

SOCIM0012 Philosophy and Research Design in the Social Sciences

Teaching Block: 1

Weeks: 1-12

Unit Owner:	Dr Leonidas Tsilipakos	Level:	M/7
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Email:	l.tsilipakos@bristol.ac.uk	Prerequisites:	None
Office:	G.07 4 Priory Road	Curriculum area:	N/A
Unit owner office hours:	<p>Please check the SPAIS MSc Blackboard site for office hours.</p> <p>(Please note, there are no regular office hours during Reading Week)</p>		
Timetabled classes:			
<p>Please check your online timetable for day, time and venue of each seminar</p> <p>You are also expected to attend ONE seminar each week. Your online personal timetable will inform you to which group you have been allocated. Seminar groups are fixed: you are not allowed to change seminar groups without permission from the office.</p> <p>Weeks 6, 12, 18 and 24 are Reading Weeks; there is NO regular teaching in these weeks.</p> <p>In addition to timetabled sessions there is a requirement for private study, reading, revision and assessments. Reading the required readings in advance of each seminar is the <i>minimum</i> expectation. The University Guidelines state that one credit point is broadly equivalent to 10 hours of total student input.</p>			
Learning outcomes			
<p>Upon completion of this unit students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with standard guidelines for research design and some controversies surrounding these principles • Understand the key steps in formulating a research project. • Know how theory, concepts and measurement are related. • Be aware of the philosophical foundations of research design • Understand the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods, including common problems faced by researchers. • Be aware of the ethical considerations associated with sociological and political research. 			
Requirements for passing the unit:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory attendance at seminars • Completion of all formative work to an acceptable standard • Attainment of a composite mark of all summative work to a passing standard (50 or above) 			

Details of coursework and deadlines

Assessment:	Word count:	Weighting:	Deadline:	Day:	Week:
Formative – presentation	n/a	0%	To be decided in class		
Summative - essay	4,000 words	100%	9.30am 11 th January 2018	Thursday	AW1

- Summative essay questions will be made available on the SPAIS MSc Admin Blackboard site.
- Instructions for the submission of coursework will be emailed prior to the submission deadline.
- Assessment in the school is subject to strict penalties regarding late submission, plagiarism and maximum word count. See Appendix.
- Marking criteria can be found in the Appendix.

Unit description

This unit discusses central issues in sociological and political research. Key questions that will be addressed include: What are the philosophical foundations of research design? What kinds of claims can be made in sociological and political research? Is social science closely related to science and what is science like? Should social scientists be committed to emancipatory values and can those values be justified? How should research ethics be taken into account when designing a research project? On the whole, we will consider the advantages and disadvantages of different methodological approaches by looking at examples of empirical research.

Teaching arrangements

There are ten seminars in the unit (Weeks 1-5 and 7-11). **Seminar Discussion:** Each seminar will examine a specific topic. Everyone is expected to take part in discussions, which will be based on thorough knowledge of the Core reading, as well as some additional reading. You will be asked to respond to issues raised by the readings and in the seminar presentations. Your participation in seminars is a crucial part of your own and others' learning, and is an important transferable skill. It is **essential** that you complete the Core reading before class and that you bring a copy along in order to participate fully in seminar discussion.

Requirements for credit points

For credit points to be awarded for this unit, you must complete all required work (the presentation and the essay) to at least a passing standard (a mark of 50) and have no more than two non-excused seminar absences.

Summative assessment

The essay assignment for this unit is summative, that is, it decides the final mark for this unit. In contrast, the presentation is formative, that is, it does not count towards the final mark for the unit but instead is aimed at, among other things, assisting you in preparing for the summative assessment. The summative assessment is an analytical essay, in which students will apply the material from the unit. A list of questions will be circulated to the students enrolled in the unit.

Essays must be written and correctly referenced according to the SPAIS Guidelines. Full details about all requirements and rules regarding assessed essays – including formatting, submission, pass marks, extensions, feedback, resubmissions, and so on – are in the SPAIS Graduate Studies handbook.

Details of coursework and deadlines

See 'Summative Assessment' above. The Graduate Studies Administrator will circulate detailed information on how to submit your work before each hand-in date. Only electronic submission is accepted.

Objectives

- To discuss key principles of sociological and political research and research design.
- To discuss some controversies surrounding the principles of research design and causality.
- To discuss some philosophical foundations of research design.

- To discuss the core elements of a research project, such as theory, variables, concepts and measurement.
- To discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different research strategies and methods.
- To examine actual examples of sociological and political research and critique these research designs
- To discuss key principles of research ethics

Transferable skills

During this unit you will develop your transferable skills in group work, seminar presentations, group discussions and writing assignments.

Development and feedback

The essay will develop your scholarly understanding of issues and perspectives in the philosophy of social science and your ability to write in a scholarly way about these matters. The seminar presentation will develop your scholarly understanding of issues and perspectives regarding comparative methodology and your ability to deliver a scholarly seminar presentation about this material.

You will receive written feedback on separate forms all of these aspects of your work with a view to assisting you in developing your abilities in these areas. The seminar presentation feedback will be emailed to you by your seminar tutor within two weeks of your presentation. The feedback on your essay will be returned via Blackboard.

Mid-unit evaluations

Each unit will provide a mid-unit evaluation on Blackboard. Students will be asked to complete a short survey to indicate how they feel the course is going so far. We appreciate your feedback and encourage you to complete this survey.

Surveys will be open in week 5 (Teaching Block 1) and 17 (Teaching Block 2).

Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment

SPAIS encourages the use of this package for all of its units. Course material is posted on this website including a number of unpublished papers that cannot be located elsewhere. There are useful links to electronic sources. Announcements and email messages will also come through this route. It is essential that you register to use this learning tool. You may log in and generate a password at:
< <https://www.ole.bris.ac.uk/> >.

Core and Supplementary Reading

The readings include book chapters and journal articles. All the Core readings are available electronically - via E-Reserves or the E-Journals and E-Books held by the library. Most of the journal articles are available through E-Journals, which can be accessed on library's webpage:
<http://www.bris.ac.uk/is/library/electronicjournals/>

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BRING A COPY OF THE CORE READING WITH YOU TO THE SEMINAR

The supplementary readings, which contain useful material for essays and in-depth study of specific topics, are available either electronically (denoted by (E-)) or on short loan in the Arts and Social Sciences library.

General background reading

Philosophy of Social Science textbooks:

Hughes, J. A. & Sharrock, W. W. (1997). *The philosophy of social research*. Longman
 Ryan, A. (1970). *The philosophy of the social sciences*. Macmillan
 Risjord, M. (2014). *Philosophy of social science: A contemporary introduction*. Routledge
 Martin Hollis (2002), *The philosophy of social science: An Introduction*. Revised. Cambridge University
 Martin, M., & McIntyre, L. C. (Eds.). (1994). *Readings in the philosophy of social science*. Mit Press.

