

# Quantitative Research Methods

**Undergraduate study**



## **Introducing Bristol Q-Step: teaching data analysis for social science, research and the workplace.**

The University of Bristol Q-Step Centre is part of a national initiative to enhance quantitative skills training for undergraduate students in the social sciences, better equipping them for their degree, for research and for the workplace.

The British Academy, the UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences, has said that 'well-rounded graduates, equipped with core quantitative skills, are vital. Quantitative methods facilitate "blue skies" research and effective, evidence-based policy. Yet, the UK currently displays weak quantitative ability in the humanities and social sciences'. Q-Step is a response to this skills shortage.

## **Q-Step at Bristol**

The University of Bristol Q-Step Centre offers a choice between single honours degrees (Childhood Studies, Criminology, Geography, Politics, Social Policy and Sociology with Quantitative Research Methods), and stand-alone units that are open to other students in those disciplines.

Units currently include Convincing Stories? Numbers as Evidence in the Social Sciences; Principles of Quantitative Social Science; Segregation and Inequality in the UK (Measurement and Debate); and Conducting a Research Project using Secondary Data. These units will introduce you to ideas and concepts that are relevant to study in the social sciences and to quantitative methods, software and data analysis.

For students on our BSc/MSci courses, in year three we provide support to complete a research dissertation in an area of applied quantitative social science. For students choosing a master's-level (MSci) qualification, in year four we offer further training in more advanced quantitative methods, including longitudinal analysis, and mapping and programming in the open-source software R.

Our ethos is that quantitative research methods are not about learning maths; they are about learning how to apply analytical methods to questions of interest for the social sciences. Members of the Bristol Q-Step team have considerable expertise in teaching quantitative social science from introductory to postgraduate level. The School of Geographical Sciences is a world leader in quantitative human geography, and the School for Policy Studies hosts the internationally respected Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research.

The Director of Bristol Q-Step has written three well respected textbooks about quantitative methods (*Quantitative Geography: the Basics*; *Statistics for Geography and Environmental Science*; and *Geodemographics, GIS and Neighbourhood Targeting*) and was winner (with IBG) of the Royal Geographical Society's 2014 Taylor & Francis Award for excellence in the promotion and practice of teaching quantitative methods.

### Enhancing your employability

Graduating with the words 'with Quantitative Research Methods' in your degree title gives a clear signal to employers about the training you have received, enhancing your employability in many sectors such as policymaking, business and commerce, consultancy, and roles where the ability to produce and analyse data is crucial.

Our four-year integrated master's (MSci) degree is a particularly good opportunity if you wish to continue to postgraduate study or are looking to further enhance the attractiveness of your skills training to potential employers.

For those who do not wish to commit to our full degree courses, choosing our units in years one or two of your studies will provide valuable skills training in important areas of the quantitative social sciences. Choosing one or both of Convincing Stories or Segregation and Inequality in the UK in year one may allow you to transfer on to our full 'with Quantitative Research Methods' courses, but we encourage direct applications to the courses to ensure a place.

[bristol.ac.uk/ug-study](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug-study)

We are looking for students who are willing to approach quantitative methods with a critical and enquiring mind and a willingness to learn. Although familiarity with higher-level Mathematics may be helpful, those without A or AS-level Mathematics or equivalent should not be put off from applying to our degree courses. The level of maths required and taught should be accessible to a student with grade 4, 5 or 6 (B or C) in GCSE Mathematics. There are no formal mathematical prerequisites for students choosing just our year-one or year-two units.

### Further information

To find out more about Q-Step, visit [bristol.ac.uk/qstep](http://bristol.ac.uk/qstep) and [www.nuffieldfoundation.org/q-step](http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/q-step).

## Contact us

### Enquiries

**Tel** +44 (0)117 394 1649

**Email** [choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk)

If you need all or part of this publication in an alternative format please contact us:

**Tel** +44 (0)117 394 1649

**Email** [choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:choosebristol-ug@bristol.ac.uk)

This leaflet contains information for students planning to start university in autumn 2020. We have made every effort to ensure all details are correct at the time of going to press (May 2019). However, since this information is subject to change, you are advised to check the University's website, [bristol.ac.uk/ug-study](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug-study), for the latest updates.

### Photography

Dan Rowley  
© University of Bristol

