

ECMH6005 - Independent Research Project

An Introductory Session.
Module Leader - Dr Stuart Jones.

Introduction....

- A look at the Module Descriptor....
- A brief look at the assessments.
- More detailed look at the Research Proposal.
- The Independent Research Project Handbook.
- The Supervision Process.....
- Key Dates.

Module Leader.....

- Dr Stuart Jones
- Email - s.a.jones@uwtsd.ac.uk
- As module leader it is my role to oversee taught elements of this programme and check on overall progress.
- You will also be allocated a project supervisor.



Information from Module Descriptor....

The Aims

- The Aim of the Module is to:
- Allow students to develop higher order research skills by identifying and undertaking a piece of independent research related to mental health which demonstrates scientific and ethical rigour in all respects.
- Enable students to demonstrate their ability to produce an independent piece of written work to appropriate academic standards

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- On completion of the module participants will be able to:
- Generate a scientifically and ethically appropriate research proposal for a specific question
- Use evidence-based reasoning to explore relevant practical, theoretical and ethical issues associated with a specific research question
- Carry out a study involving primary quantitative and/or qualitative data collection using appropriate tools

Learning Outcomes (Continued)....

- Analyse research data using appropriate methodological frameworks
- Present research findings to appropriate academic standards
- Critically reflect on the research process

A Brief Look at the Assessments....

- Assessment Component 1: 2,500 word research ethics proposal (25% of module mark)
- Students will be required to submit a research ethics proposal on the provided proforma for their proposed independent study.
- We will discuss this in more detail later in this talk.

A brief look at the Assessments.....

- Assessment Component 2: 7,500 word written study report (75%)
- Students will be required to write up their study in a journal format and submit a 7,500 word written report of their independent study

Recommended Reading...

- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association : the official guide to APA style*. (7th ed.).
- Coolican, H. (2019). *Research methods and statistics in psychology* (7th ed.). Routledge
- DuBois, J.M. (2008). *Ethics in Mental Health Research: Principles, Guidance, and Cases*. Oxford University Press

Recommended Reading.....

- Harper, D. & Thompson, A.R. (2012). *Qualitative Research Methods in Mental Health and Psychotherapy: A Guide for Students and Practitioners*. Wiley.
- Pallant, J. (2020). *SPSS Survival Manual: A Step By Step Guide To Data Analysis Using IBM SPSS*. 7th edition. Open University Press.
- Wallcraft, J., Schrank, B. & Amering, M. (2009). *Handbook of Service User involvement in Mental Health Research*. Wiley.
- Walliman, N. (2013). *Your undergraduate dissertation: The essential guide for success* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Useful Documentation that you will be provided in the first instance

- ECMH6005 - Independent Research Project - Handbook.
- Research Proposal Template (you must use this template for assessment 1).
- Research Ethics form (before starting data collection you must gain ethical approval from the academic discipline ethics panel).

Research Proposal - Processes and Assessment.

- Remember you have written a research proposal for your applied research skills module - but this time it is for a REAL study that you will undertake and report in this independent research project.
- You are encouraged to start engaging with potential research project topics during Semester 2 of your second year of study (level 5) and to come and talk to members of staff about the feasibility of research ideas.
 - If you haven't thought about ideas - it is important that you do so.
 - Which member of staff to speak to? - Module Leader (Dr Stuart Jones) will be a good starting point, and can provide the initial feedback.

Allocation of Supervisor

- Allocation of supervisors will provisionally be confirmed following the submission of a draft proposal and will be based on a number of factors that will include the following: 1) appropriate supervisory expertise for the research project topic in question; 2) evidence of active engagement with supervisor during semester 2 of year 2; 3) quality of proposal and 4) available supervisory capacity. Students will not necessarily get their first choice of supervisor for a number of reasons, and particularly weak proposals are likely to be re-allocated to those with available capacity and may require a change of focus to match available supervisors' expertise.
- In exceptional circumstances a change in supervision arrangement may be necessary at short notice (e.g., due to staff illness). Where this occurs, students will be matched with the most appropriate available supervisor.

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- A final research project proposal will need to be submitted at the start of the final year of study which reflects your final design and this form assessment component 1. This form will need to be included in the appendix of your research project and must therefore accurately reflect the study that is then carried out.
 - The specific submission date will be confirmed later in this presentation under key dates.

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- Prior to commencing the research, you **MUST** obtain ethical approval from the Academic Discipline Ethics Panel (also referred to as the SREC).
 - Ethical approval forms must be submitted via turnitin with appropriate appendices - It is very important that you engage with the ethics form - without ethical approval approval you **CANNOT** start data collection. A video guidance on completing the ethics form will be provided.
 - Key Dates relating to Ethics will be noted later in this presentation.