Research Design and Methods textbooks:

Blaikie, N. (2009). *Designing social research*. Polity.

Donatella Della Porta and Michael Keating (eds.) (2008), *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Alan Bryman (2015), *Social Research Methods*, 5th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Some useful websites

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <https://plato.stanford.edu/>

Consortium on Qualitative Research Methods <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/programs/cqrm/>

The Society for Political Methodology (mostly quantitative) <http://polmeth.wustl.edu/>

Oral Presentation

In preparing your presentation, you should bear in mind the following points:

1. The presentation topics will be allocated in the first seminar.
2. Each presentation should focus on a critique a freely chosen research article.
3. You should briefly summarise the research design and core arguments and then turn to an assessment of the approach/methodology adopted in the article.
4. You should relate the article to the theoretical and conceptual material covered in that seminar.
5. You should focus on the delivery of the presentation as well as the intellectual content
6. You should make use of the facilities available (PowerPoint, whiteboard, etc)
7. The presentation should be accompanied by a word-processed handout on one side of A4
8. The handout should include a brief bibliography

Seminar overview

Week 1: Introduction: philosophy of social science and research design

Part I: What does it take to become a science?

Week 2. Positivism and logical empiricism

Week 3. Post-empiricist philosophy of science

Week 4. What is science really like?

Part II: The interpretative alternatives

Week 5. Social science and interpretation

Week 6. Reading Week –No seminars–

Week 7. There is no such thing as a social science

Part III: Programmes of emancipation

Week 8. Critical theory

Week 9. Feminist epistemology

Part IV: Values, objectivity and ethics

Week 10. Values and objectivity

Week 11. Ethics and research

Week 12. Reading Week –No seminars–

WEEK 1: Introduction: philosophy of social science and research design

In the first seminar we will deal with introductions and housekeeping issues. We will also go over the organising threads of this unit and discuss the relationship between philosophy, methodology, research design and methods in social science research.

Core reading: (E-Reading List) Hughes, J.A. and Sharrock, W.W. (1997) The philosophy of social research (Chapter 1), in *The philosophy of social research*, Third edition. London: Longman. pp. 1-23.

Supplementary reading:

- Gunnell, J. G. (1998). *The orders of discourse: philosophy, social science, and politics*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Martin, J. L. (2011). *The explanation of social action*. OUP USA.
- Kaufmann, F. (1944). *Methodology of the social sciences*. Oxford University Press; London.
- Sayer, A. (2010). *Method in social science: revised 2nd edition*. Routledge.
- Anderson, R. J., Hughes, J. A., & Sharrock, W. W. (1985). *The sociology game: an introduction to sociological reasoning*. Longman Publishing Group.
- Ted Benton and Ian Craib (2011), *Philosophy of Social Science*, 2nd edition, Basingstoke: Macmillan
- Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier (eds.) (2008), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, esp. ch. 3
- Peter Burnham, Karin Gilland Lutz, Wyn Grant and Zig Layton-Henry (2008), *Research Methods in Politics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, ch. 13
- Colin Hay (2006), "Political Ontology", in Robert E. Goodin and Charles Tilly (eds), *The Oxford handbook of contextual political analysis*, Oxford : Oxford University Press
- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba (1994), *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Princeton: Princeton University Press , ch. 1, 2.1-2.3 (pp. 3-50)
- Dietrich Rueschemeyer (2009), *Usable Theory: Analytic Tools for Social and Political Research*, Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Garfinkel, A. (1981). *Forms of explanation: Rethinking the questions in social theory*
- Robert K. Merton (1949), "On Sociological Theories of the Middle Range", from Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, New York: Simon & Schuster
- Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks: SAGE (13)
- Kenneth Waltz (1979), *A Theory of International Relations*, Reading: Addison-Wesley, pp. 1-17 (17)
- Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1994), "Grounded Theory Methodology: An Overview", in: Norman K. Norman Fairclough (2010), *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, 2nd edition, Harlow : Longman
- (E-Journals) Jonathan Grix (2002), "Introducing Students to the Generic Terminology of Social Research", *Politics*, 22: 3, 175-186 (12)
- (E-Journals) Michael Coppedge (1999), "Thickening Thin Concepts and Theories: Combining Large N and Small in Comparative Politics", *Comparative Politics*, 31: 4, pp. 465-476 (12)
- Jan Kubik (2009), "Ethnography of Politics: Foundations, Applications, Prospects", in Edward Schatz (ed.), *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 25-52 (28)
- (E-Journals) Iver B. Neumann (2005) "To Be a Diplomat", *International Studies Perspectives*, 6: 1, 72–93 (22)
- (E-Journals) Eldad Davidov, Bart Meuleman, Jan Ciecuch, Peter Schmidt and Jaak Billiet (2014), "Measurement Equivalence in Cross-National Research", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40: 55-75
- (E-Journals) David Freedman (1991), "Statistical Models and Shoe Leather", *Sociological Methodology*, 21, 291-313 (23)
- (E-Journals) Robert W. Jackman (1985), "Cross-National Statistical Research and the Study of Comparative Politics", *American Journal of Political Science*, 29: 1, 161-182 (22)
- (E-Journals) Gary King (1986), "How Not to Lie with Statistics: Avoiding Common Mistakes in Quantitative Political Science", *American Journal of Political Science*, 30: 3, 666-687
- (E-Journals) Gary King (1991), "On Political Methodology", *Political Analysis*, 2, 1-30 (30)
- (E-Journals) Patrick Baert, 'Pragmatism as a Philosophy of the Social Sciences', *European Journal of Social Theory* 7 (3) 2004, pp.355-69.
- (E-Journals) Victoria E. Bonnell (1980), "The Uses of Theory, Concepts and Comparison in Historical Sociology", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 22: 2, 156-173
- Hacker, P. M. S. (2011). *Human nature: The categorial framework*. John Wiley & Sons.

WEEK 2: Positivism and logical empiricism

The fact that science has succeeded in an unprecedented way in explaining all sorts of phenomena in the natural world has been understood by positivists as furnishing the social sciences with a methodological exemplar all knowledge seeking activities (and, thus, they too) should adopt in order to achieve genuine scientific status. But what does this exemplar involve? Logical empiricists hold that science is based on universal laws and empirical observations which via close logical reasoning lead to explanation, prediction and the verification of theories.

Core reading: (E-Reading List) Hahn, Hans, Otto Neurath, and Rudolf Carnap. "The scientific conception of the world: The Vienna Circle." (1929), in Neurath, M., & Cohen, R. S. (Eds.). (1973). *Empiricism and sociology* (Vol. 1). Dordrecht.

