

Educational Enquiry 2

Dr Pat McLaughlin

Credit Rating : 10 credits, SCQF Level 11

Rationale

This course will introduce students to the process required to design and implement a research project. Central to this process is the need to be able to develop appropriate research designs, identify research questions and suitable approaches to data collecting and analysis. Students will also develop an appreciation of the responsibilities associated with professional conduct in work of this nature and the conventions and recommendations that guide the presentation of a Masters dissertation. Whilst not all students will necessarily use this course to develop a proposal for their dissertation it is expected that all students completing postgraduate work should have an understanding of the research process and the opportunity to benefit from the potential transfer of the fundamental skills the process promotes.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

- specify a topic of enquiry suitable for the Dissertation and justify its theoretical and practical significance, professional relevance and practical feasibility
- identify and reflect critically on relevant and up-to-date literature, research reports and other scholarly and professional evidence, with specific reference to the research project
- develop a research design, including appropriate data collection and analysis, and to identify the implications of these choices for the status of the evidence and the findings
- critically examine the potential contribution and limitations of the proposal for theories and issues relevant to the practice and roles of relevant professionals
- demonstrate that the proposal conforms to appropriate ethical guidelines.

Mode of Delivery

The course will use a combination of seminars, guided reading, and supported self-study.

Assessment: Tasks and Contexts

Students should submit either a research proposal and timeline for a dissertation (2,000 words) or an assignment essay on Research Enquiry (2,000 words).

Some Recommended Readings

- Alvesson, M. and Skoldberg, K. (2000) Reflexive Methodology: new vistas for qualitative research, London: Sage.
- Ackroyd, S. and Hughes, J.A. (1983) Data Collection in Context, London: Longman.
- Bechhofer, F. and Paterson, L. (2000) Principles of Research Design in the Social Sciences, London: Routledge.
- Bernard, H. R. (2000) Social Research Methods, London: Sage.
- Berry, R. (2000) The Research Project (4th edition), London: Routledge Falmer.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (1996) How to Research, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Brown, S. (1990) Planning Small Scale Research, Edinburgh: Scottish Council for Research in Education.
- Bryman, A. (1988) Quantity and Quality in Social Research, London: Unwin Hyman.
- Burns, R. B. (2000) Introduction to Research Methods (4th edition), London: Sage.
- Chapman, M. (1986) Plain Figures, London: HMSO.
- Coghlan, D. & Brannick, T. (2000) Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization, London: Sage.
- Cohen and Mannion, L. and Morris, K. (2002) Research Methods in Education (5th edition) London: Routledge Falmer.
- Denscombe, M. (1998) The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research projects, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Delamont, S. (1992) Fieldwork in educational settings : methods, pitfalls and perspectives, London: Falmer Press
- Dillman, D. (1977) Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Method, New York: Wiley.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. & Lowe, S. (2001) Management Research: an introduction (2nd edition), London: Sage.
- Fairbairn, G. and Winch, C. (1991) Reading, Writing and Reasoning: A guide for students, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Fielding, J. and Gilbert, N. (2000) Understanding Social Statistics, London: Sage.
- Garrick, J. and Rhodes, C. (2000) Research and Knowledge at Work, London: Routledge.
- Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (1997) Research Method for Managers (Second Edition), London: Paul Chapman.
- Girden, E. R. (1996) Evaluating Research Articles From Start To Finish, London: Sage.
- Hakim, C. (1987) Research Design, London: Allen and Unwin.

- Hammersley, M. (1992) What's Wrong with Ethnography? London: Routledge.
- Hart, C. (1998) Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination, London: Sage.
- Howard, K. and Sharp, J. (1983) Management of a Student Research Project, London: Gower.
- Huff, D. (1973) How to Lie With Statistics, London: Pelican.
- Kumar, R. (1999) Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners, London: Sage.
- May, T. (1997) Social Research: issues, methods and process, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Moon, J. (2000) Reflection in Learning and Professional Development: Theory and Practice, London: Kogan Page.
- Punch, K. (2000) Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches, London: Sage.
- Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (eds) (2000) Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice, London: Sage.
- Robson, C. (1993) Real World Research: A source for social scientists and practitioner researchers, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Walliman, S. R. (2000) Your Research Project: A step-by-step guide for the first-time researcher, London: Sage.