- Depending on the level of detail and scientific merit of the proposal, the following outcomes from the Academic Disciplines Research Ethics Committee are possible:
- 1) Approved - You can commence with Data Collection.
- 2) Approved subject to conditions - minor changes needed to be signed off by supervisor.
- 3) Resubmission - Changes based on the recommendation need to be made in red and sent off for the next ethics panel.
- 4) Rejection - The study is deemed ethically unsound, an entirely new ethical approval submission is needed.

Key Dates Linked to Assessment

Component 1: The Proposal

- End of September, 2024 - DRAFT Submission of Research Proposal AND Research Ethics form - There will be two SEPARATE Turnitin portals for this. Stuart will confirm the date for this in our next meeting in July. The DRAFT proposal is for you to obtain feedback on how it can be improved.
- End of October, 2024 - FINAL (ASSESSED) Submission of Research Proposal Form.
- End of October, 2024 - First opportunity for submission of Research Ethics form ahead of the next Academic Discipline Research Ethics Committee.

What type of Study can I do...

- Qualitative Research
- Quantitative Research
- Mixed Methods.
- It is important that you start reading and think about the DESIGN of your study and what design would suit your study and liase with a member of staff on this (Module Leader a good starting point).
 - Remember your ASSESSED Proposal Template will contain a section on the methodology and design of the study, so a good knowledge of this is important.

Supervision...

- Each student will be allocated a Research Supervisor who will oversee your research progress and provide appropriate advice and guidance. You will receive a combination of individual and group supervision meetings, workshops and structured lectures at appropriate points during the course of your Research Project.
- The dates and times of these meetings will be posted on Moodle, and it is your responsibility to ensure you make a note of when these will be taking place. Regular attendance at meetings and lectures is absolutely essential and will be monitored closely.

Independent Learning and Working.

- It is essential that you continue to work steadily on your research project throughout the course of the year and between these supervision meetings. You will then ensure that you receive maximum benefit from your supervision meetings in the form of constructive feedback and advice.

- There are several sections that make up the Research Project. A series of target dates and individual supervision meetings will be identified in the handbook. These will help to help you keep on track with your research project. It is your responsibility to ensure that you come to your individual supervision meeting with your relevant draft chapters so that you can benefit from feedback on these chapters.

Responsibilities of the Student

- Responsibilities of the Student
 - 1. Consider the ethical implications of your work and submit the appropriate forms to the Supervisor and/or School's Research Ethics Committee (SREC).
 - 2. Write and submit the Research Proposal and Ethics form in a timely manner following an initial discussion with the supervisor.
 - 3. Gain a thorough understanding of relevant psychological theory and evidence, proposed methods and the intended analysis.

Responsibility of the Student.

- 4. Attend regular meetings and keep a note of contact and advice.
- 5. Adhere to the research project timetable and inform supervisor of any problems - the sooner, the better.
- 6. Ensure your written work follows APA style and is of a rigorous academic standard. This includes proof-reading your work for clarity, spelling, grammar and correct referencing.
- 7. Submit the research report on the specified date and time.

Responsibilities of the Supervisor

- Responsibilities of the Supervisor
- 1. Help the student refine the original research proposal. The emphasis must be on what is achievable. It may be at this stage that the supervisor believes the original research proposal unworkable. If so, students should redraft and come back to the supervisor.
- 2. Discuss approaches to the literature review, research design and choice of appropriate methods.
- 3. Discuss the plan of action and appropriate timescales.

Responsibilities of the Supervisor

- 4. Meet with the student at agreed times and keep a note of contact, issues discussed and deadlines agreed upon.
- 5. Discuss progress and advise the Module Co-ordinator and/or Head of School of any students causing concern.
- 6. Discuss research findings and advise on appropriate analysis.
- 7. Read and comment on draft chapters if presented in time at allocated supervision meetings.

Key Dates....

- DRAFT Submission of Proposal and Ethics form.
 - September 2024 (via Turnitin). Date TBC
- FINAL (ASSESSED) Submission of Proposal and also Ethics form (ahead of Research Ethics Panel Meeting).
 - October 2024 (via Turnitin). Date TBC
- FINAL SUBMISSION OF COMPLETED RESEARCH PROJECT (ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 2).
 - April 2025. Date TBC

Other dates....

- Draft Submission Recommendations....
- Draft Submission for Methodology Section.
 - End of December (before break of for Christmas)
- Draft Submission for Introduction Section.
 - End of January.
- Draft Submission for Results Section.
 - Beginning of March.
- Draft Submission for Discussion Section.
 - End of March.