Supplementary reading:

Ayer, A. J. (Ed.). (1966). *Logical positivism*. Simon and Schuster.

(E-Journals) Hempel, C. G. (1942) 'The Function of General Laws in History'. *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 39: 22-42

(E-Journals) Hempel, C. G., & Oppenheim, P. (1948). 'Studies in the Logic of Explanation'. *Philosophy of science*, 15(2), 135-175.

Nagel, E. (1981). *The structure of science: Problems in the logic of scientific explanation*.

Durkheim, E. (1982) *The Rules of Sociological Method and Selected Texts on Sociology and Its Method* (with an Introduction by Steven Lukes), Basingstoke: Macmillan

Durkheim, E. (1897). *Suicide: a study in sociology*. Various editions.

Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1955). *The language of social research: a reader in the methodology of social research*. Free Press

Halfpenny, P. (1982) *Positivism and Sociology: Explaining Social Life*, London: George Allen and Unwin.

Mill, J. S. (1893). *A system of logic, ratiocinative and inductive: Being a connected view of the principles of evidence and the methods of scientific investigation*. Harper & brothers.

Ryan, A. (1970) *The philosophy of John Stuart Mill*. London. Macmillan

Von Wright, Georg Henrik (1971) *Explanation and Understanding*, London: Routledge.

Milton Friedman (1953), "The Methodology of Positive Economics", in *Essays in Positive Economics*, London: University of Chicago Press (HB34 FRI)

WEEK 3: Post-empiricist philosophy of science

Post-empiricist philosophers of science (Popper, Kuhn, Lakatos, Feyerabend) have questioned the accuracy of the picture logical empiricists have painted of science. Contrary to the logical empiricist model of science that emphasises verification, Popper contends that only falsification is logically conclusive and that falsifiability demarcates science from non-scientific pursuits. Accordingly, Popper's image of scientific progress consists in the replacement of a refuted theory by a new one. Kuhn, on the other hand, questions the view that a scientific theory can be refuted *in toto* and presents scientific progress as akin to political revolutions. For Kuhn, the decision as to whether to give up or hold onto a scientific scheme is a decision for scientists and there is no external (philosophical) standard for deciding whether a change of scheme is rational.

Core reading: (E-Book) Thomas Kuhn (1970) 'Logic of discovery or psychology of research?' In Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (Eds.) (1970). *Criticism and the growth of knowledge*, pp. 1-23. Available at: https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/AEEDF747C8822D4F5A053BBD4B4890BC/9781139171434c1_p1-24_CBO.pdf/logic_of_discovery_or_psychology_of_research.pdf

Supplementary reading:

Thomas Kuhn (1996), *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press (Q175 KUH)

Fleck, L. (1979) *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (University of Chicago Press).

Imre Lakatos (1978), *The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes*, Cambridge: Cambridge

Popper, K.R. (1957) 'Philosophy of science: a personal report', in Mace, C.A. (ed.) *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century.*, pp. 153 -191. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Popper, K.R. (1959[1935]) *The logic of scientific discovery*. New York: Basic Books.

Popper, K. R. (2002). *The poverty of historicism*. Psychology Press.

Popper, K., & Popper, K. S. (2012). *The open society and its enemies*. Routledge.

Kuhn, T.S. (1996[1962]) *The structure of scientific revolutions*, 3rd edition. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Sharrock, W. and Read, R. (2002) *Kuhn: Philosopher of Scientific Revolutions*. Polity Press.

Hacking, Ian (1983). *Representing and intervening: Introductory topics in the philosophy of natural science*. Cambridge University Press,

Harré, Rom. (1970). *The principles of scientific thinking*. London: Macmillan.

Harré, Rom. (1972). *The philosophies of science*. Oxford University Press.

Paul Feyerabend (1988), *Against Method*, revised edition, London: Verso (any earlier edition is fine too)

Barbara Geddes (2003), *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press (JA86 GED)

WEEK 4: What is science really like?

Post-empiricist work on science has inevitably led to the question of whether we have operated based on an accurate account of what science is like; there have since been numerous historical, sociological and ethnographic studies of scientific practice. In this week's seminar we will try to explore this question by focusing on the commentary eminent theoretical physicist Richard Feynman provides on his life and work and, further, on a lucid exposition of what counts as a discovery in physics featuring numerous insights that facilitate fruitful and accurate comparison to the social sciences.

Core reading: (E-Reading List) Toulmin, S. (1953) Discovery (Chapter 2), in *The philosophy of science*. London: Hutchinson. pp. 16-50

Core viewing: BBC Horizon Documentary on Richard Feynman "The pleasure of finding things out" <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x24gwgq>

Supplementary reading:

Baldamus, W. (1974) 'The role of discoveries in social science', in Shanin, T (ed.) *The rules of the game. Cross-disciplinary essays on models in scholarly thought*.

Hanson, N.R. (1958) *Patterns of Discovery: An Inquiry into the Conceptual Foundations of Science*. Cambridge University Press.

(E-Journals) Dupré, J. (1983). The disunity of science. *Mind*, 92(367), 321-346.

(E-Journals) Kuhn, T. S. (1961). The function of measurement in physical science. *Isis*, 52(2), 161-193.

Chalmers, A. F. (1999). *What is this thing called science?*. Hackett Publishing.

Lynch, M. (1985) *Art and Artifact in Laboratory Science* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).

Lynch, M. (1997). *Scientific practice and ordinary action: Ethnomethodology and social studies of science*. Cambridge University Press.

Sormani, P. (2014). *Respecifying lab ethnography: An ethnomethodological study of experimental physics*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd..

Latour, B. and Woolgar, S. (1986), *Laboratory life: The construction of scientific facts*, Princeton, N.J : Princeton University Press

Bloor, D. (2011). *The enigma of the aerofoil: rival theories in aerodynamics, 1909-1930*. University of Chicago Press.

Shapin, S., & Schaffer, S. (1985). *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* Princeton University Press.

WEEK 5: Social science and interpretation

So far we have been presupposing that the social sciences should model themselves after the natural sciences and we have sought to explore different accounts of what the natural sciences are like with a view to ascertaining which ones are actually accurate. Interpretivists, however, reject the assumption that social science should take after natural science and argue that understanding mind, culture or meaning is unlike understanding matter or natural phenomena. The fact, then, that the subject matter the social sciences have chosen is distinctive calls for the use of an appropriate set of methods.

