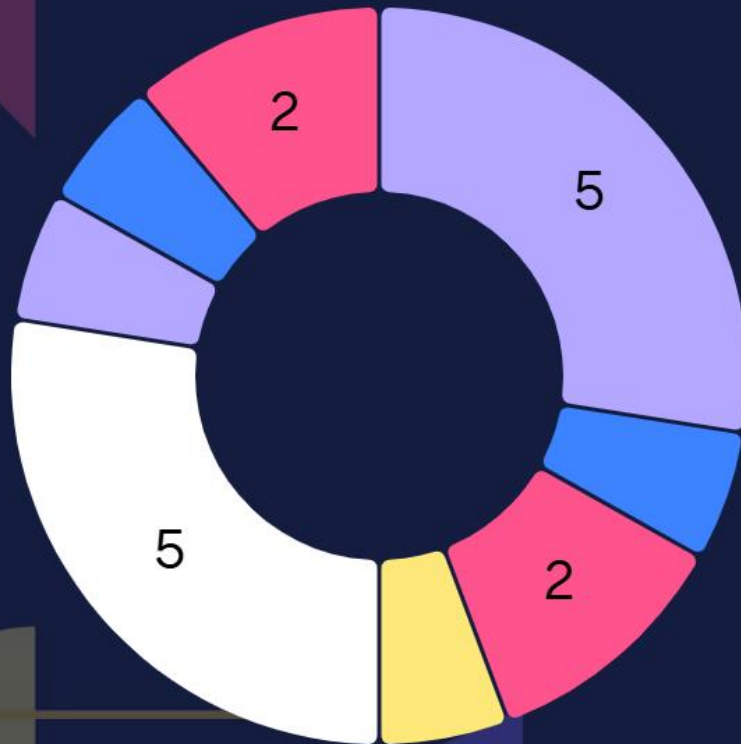
NICHE AREA: Consumer trust

Let's practice:

- **Determine which ones are suitable for research (multiple choices)**
- **Also think about why they are suitable or not**
- **Ready to share your thoughts!**



Review the following topics and determine which ones are suitable for research:



- 5 The impact of cultural differences on international expansions: Wal-Mart's international expansion strategies in South Korea and China
- 1 The applicability of the Uppsala model in SME internationalisation
- 2 A study on the role of content marketing in sustaining the brand identity of a retail brand: Case study of Tesco's
- 1 Expatriates' job satisfaction in the cross-cultural environment within MNCs
- 5 Digital marketing of Samsung in Korea
- 1 Internationalisation pattern for Chinese MNEs: TCL vs. Lenovo
- 1 Examining the key external constraints that negatively affect the country of choice of UK-based SMEs for their expansion into foreign markets
- 2 Corporate Social Responsibility and Bangladesh's textile companies

*There comes to our choices.
Always reflect on how you can better narrow and define the research scope.*

The 7 Step Process:

#1 Understand the research process.

#4 Review past dissertations.

#2 Understand what your university wants.

#5 Review the literature.

#7 Systematically evaluate each topic.

#3 Identify your broad interests.

#6 Identify specific potential topics.

Attributes of good research topics

- ▶ **Capability: is it feasible?**
 - ▶ Do you have the necessary research skills?
 - ▶ Can you complete the project in the available time?
 - ▶ Will you be able to gain access to data?
- ▶ **Appropriateness: is it worthwhile?**
 - ▶ Is the topic clearly linked with theory?
 - ▶ Are the research question (aim) and objectives clearly stated?
 - ▶ Is the research topic matching your career goals?

Evaluate each topic on these criteria:

Resources - will you have access to required resources?

Data **collection** - are you able (and willing) to collect data?

Analysis - will you be able to analyse the data correctly?

Personal **attraction** - overall, how attracted are you?

Originality - is it unique enough for your program?

Importance - is it worth researching / answering?

Literature base - is there enough literature to build on?

Data **access** - can you get access to the data you need?

Nature of scholarship

- Methodologically coherent – design and methods support objectives and the approach taken justified
 - Synthesis – theory and data combined into cohesive argument
 - Audience – primarily academic but also practitioner
- (Adapted from Mauch and Birch, 2003)

And finally...

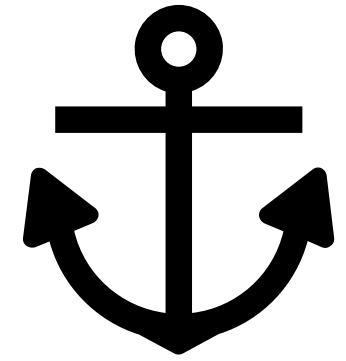
"there is no one best way for undertaking all research"

Saunders et al. (2009)

Being reflective & reflexive in research

- Being aware of any bias brought into the process by the researcher
- Reflectivity requires researchers to think carefully about cultural and political contexts as well as researcher interaction with respondents and any bias
- Reflexivity's primary concern relates to interpretation – an acceptance that all data (of whatever type) could be problematic – researchers need to search themselves, their community and their language

It's your turn



- Work in pairs (2-3 students)
- Do your **topic hunting** by your own and **write down** your refined topic (1 or 2)
- **Discuss** with your pairs
- Give feedback to your pair, help them **evaluate** the **capability and appropriateness** of the selected topic
- Record your questions/debates – we'll have a Q&A

Writing a research proposal: the elements

- Draw together ideas
- Build on previous work: see what the literature already says
- See how elements of the research process come together and how this links to a design for the research including methods and analysis
- Demonstrate the coherence of what is being proposed
- Ensure the coherence of what is being proposed

Recommendation for your to have a systematic view of research methods:

- [Mark Saunders on Research Methods - YouTube](#)



Prepare for Our Next Session (Week 3)

- Your homework: Define and confirm your research topic
- Bring it to our next session
- Ready for writing your research proposal
- The proposal submission is due during Week 5
- Any questions?

