

ECGE7001

Session 2

c.morgan@uwtsd.ac.uk

Schedule

03-Oct	Research Journeys: Mapping the Route • Introduction to Module • Overview of Assessments
10-Oct	Becoming a Researcher: Research Paradigms • Thinking and Being as a Researcher • Research Design
24-Oct	The Tools Along the Way • Qualitative Methods
7-Nov	More Tools Along the Way • Quantitative Methods
17 Nov (Sat)	Research Conference

Schedule

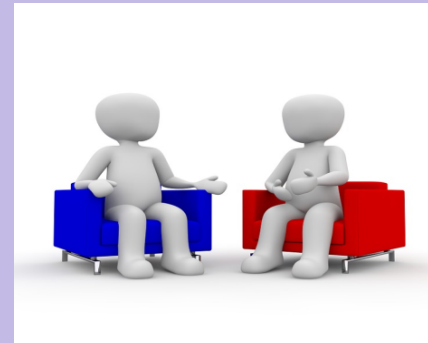
28-Nov	Doing it Right; Doing No Harm • Ethics in Educational Research
16 Jan	Telling the Story: Building arguments, not libraries • Reviewing the Literature • Critical skills • Notes and quotes • Writing at Level 7 + Tutorials
30 Jan	Content to be decided + Tutorials
06-Feb	~~Presentations???~~ Content to be decided + Tutorials
Submission Date	10th April, 2019



Assessment

- Assessment Component 1 – 50%
- Written Assignment (4300 words): Develop a Research Proposal
- Consider and critically evaluate a research paradigm and methodology suitable for your client group (e.g. with young children or children or young people or those excluded, or within wider community settings or educational contexts). Your research proposal should include:
 - the choice of focus and its potential impact on the student's own practice,
 - a rationale of the methodology to be adopted,
 - an example of an empirical data collection tool on a research area of your choice; include a consent form and letter of introduction, e.g. a questionnaire or a focus group schedule or an interview schedule or equivalent,
 - ethical considerations relating to your research.

Assessment



- **Assessment Component 2 – 50%**
- Oral presentation (25 minutes)
- Prepare and present a relevant ethics form based on the research paradigm explored in Assignment 1. You will discuss and justify your ethical decisions with the module tutor, making links to relevant ethical frameworks and supporting your points with appropriate academic sources.

What is Social Science research?

- <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-us/what-is-social-science/videos-what-is-social-science/>

Thinking of a research idea

- Starts with curiosity
 - Is something a case?
 - Why is that the case?
 - What are the consequences of doing something?
 - What's the angle?
- Can get ideas from personal experience: discussions, lectures, current events, observations

Refining your Research Question

The Research Process									
Phase	PHASE A			PHASE B			PHASE C		
Main task	DECIDING			PLANNING			CONDUCTING		
									
	WHAT			HOW			COLLECTING		
	Research questions to answer?			Gather evidence to answer the research questions.			The required information		
Operational steps/research journey	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Adapted from Kumar, 2014



The 5 Ws



What?
What is your
research?

When?
When are you going to
complete each stage?

Why?
Why do you want to do
the research?
(Consider the reason
you're conducting this
research!)

Who?
Who will be your
participants?

Where?
Where are you going to
conduct your research?



Spot the issues...



- *This research aims to find out what people think about television.*
 - This is broad and obscure. I would want to know what ‘people’ and what ‘television’?
 - What would be the purpose of this research? Who would want to know the results? No point in repeating research.

What is the educational value of children’s programming according to teachers?

- *I want to find out how many local residents are interested in a play scheme for children during the summer holiday.*
 - All local residents?
 - Only if they're 'interested'... or whether they would want to actually *use* it?
 - Would residents be happy to use the scheme if it was run? What is your interest in this?

My project is to do some research into autism, find out what people do when their relatives have it and what support they can get and how doctors deal with it.

- What do you think about the way this question has been written?
- What questions would you ask if you were supervising this student?

Operational Definitions

- An operational definition:
 - Must be valid for and specific to the research – it must be used to gather data to help you address your research question;
 - Is always context-specific, designed for each research project.

Matthew and Ross, 2010



Reflect on...

- Have you operationalised the concepts in your research question?
- Do your definitions enable you to get data that will answer your questions?
- Do your definitions help you to describe the concept in terms you can identify and measure?
- Will you be collecting data from or about the cases, people, situations you say you are?
- Are your definitions specific to the context and culture setting of your research?
- Are you sure you're getting the data you think you are getting?

Now consider **your** research...

What?

What is your research?

Why?

Why do you want to do the research?
(Consider the reason you're conducting this research!)

When?

When are you going to complete each stage?

Where?

Where are you going to conduct your research?

Who?

Who will be your participants?



Partner A: Explain the 5 Ws of your research to your partner.

Partner B: Challenge your partner on any words or ideas you are unsure about. What questions do you have about your partner's research?

Where do I begin?

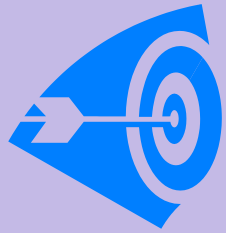
- **The Introduction:** sets the scene and outlines the case for the whole project
- Not a summary of the project
- Answers the questions:
 - Was this project worth doing? In other words, how well is the case made for research into this issue?
 - Have you thought seriously about the questions at the centre of the project – whether they are answerable?