Core reading: (E-Journals) Charles Taylor (1971), "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man", *Review of Metaphysics*, 25: 1, 3-51

Supplementary reading:

- Weber, M. "The fundamental concepts of sociology", in (2009). *The theory of social and economic organization* (Translated by A.M. Henderson and T. Parsons.). Simon and Schuster.
- Collingwood, R.G., and Willem J. van der Dussen. *The idea of history*. Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Collingwood, R. G. 'Human Nature and Human History' in Martyn, M. & LC. McIntyre (1994) *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- (E-Journals) Alfred Schütz (1953) Common-sense and scientific interpretation of human action. *Philosophy and phenomenological research* 14(1), 1-38
- (E-Journals) Alfred Schütz (1954) Concept and theory formation in the social sciences. *Journal of Philosophy* 51(9) 257-273.
- Alfred Schütz (1967) *The Phenomenology of the Social World* (Translated by G. Walsh and F. Lehnert and with an Introduction by G. Walsh), Chicago: Northwestern University Press.
- Dray, W. (1957) *Laws and Explanation in History* Oxford: Oxford University
- (E-Journals) Dilthey, Wilhelm (1972[1900] The rise of hermeneutics. *New Literary History* 3(2), 229-244.
- (E-Journals) Windelband, W. (1998). History and natural science. *Theory & Psychology*, 8(1), 5-22.
- (E-Journals) Walsh, W. H. (1942). The intelligibility of history. *Philosophy*, 17(66), 128-143.
- Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Bernstein, J., *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics and Praxis*
- Clifford Geertz (1973), "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, NY: Basic Books, pp. 3-32 (30)
- (E-Journals) Ronald Dworkin (1982), "Law as Interpretation", *Critical Inquiry*, 9: 1, 179-200 (22)
- Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: Allen Lane (later editions also available)
- Kenneth J. Gergen (1999), *An Invitation to Social Construction*, London: SAGE
- (E-Journals) Emanuel Adler (1997), "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics", *European Journal of International Relations*, 3: 3, 319-363
- (E-Journals) Phil Brown (1995), "Naming and Framing: The Social Construction of Diagnosis and Illness", *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 35, 34-52
- (E-Journals) Chris Clarke (2009), "Paths between Positivism and Interpretivism: An Appraisal of Hay's Via Media", *Politics*, 29: 1, 28–36.
- (E-Journals) John Gerring (ed.) (2003), "Symposium on Interpretivism", *Qualitative Methods*, 1: 2, 2-28, available at: <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedFiles/moynihan/cqrm/Newsletter1.2.pdf>
- Ted Hopf (1998), "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory", *International Security*, 23: 1, 171-200 (30)
- Alexander Wendt (1992), "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics", *International Organization*, 46: 2, 391-425

WEEK 6: Reading Week – No seminars –

WEEK 7: There is no such thing as a social science

Drawing on Ludwig Wittgenstein's later work (*Philosophical Investigations*), Peter Winch explores what 'understanding social action' might consist of. He argues that social life is constituted by and is to be understood in terms of its indigenous concepts. These concepts do not establish external-causal relations but rather internal-logical ones which are understood when one correctly grasps and applies rules. We focus on Winch's arguments on whether observational-experimental criteria form an appropriate basis from which to approach the study of society and on how to do justice to the forms of rationality that various activities exhibit.

Core reading: (E-Book) Winch, Peter (1958) 'The mind and society' ch.4 in *The idea of a social science and its relation to philosophy*.

Supplementary reading:

- (E-Book) Winch, P. (1990) *The idea of a social science and its relation to philosophy*, 2nd edition. Routledge.
- (E-Journals) Winch, P. (1964). Understanding a primitive society. *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 1(4), 307-324.
- Winch, P. (1972). *Ethics and action*. Routledge.
- Winch, P. (1987). *Trying to make sense*. Basil Blackwell.

- (E-Journals) Winch, P. (1997). Can we understand ourselves? *Philosophical investigations*, 20(3), 193-204.
- (E-Journals) Hertzberg, L. (1980). Winch on social interpretation. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 10(2), 151-171.
- Lyas, C. (2014). *Peter Winch*. Routledge.
- Wilson, B (ed.) (1973). *Rationality*. John Wiley & Sons
- Hutchinson, P., Read, R. & Sharrock, W. (2008). *There is no such thing as a social science: in defence of Peter Winch*. Ashgate.
- Hammersley, M. (2017) Is there such a thing as social science evidence? On a Winchian critique. *Ethnographic Studies* 14. <https://zenodo.org/record/823047#.WWNx28mIBaQ>
- Tsilipakos, L. (2015). *Clarity and Confusion in Social Theory: Taking Concepts Seriously*. Ashgate.
- Louch, A. R. (1966). *Explanation and human action* (Vol. 17). Univ of California Press.

WEEK 8: Critical theory

Like interpretivists, critical theorists are not convinced that social science should try to model itself after natural science but they provide a wholly different rationale as a basis to that conclusion. Drawing on Marxist and Freudian traditions, the Frankfurt School advocate politically-committed enquiry. The aim of critical theory is to emancipate through ideology critique, which predominantly consists in pointing out contradictions between ideas and values and the realities of social life.

Core reading: (E-Reading List) Adorno, Theodor 'Sociology and Empirical Research', in Theodor W. Adorno et al. (1976) *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*, London: Heinemann. pp. 68-86

Supplementary reading:

- Max Horkheimer (1982) 'Traditional and Critical Theory'. In *Critical Theory. Selected Essays*. New York: Continuum.
- Theodor W. Adorno et al. (1976) *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*, London: Heinemann.
- (E-Journals) David Frisby (1972) 'The Popper-Adorno Controversy: The Methodological Dispute in German Sociology' in *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 2, pp. 105-19.
- (E-Journals) Ryan Drake (2000) 'Objectivity and Insecurity: Adorno and Empirical Research' in *Philosophy Today*, 44(2), pp. 99-107.
- Geuss, R. (1981). *The idea of a critical theory: Habermas and the Frankfurt School*. Cambridge University Press.
- Jürgen Habermas (1978) *Knowledge and Human Interests. Second Edition*. London: Heinemann.
- Seyla Benhabib (1986), *Critique, norm, and utopia: a study of the foundations of critical theory*, New York: Columbia University Press
- Raymond Morrow (1994) *Critical Theory and Methodology*, London: Sage,
- Held, D. (1980). *Introduction to critical theory: Horkheimer to Habermas* (Vol. 261). Univ of California Press.
- Jay, M. (1996). *The dialectical imagination: A history of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950* (Vol. 10). Univ of California Press.
- Benton, T., & Craib, I. (2010). *Philosophy of social science: The philosophical foundations of social thought*. Palgrave Macmillan. (Chapter 7 – 'Critical rationality')
- Simon Malpas and Paul Wake (2006), *The Routledge Companion to Critical Theory*, London: Routledge
- Robert Cox (1983), "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method", *Millennium*, 12: 2, 162-175
- (E-Journals) Ben Agger (1991), "Critical Theory, Poststructuralism, Postmodernism: Their Sociological Relevance", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 17, 105-131 (26)
- (E-Reserves) Robert W. Cox (1995), "Critical Political Economy", in Bjorn Hettne (ed.) (1995), *International Political Economy: Understanding Global Disorder*, London: Zed Books (15)
- Jürgen Habermas, 'Epistemology and Methodology', in Outhwaite, W. (ed), *The Habermas Reader*, Cambridge: Polity Press 1996, pp.96-111.
- John M. Finnis (1985), 'On "The Critical Legal Studies Movement"', *American Journal of Jurisprudence*, 30: 21-42, available at: http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/law_faculty_scholarship/847/
- (E-Journals) J. Paul Oetken (1991), "Form and Substance in Critical Legal Studies", *Yale Law Journal*, 100: 7, 2209-2228 (20)
- Pleasants, N., (2002) *Wittgenstein and the idea of a critical social theory: a critique of Giddens, Habermas and Bhaskar*. Routledge

WEEK 9: Feminist epistemology

Feminists have argued that methodological principles in social science have been defined in terms of masculine values. While for some the solution to this problem is to correct bad science – by, for example, including women in existing frameworks – others have argued that androcentrism is not so easily undone. Instead of starting from dominant androcentric models, standpoint epistemologists propose that there are important resources for the production of knowledge to be found in starting off research projects from issues arising in women's lives.

Core reading: (E-Journals) Sandra Harding (2004) "A Socially Relevant Philosophy of Science? Resources from Standpoint Theory's Controversiality", *Hypatia*, 19: 1, 25–47 (23)

Supplementary reading:

Sandra Harding and M. Hintikka (eds) (1983) *Discovering Reality*, Dordrecht, Boston and London: Reidel.

Dorothy Smith: 'Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology', pp. 84-96.

Jane Flax: 'Political Philosophy and the Patriarchal Unconscious...', pp. 245-81.

Nancy Hartsock: 'The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism', pp. 283-303

Sandra Harding (1986) *The Science Question in Feminism*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Sandra Harding (1987) *Feminism and Methodology*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Sandra Harding (1991) *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives*. Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

(E-Journals) Sandra Harding (1993), "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is Strong Objectivity?", in Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter (eds.), *Feminist Epistemologies*, London: Routledge

(E-Journals) Sandra Harding (1992), "After the Neutrality Ideal: Science, Politics, and "Strong Objectivity"", *Social Research*, 59: 3, 567-587 (21)

Sandra Harding (ed.) (2004), *The feminist standpoint theory reader: intellectual and political controversies*, London: Routledge

(E-Journals) Susan Hekman, 'Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 22 (2) 1997, with critical comments by Patricia Hill Collins, Sandra Harding, and Dorothy E. Smith, pp.341-65 & 375-98

Donna Haraway (1991) *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, New York and London: Routledge.

Patricia Hill-Collins (1991) *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*, London and New York: Routledge. Chapters 1, 2, 10 and 11.

bell hooks (1990) *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*, Boston: South End Press.

Dorothy Smith (1987) *The Everyday World As Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Rosenberg, Alexander (2008) 'Shall we commit a social science', in his *Philosophy of Social Science*

Wylie, Alison (1994) Reasoning about Ourselves: Feminist Methodology in the Social Sciences, ch.39 in Martin and McIntyre, *Readings in the philosophy of social science*.

(E-Journals) Walby, S. (2001). 'Against Epistemological Chasms: The Science Question in Feminism Revisited', *SIGNS* 26(2): 485–510.

(E-Journals) Kathy Davis (2008), 'Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful', *Feminist Theory*, 9: 1, 67-85 (19)

(E-Journals) Suzanne Bergeron (2001), "Political Economy Discourses of Globalization and Feminist Politics", *Signs*, 26: 4, 983-1006 (24)

(E-Journals) Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix (2004). 'Ain't I A Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality', *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 5(3), 75-86. Available at: <http://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol5/iss3/8>

Ian Hacking (1999), *The social construction of what?*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press

(E-Journals) John Holmwood (1995), "Feminism and Epistemology", *Sociology*, 29: 3, 411-428

(E-Journals) Gregor McLennan (1995), "Feminism, Epistemology and Postmodernism: Reflections on Current Ambivalence", *Sociology*, 29: 3, 391-409

(E-Journals) Gayatri Spivak (1978), "Feminism and Critical Theory", *Women's Studies International Quarterly*, 1: 3, 241–246

Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1993), *Breaking out again: feminist ontology and epistemology*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge,

Harding, S., 'Is Science Multicultural?' in Goldberg, D.T., *Multiculturalism*

Hesse, B. (ed) *Un/settled Multiculturalisms*

Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Joao Arriscado Nunes, Maria Paula Meneses, 'Introduction', *Another Knowledge is Possible: beyond Northern epistemologies*, London: Verso 2007, pp.ix-lxii.

Bobby S. Sayyid, 'Islamism and the limits of the Invisible Empire', in *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the emergence of Islamism*, London: Zed Books 1997, pp.127-54.

(E-Journals) Bhabra, G.K., 'Sociology and postcolonialism: another "missing revolution"?' *Sociology* 41(5) 2007: 871-84.

WEEK 10: Values and objectivity

This week we will scrutinise a host of issues emancipatory programmes have chosen to answer one way; but there are counterarguments too: Is science value free? Are social scientists committed to values and of what kind? Should they be? Is there such a thing as objectivity? These are only some of the pressing questions we will ask.

Core reading: (E-Reading List) Weber, M., "Objectivity" in Social Science and social Policy, Chapter 34 in Martin and McIntyre, *Readings in the philosophy of social science*.

Supplementary reading:

Weber, M., "Objectivity" in Social Science and social Policy (1949). Shils, Edward, & Finch, Henry A. *The methodology of the social sciences / Max Weber ; translated and edited by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch ; with a foreword by Edward A. Shils*. New York ; Glencoe, Ill: Free Press.

(E-Journals) Becker, H. (1967) 'Whose side are we on?' *Social Problems*, 14, pp. 239-247

Gouldner, V. (1975) 'The Sociologist as Partisan: Sociology and the Welfare State' (chapter 2), in *For Sociology: Renewal and Critique in Sociology Today*

Fish, S. (2012). *Save the world on your own time*. Oxford University Press.

Hollis, M. (2002) 'A value neutral social science', chapter in his *The philosophy of social science*.

Risjord, M. (2014). 'Objectivity, Values and the Possibility of a Social Science, in his *Philosophy of social science: A contemporary introduction*. Routledge.

Kaufmann, F. (1944). Value Problems in the Social Sciences, in *Methodology of the social sciences*. Oxford University Press; London.

Martyn Hammersley (1995), *The Politics of Social Research*, Thousand Oaks: SAGE

Hammersley, M. (2000). *Taking sides in social research: Essays on partisanship and bias*. Psychology Press.