What is the point of this research?

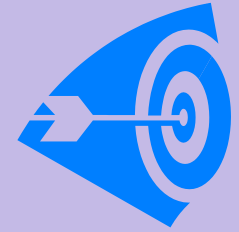
- Must communicate why this is a good topic to research
- What is the problem you are trying to solve?
- Most common mistake = not making clear what the issue, problem or dilemma is
- State **the BIS**
 - Background
 - Issue
 - Solution

Purpose of research

- Find something out for its own sake
- Evaluate something
- Find out if something works
- Improve your own or others' practice



Aims and Objectives



Aim: The overall driving force of the research – what is it that you want to find out?

Objectives: The means by which you intend to achieve the aim.
How will you find this out?

- To identify, describe, produce an analysis...
- This research seeks to determine...

Example

- Aim: To examine the relationship between academic achievement and the social environment.
- Objectives:
 - To find out the relationship, if any, between self-esteem and a pupil's academic achievement at school.
 - To ascertain the relationship between parental involvements in a pupil's studies and academic achievement at school.
 - To examine the links between a pupil's peer group and academic achievement.

Research Questions

- Many kinds of research questions that lead into different lines of inquiry and research
- Some questions are simple, and some are challenging to answer
- Four kinds of questions:
 - What's the situation ... ?
 - What's going on here ... ?
 - What happens when ... ?
 - What is related to what ... ?
- **Fieldwork:** the process of collecting data
- **Experiment:** a situation organised by you where you want to examine the influence of one phenomenon on another

Does your question demand a descriptive or explanatory answer?

- Questions that demand straightforwardly descriptive answers:
 - What are the principal means by which students at this university arrive on campus?
 - What are some of the main ways in which anti-MRSA measures are being ignored at Gotham General Hospital?
 - What are consumers' most trusted commercial websites?
- Questions that promise some kind of explanation are more complex:
 - What factors are determining students' choices concerning travel to campus?
 - Why has there been resistance to anti-MRSA measures being implemented in Gotham General Hospital?
 - Are there factors associated with consumers' trust of commercial websites?

Research Question or Hypothesis?

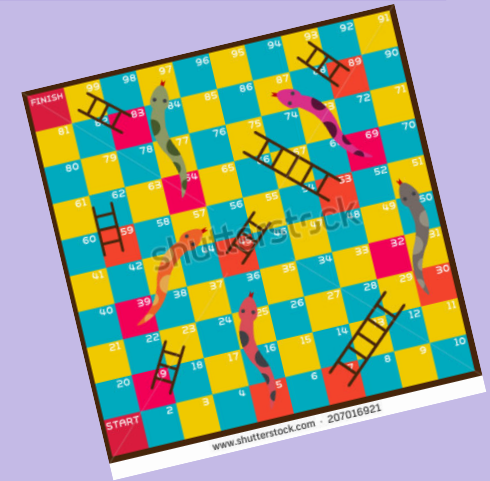
- Hypotheses = framed around 'what happens when ... ?' questions
- Expectation surrounding the hypothesis is that the hypothesis is precisely testable
- Hypotheses are problematic in social research because you cannot answer most of these questions definitively and precisely

Coming up with a question

- Think of the situation in which you are working or the subject you are studying. Is there something novel, perplexing or unusual about it?
- Think of a story in the media about education, the media, healthcare, probation, business or the field in which you are studying. Are there aspects of it that seem interesting or puzzling?
- Look at some websites, such as those of the big government departments. Find out what is topical. How could a project be geared around these topics?
- Brainstorm an A to Z list of topics. Any sparks?

Problems with Research Questions

- Common problems
 - They are too broad
 - There's no clear way to answer them
 - You can't get the information you need
- Ask yourself:
 - Is the question precise?
 - Is the research that will come from this question doable?
- **Prima facie questions:** the questions you start with and refine as your research progresses



Your Research Question

If one wants to solve a problem, one must generally know what the problem is. It can be said that a large part of the problem lies in knowing what one is trying to do.

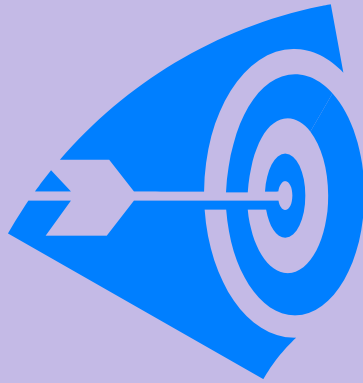
(Kerlinger, 1986)



Kinds of evidence and kinds of answers

- Strong, weak, circumstantial, primary, secondary
- **Empirical:** something that has been found out from experience, from trial and error or from the evidence of your senses
- Important to look for different sources of evidence (observation, documents, artefacts, testimony, experience, interviews)

Aims of Research



- To find new knowledge
- To be thorough
- To be balanced
- To be fair
- To be ethical

Task

- Complete the '**research design**' sheet.
- Be ready to explain your research design, including a **clear, complete and specific aim** (with objectives, if necessary).
- Consider whether, in light of discussions today, you need to refine your question. If yes, bring your **revised research statement** with you to your next tutorial.

References

- Dawson, C (2009) *Introduction to Research Methods*, Glasgow: Bell and Bain Ltd.
- Kumar, R (2014) *Research Methodology*, London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Thomas, G. (2017) *How to do your Research Project*, London: Sage.