(E-Journals) Hammersley, M., 'Why Critical Realism Fails to Justify Critical Social Research', *Methodological Innovations Online*, 4(2), 2009, pp. 1-11

Taylor, C. (1967). Neutrality in political science. *Philosophy, politics and society*, 3, 25-57.

Louch, A. R. (1966). *Explanation and human action* (Vol. 17). Univ of California Press.

Flyvbjerg, Bent. *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge university press, 2001.

Nagel, "The Value-Oriented Bias of Social Inquiry", Ch. 36 in Martin and McIntyre, *Readings in the philosophy of social science*.

(E-Journals)Burawoy, M. (2005). For public sociology. *American sociological review*, 70(1), 4-28.

(E-Journals)Tittle, C. R. (2004). The arrogance of public sociology. *Social Forces*, 82(4), 1639-1643.

WEEK 11: Research and ethics

In the final week of this unit we are concerned with what kinds of ethical considerations the conduct of sociological and political research raises. We will ask how they should be addressed and also deal with the issue of whether social science itself provides a good basis from which to understand such considerations.

Core reading: (E-Reading List) Gaita, R. (2004). 'Moral Understanding' *Good and evil: An absolute conception*. Routledge, pp.264-282

(E-Source) British Sociological Association (2017), *Statement of Ethical Practice*, available at https://www.britisoc.co.uk/media/24310/bsa_statement_of_ethical_practice.pdf

Supplementary reading:

(E-Journals) ESRC, *Framework for Research Ethics*, available at:

http://www.esrc.ac.uk/_images/Framework_for_Research_Ethics_tcm8-4586.pdf
(E-Journals) American Anthropological Association, Code of Ethics, available at:
<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>
(E-Journals) American Political Science Association, *Ethics in Political Science*, available at:
http://www.apsanet.org/content_9350.cfm

Cook, J. (1978). "Cultural relativism as an ethnocentric notion". In Beehler, R., & Drengson, A. R. (1978). *The philosophy of society*.

Williams, B. (2011). 'Knowledge, Science, Convergence', *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*. Taylor & Francis.

Morgan, M. (2016). *Pragmatic Humanism: On the Nature and Value of Sociological Knowledge*. Routledge. (especially 'The poverty of moral philosophy and the strength of sociological 'ethics',)

Sayer, A. (2011). *Why things matter to people: Social science, values and ethical life*. Cambridge University Press.

Beauchamp, T. L. (1982). *Ethical issues in social science research*. John Hopkins.

(E-Journals) Enzo Nussio (2011), "How ex-combatants talk about personal security. Narratives of former paramilitaries in Colombia", *Conflict, Security & Development*, 11: 5, 579-606

(E-Journals) Ruth Pinder (1995), "Bringing back the body without the blame? The experience of ill and disabled people at work", *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 17: 5, 605-631

(E-Journals) Rachel Aldred (2008), "Ethical and Political Issues in Contemporary Research Relationships", *Sociology*, 42: 5, 887-903

(E-Journals) Renée R. Anspach and Nissim Mizrahi (2006), "The field worker's fields: ethics, ethnography and medical sociology", *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 28: 6, 713–731

Tim May (2001), *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*, 3rd edition, Buckingham: Open University Press

Tim May with Beth Perry (2010), *Social Research and Reflexivity*, Thousand Oaks: SAGE

Paul Oliver (2010), *The Student's Guide to Research Ethics*, 2nd edition, Buckingham: Open University Press

Nutley, S., I. Walter, et al. (2007). *Using Evidence: How research can inform public services*. Bristol, Policy Press.

(E-Journals) Weiss, C., H (1979). "The many meanings of research utilisation." *Public Administration Review* 39(5): 426-431.

Appendix A

Instructions on how to submit essays electronically

1. Log in to Blackboard (<https://www.ole.bris.ac.uk/>) and select the Blackboard course for the unit you are submitting work for. If you cannot see it, please e-mail f.cooper@bristol.ac.uk with your username and ask to be added.
2. Click on the "Submit Work Here" option on the left hand menu and then find the correct assessment from the list.
3. Select 'view/complete' for the appropriate piece of work. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have selected both the correct unit and the correct piece of work.
4. The screen will display 'single file upload' and your name. Enter your candidate number as a submission title, and then select the file that you wish to upload by clicking the 'browse' button. Click on the 'upload' button at the bottom.
5. You will then be shown the essay to be submitted. Check that you have selected the correct essay and click the 'Submit' button. This step must be completed or the submission is not complete.
6. You will be informed of a successful submission. A digital receipt is displayed on screen and a copy sent to your email address for your records.

Important notes

- You are only allowed to submit one file to Blackboard (single file upload), so ensure that all parts of your work – references, bibliography etc. – are included in one single document and that you upload the correct version. You will not be able to change the file once you have uploaded.
- Blackboard will accept a variety of file formats, but the School can only accept work submitted in .rtf (Rich Text Format) or .doc/.docx (Word Document) format. If you use another word processing package, please ensure you save in a compatible format.
- By submitting your essay, you are confirming that you have read the regulations on plagiarism and confirm that the submission is not plagiarised. You also confirm that the word count stated on the essay is an accurate statement of essay length.
- If Blackboard is not working email your assessment to f.cooper@bristol.ac.uk with the unit code and title in the subject line.

How to confirm that your essay has been submitted

You will have received a digital receipt by email and if you click on the assessment again (steps 1-4), you will see the title and submission date of the essay you have submitted. If you click on submit, you will not be able to submit again. This table also displays the date of submission. If you click on the title of the essay, it will open in a new window and you can also see what time the essay was submitted.

Appendix B
Summary of Relevant School Regulations
(Further details are in the Postgraduate taught handbook, which takes precedence)

Attendance of Seminars

SPAIS takes attendance of and participation in seminars very seriously. Seminars form an essential part of your learning and you need to make sure you arrive on time, have done the required reading and participate fully. Attendance at all seminars is monitored, with absence only condoned in cases of illness or for other exceptional reasons.

If you are unable to attend a seminar you must inform your seminar tutor. You should also provide evidence to explain your absence, such as a self-certification and/or medical note, counselling letter or other official document. If you are ill or are experiencing some other kind of difficulty which is preventing you from attending seminars for a prolonged period, please contact the Postgraduate Office or the Graduate Administration Manager who can advise on how to proceed.

Requirements for credit points

To be awarded credit points for a taught unit, students must:

- Have a satisfactory attendance record.
- Pass the summative assessment

Where there are multiple summative assessments in a unit, students must achieve the pass mark for the weighted average of the assessments (i.e. in the mark for the unit overall). They do not need to pass each individual piece of assessment.

If any of these conditions are not met, then your ability to progress through your degree may be affected.

Presentation of written work

Coursework must be word-processed. As a guide, use a clear, easy-to-read font such as Arial or Times New Roman, in at least 11pt. You may double-space or single-space your essays as you prefer. Your tutor will let you know if they have a preference.

All pages should be numbered. Ensure that the essay question appears on the first page.

Students are required to complete and include a cover page for essay/summative submissions – the template cover page will be available via the online submission point for students to complete.

Candidate numbers are required on summative work in order to ensure that marking is anonymous. Note that your candidate number is not the same as your student number. This number can be viewed in StudentInfo (<https://www.bris.ac.uk/studentinfo>). You should regard this number as personal to you and not share it with anyone else. The number is used to ensure that the marking of a student's work is done anonymously. Please ensure that you memorise your candidate number as you will need to write it on every assessment.

Assessment Length

Each piece of coursework must not exceed the stipulated maximum length for the assignment (the 'word count') listed in the unit guide. Summative work that exceeds the maximum length will be subject to penalties. **The word count is absolute (there is no 10% leeway, as commonly rumoured).** Five marks will be deducted for every 100 words or part thereof over the word limit. Thus, an essay that is 1 word over the word limit will be penalised 5 marks; an essay that is 101 words over the word limit will be penalised 10 marks, and so on.

The word count includes all text, tables, numbers, footnotes/endnotes, Harvard referencing in the body of the text and direct quotes. It excludes the cover page, bibliography, headers and appendices. However, appendices should only be used for reproducing documents, not additional text written by you.

Students are advised that any attempt to circumvent word count limits by changing essay format, e.g. by removing spaces in references, will be investigated. In these cases, penalties will be applied if the actual word count is exceeded and further disciplinary action may be taken.

Students should be aware that word count penalties will incur a mark reduction that may in turn impact their progress and/or overall qualification.

Referencing and Plagiarism

Students are required to reference the source materials used to inform their submitted work. Students are expected to use the Harvard referencing system as set out in the relevant section of the SPAIS *Study Guide*. Unless otherwise stated, essays must contain a bibliography. Students should consult the SPAIS *Study Guide* for full details (students can access this via the SPAIS MSc-Dip Admin Blackboard site).

Inadequate referencing in submitted work can run the risk of plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged inclusion in a student's work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. "Work" includes internet sources as well as printed material.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and penalties will be applied in such cases, as is set out in the SPAIS *Postgraduate taught handbook*. See also the relevant section of the *School Study Skills Guide* for more information.

Please note that plagiarism may lead to penalties that may prevent students found guilty of such an offence from progressing in their programme of study.

Extensions

Extensions to coursework deadlines will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If you want to request an extension, complete a Coursework Extension Request Form (available at Blackboard/SPAIS MSc/Dip Administration/forms) and submit the form with your evidence (e.g. medical certificate, death certificate, or hospital letter) to Faye Cooper in the Postgraduate Office, 11 Priory Road or f.cooper@bristol.ac.uk.

Extension requests will not be considered if there is no supporting evidence.

All extension requests should be submitted at least 72 hours prior to the assessment deadline. If the circumstance occurs after this point, then please either telephone or see the Graduate Administration Manager in person. In their absence you can contact Faye Cooper in the PG Office, again in person or by telephone.

Extensions can only be granted by the Graduate Administration Office. They cannot be granted by unit convenors or seminar tutors.

You will receive an email to confirm whether your extension request has been granted or not.

Submitting Essays/Work for assessment

Formative work: Where applicable, details on how to submit formative work for assessment will be contained in this unit guide.

Summative work: All summative submissions ***must be submitted electronically via Blackboard.***

Electronic copies enable an efficient system of receipting, providing the student and the School with a record of exactly when an essay was submitted. It also enables the School to systematically check the length of submitted essays and to safeguard against plagiarism.

Late Submissions

Penalties are imposed for work submitted late without an approved extension. Any kind of computer/electronic failure is **not** accepted as a valid reason for an extension, so make sure you back up your work on another computer, memory stick or in the cloud (e.g. One Drive, Dropbox or another equivalent system). Also ensure that the clock on your computer is correct. The following schema of marks deduction for late/non-submission is applied to both formative work and summative work:

- Up to 24 hours late, or part thereof *Penalty of 10 marks*
- For each additional 24 hours late, or part thereof *A further 5 marks deduction for each 24 hours, or part thereof*
- Assessment submitted over one week late *Treated as a non-submission: fail and mark of zero recorded. This will be noted on your transcript.*

- The 24 hour period runs from the deadline for submission, and includes Saturdays, Sundays, bank holidays and university closure days.
- If an essay submitted less than one week late fails solely due to the imposition of a late penalty, then the mark will be capped at 50 and recorded as a second attempt.

Students should be aware that late penalties will incur a mark reduction that may in turn impact their progress and/or overall qualification.

Marks and Feedback

In addition to an overall mark, students will receive written feedback on their assessed work.

In accordance with the Faculty's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught programmes, marks and feedback are typically returned within fifteen working days of the relevant submission deadline, unless exceptional circumstances arise in which case students will be informed of the deadline for return. The process of marking and providing detailed feedback is a labour-intensive one, with most 4000 word essays taking at least 45 minutes to assess and comment upon. Summative work also needs to be checked for plagiarism and length and moderated by a second member of staff to ensure marking is fair and consistent.

If work is submitted late, then it may not be possible to return feedback within fifteen working days.

Fails and Resits

If you fail the unit overall, you will normally be required to resubmit or resit unless you do not meet the progression requirements for your programme. Your School Office will contact you if this is the case.

Appendix C

Level 7 Marking and Assessment Criteria (Postgraduate)

All MSc/Diploma marking in the School is out of 100 on the following scale and with the following classifications:

70 and above Distinction

60-69 Merit

50-59 Pass

Below 50 Fail

Work within each of the classifications is expected to demonstrate the following attributes. Please note that markers do not weight each of these attributes equally when finalising the mark. Markers may also take into account the extent to which achievement of unit-specific intended learning outcomes (see unit guide) has been demonstrated when assessing work and arriving at the mark.

70-100: DISTINCTION

Addresses the Question Set

The work is a highly appropriate response to the question or assignment task that has been set. Coverage and selection of content is exemplary. There is clear analysis of the question or topic. Clear ability to analyse and synthesize ideas is demonstrated. At the upper end of the distinction range (marks of 80+), work will be outstanding in (where appropriate) its incorporation and use of empirical evidence/theoretical frameworks/methodological approaches in addressing the question.

Contains coherent structure and argument

The assignment is internally consistent, extremely coherent, concise and well-structured. The introduction is well focused and provides a clear indication of the rationale, key literature base used and organisation of the work. The central argument/structure of the work has a clear and logical sequence of progression. The conclusion draws insights which are logically developed from the analysis. At the upper end of the distinction range (marks of 80+), work will be outstanding in the extent to which the structure facilitates the answer to the question.

Demonstrates understanding of key concepts and/or data

A detailed understanding of key concepts and/or data will be demonstrated. At the upper end of the distinction range (marks of 80+) sustained evidence of critical understanding of concepts and/or critical analysis of data will be demonstrated.

Supports argument with appropriate evidence

The assignment demonstrates that an excellent knowledge of the topic has been gained from careful research and wide ranging reading that goes well beyond the prescribed reading list. The selection, interpretation, comparison, evaluation, and integration of evidence and source material to support the argument is extremely effective. At the upper end of the distinction range (marks of 80+), work will indicate outstanding ability to deal with complexity, contradictions or gaps in the existing academic literature.

Demonstrates critical evaluation

Work at this level will indicate a detailed and critical understanding of central theoretical and/or methodological issues as appropriate. At the upper end of the distinction range (marks of 80+) work will show extensive evidence of coherence, creativity, originality and imagination in addressing the question or topic.

Writing, Background Reading, Referencing and Bibliographic format

The work is extremely well presented, with minimal grammatical or spelling errors. It is written in a fluent and engaging style that demonstrates sufficient background reading, with exemplary referencing and bibliographic formatting in accordance with the required conventions. At the upper end of the distinction range (marks of 80+), the work will be virtually error-free in these respects.

60-69: MERIT

Addresses the Question Set

The work is a very appropriate response to the set question or assignment task. The question is addressed comprehensively, and a convincing and coherent argument is maintained in doing so. There is very good coverage of content and some evidence of an ability to think critically in relation to the question or topic will be shown. Where appropriate, the work will illustrate good comprehension of the theoretical implications of the set question or assignment.

Contains coherent structure and argument

The structure of the assignment is sound. The introduction is relevant and provides the reader with a clear guide to the central argument and the overall structure of the work. The conclusion will highlight and reflect upon the key points of argument developed within the main body of the essay and relative to the set question or assignment.

Demonstrates understanding of key concepts and/or data

A sound understanding of relevant key concepts and/or data has been developed and demonstrated, with key related issues and debates identified and discussed.

Supports argument with appropriate evidence

Overall there is a very good selection and use of sources which are well integrated, interpreted and evaluated. The work will demonstrate the ability to be selective in the range of material used. Some independent reading and research that goes beyond the prescribed reading list will be demonstrated, although the range of evidence used will be more restricted in comparison with an assignment awarded a higher grade.

Demonstrates critical evaluation

The work will clearly demonstrate a capacity to synthesise and critically evaluate source materials and/or debates in relation to the set question or assignment rather than simply describe or summarise them.

Writing, Background Reading, Referencing and Bibliographic format

The work is clear and fluent and largely conforms to referencing and bibliographic conventions. It has been well edited and demonstrates sufficient background reading. Proof-reading has resulted in there being few grammatical or spelling errors.

50-59: PASS

Addresses the Question Set

The work is a reasonably appropriate response to the set question or assignment task. All aspects of the set question or topic have been addressed. The work will show some comprehension of the underlying theoretical/methodological implications of the question where appropriate, but there may be limitations in the understanding of how these issues relate to the question.

Contains coherent structure and argument

The assignment has been effectively structured, although more careful editing may have improved the overall coherence of argument. The introduction is well focused and provides a sense of the central argument and overall organisation. The conclusion provides a summary of the discussion, although may be primarily descriptive in nature and may fail to reflect upon or support the argument fully.

Demonstrates understanding of key concepts and/or data

A basic level of understanding of relevant key concepts and/or data has been demonstrated, though there may be some errors and/or gaps in the knowledge and understanding. Key related issues have been identified and discussed but without many significant insights being developed.

Supports argument with appropriate evidence

The argument will be supported by reference to and incorporation of some relevant evidence, but with scope for greater range and depth of evidence. The work will indicate a generally clear understanding of appropriate evidence, but this may be presented in an uncritical/descriptive manner and/or insufficiently incorporated into the overall argument in response to the set question or assignment task.

Demonstrates critical evaluation

A good range of relevant content has been covered, and there is some attempt at analysis but a tendency to be descriptive rather than critical. Work in this classification may also exhibit a tendency to assert/state points of argument rather than argue on the basis of reasoning and evidence.

Writing, Background Reading, Referencing and Bibliographic format

The style of writing is appropriate and presents few comprehension difficulties for the reader. The assignment is not as fluently written as it might have been, and there may be scope for improvement in spelling and grammar. There is evidence of sufficient background reading. Referencing and bibliographic formatting generally conform to the conventions, but there may be scope for further improvement in accuracy and consistency in accordance with the required conventions.

0-49 FAIL

Addresses the Question Set

Although some attempt will have been made, the work largely fails to address and/or significantly misunderstands the set question or assignment task. At the lower end of the fail range (marks of 0-40) there is little or no understanding of the set question or assignment task in evidence.

Contains coherent structure and argument

The work does not contain a sufficiently structured argument, and may be ineffectively organised. The introduction may lack a clear rationale or statement of argument, and/or may lack a clear outline of the overall structure of the assignment. The conclusion may lack any indication of insights in relation to the set question or assignment task. At the lower end of the fail range (marks of 0-40) the structure of the work may be incoherent or illogical, and/or the work may lack a clearly developed argument.

Demonstrates understanding of key concepts and/or data

There is limited knowledge and understanding of key concepts and/or data, with significant errors and/or omissions in this respect. At the lower end of the fail range (marks of 0-40) there may be significant lack of awareness or understanding of key concepts and/or data.

Supports argument with appropriate evidence

Few key points of appropriate evidence are identified and/or there may be very little attempt at analysis of evidence, with the work tending towards excessive description. At the lower end of the fail range (marks of 0-40) evidence referred to and included in the work may not be relevant to the addressing the set question or assignment task.

Demonstrates critical evaluation

The approach is typified by a general lack of critical evaluation in relation to relevant literature and issues. Work that simply asserts rather than argues a case may also fall into this classification. The use of sources may be excessively derivative of existing work, with little or no indication of an ability to independently analyse relevant material. At the lower end of the fail range (marks of 0-40) there is little or no evidence of critical evaluation.

Writing, Background Reading, Referencing and Bibliographic format

The standard of writing presents difficulties for the reader, with frequent grammatical and spelling errors to a degree that inhibits communication. The range and depth of background reading may be insufficient. The approach to referencing and bibliographic formatting does not follow the required conventions to a sufficiently consistent level. At the lower end of the fail range (marks of 0-40) the use

of language may present considerable comprehension difficulties for the reader. The assignment may not meet stipulations in terms of layout and/or length, and the approach to referencing may not meet expected conventions