

**SOCIM0013: INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
METHODS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Teaching Block: 1

Weeks: 1-12

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|---|---|-------------------------|------|
| Unit Owner: | Therese O'Toole Co taught by: Sveta Milyaeva & Claire O'Neill | Level: | M/7 |
| Phone: | 0117 3310854 | Credit points: | 20 |
| Email: | Therese.OToole@bristol.ac.uk | Prerequisites: | None |
| Office: | Room 1.7, 3 Priory Road | Curriculum area: | N/A |
| Unit owner office hours: | <p>Tuesdays, 1-3 during TB1 (Please note, there are no regular office hours during Reading Week)</p> | | |
| <p>Timetabled classes:</p> <p>Please check your online timetable for day, time and venue of each seminar.</p> <p>You are 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> | | | |
| <p>Learning Outcomes</p> <p>On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to design research on a substantive area of interest to social science using appropriate methodological tools; • Ability to critically evaluate the research practice, data and interpretations of others; • Sensitivity to the ethical dimensions of social research; • Appreciation of a reflexive approach to social research. | | | |
| <p>Requirements for passing the unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory attendance at seminars; • 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: |
| Summative assessment 1: Research Design Design a qualitative research project which specifies a research question, aims and objectives, methodology, ethics, and rationale (See guide in Appendix 1). | 1,500 words | 25% | 24 November 2017 9.30 am | Friday | 9 |
| Summative assessment 2: Essay Answer one essay question from a choice of four (questions to be distributed in TB1). | 2,500 words | 75% | 11 January 2018 9.30 am | Thursday | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 4. • Marking criteria can be found in the Appendix 5. | | | | | |

Unit description

The unit offers graduate level grounding in the rationale, strengths and limitations of a selection of research methods most commonly utilised in contemporary qualitative social research. The unit topics include: the reasons why qualitative research methods are adopted; qualitative research design; a range of the most common methods used including interviews, focus groups, ethnography and documentary, visual and online research methods; the ethics of and challenges associated with conducting qualitative research; the ethics and governance of data protection; and relationships between researchers and research participants.

Unit aims

- To explain the philosophical background to qualitative forms of social research
- To make students aware of a variety of qualitative social research methods and how to select the techniques most appropriate to their enquiry
- To aid students in understanding how to formulate focused research questions and how to translate these into manageable projects
- To make students aware of the ethics of conducting qualitative social research and practical ethical issues in information retrieval and data protection

Previous assessed essay titles

2017/18 titles will be approved by the Examination Board and External Examiner and circulated during the term. A selection of previous essay titles is below.

1. "in most cases the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship" (Oakley 1981: 41). Discuss.
2. What does reflexivity in qualitative research mean in practice? Discuss with reference to research design, data gathering and data analysis.
3. In conducting research, to whom are ethical obligations owed and what are the implications of this for the ways in which researchers conduct their research?
4. In what ways can qualitative researchers work with rather than on the researched? What are the benefits and challenges of this?
5. Does online qualitative interviewing or ethnography present any distinctive ethical or research challenges relative to offline methods?

General reading and resources

This unit is accompanied by key readings covering methodological issues that you are required to read for each seminar. They are available via Blackboard. A selection of further reading is available on Blackboard. You are expected to conduct your own bibliographic research as well. In addition, there are some good general texts covering qualitative methods, including:

- Berg, B. L. (2007) *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (Harlow: Pearson)
- Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Devine, F. and S. Heath (1999) *Sociological Research Methods in Context* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)
- Devine, F. and S. Heath (eds.) (2009) *Doing Social Science: Evidence and Methods in Empirical Research* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)
- Gilbert, N. (ed.) (2008) *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative Researching* (London: Sage)
- May, T. (2001) *Social Research* (Buckingham: Open University Press)
- Silverman, D. (2014) *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (London: Sage)
- Silverman, D. (2010) *Doing Qualitative Research* (London: Sage)
- Waller, V., Farquharson, K. and Dempsey, D. (2016) *Qualitative Social Research: Contemporary Methods for the Digital Age* (London: Sage)

Lecture and seminar schedule

| | Lecture date and topic | Seminar topic |
|----------------|--|---|
| Week 1 | 26.9.17 Introduction to qualitative methods and research design | Introduction to qualitative methods and research design |
| Week 2 | 3.10.17 Qualitative interviews | Qualitative interviews |
| Week 3 | 10.10.17 Focus groups | Focus groups |
| Week 4 | 17.10.17 Ethnography | Ethnography |
| Week 5 | 24.10.17 Documentary and archival research | Documentary and archival research |
| Week 6 | 31.10.17 <i>Reading week: no lecture</i> | <i>Reading week: no seminar</i> |
| Week 7 | 7.11.17 Visual methods | Visual methods |
| Week 8 | 14.11.17 Online qualitative research | Qualitative methods in practice |
| Week 9 | 21.11.167 The ethical researcher | Online qualitative research |
| Week 10 | 28.11.17 The reflexive researcher | The ethical researcher |
| Week 11 | 5.12.17 Building a relationship with respondents, before, during and after the research | Researcher-researched relationships |
| Week 12 | 12.12.16 <i>Reading week: no lecture</i> | <i>Reading week: no seminar</i> |

WEEK 1 Introduction to qualitative methods and research design

This week, we address the questions: what is qualitative research and why should we do it? What is the basis of qualitative work and how has it evolved? We will consider the advantages and disadvantages associated with its use in social science research and the range of techniques available. Issues about reliability and generalisation will be explored, as well as questions concerning what can and cannot be achieved using qualitative methods. The lecture and seminar will include a focus on the processes of conducting research and features of qualitative research design.

Essential reading

- Bryman, A. (2012) Chapter 17: 'The Nature of Qualitative Research', *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Wacquant, L. J. D. (1995) 'The Pugilistic Point of View: How Boxers Think and Feel about Their Trade', *Theory and Society*, 24(4): 489-535

Seminar questions

1. What are the strengths and limitations of qualitative research approaches?
2. What research problem are you engaging with?
3. Would a qualitative approach enable you to address this? (How?)

Recommended reading

If you would like an introductory text to the issues discussed in this session to get you started, you might find it helpful to read:

Vivienne Waller, Karen Farquharson and Deborah Dempsey (2016) Part 1: Getting Ready (includes: '1 The foundations of qualitative research', '2 The aims of qualitative research', '3 From topic to research design', '4 The politics and ethics of qualitative research'), *Qualitative Social Research: Contemporary Methods for the Digital Age* (London: Sage)

A sample chapter 2 is available here: https://uk.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/72578_Waller_Qualitative_Social_Research.pdf

If you would like more in-depth resources, then do consult the journal *Qualitative Research*: <http://qri.sagepub.com/> and the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) site is very useful for resources on, and information on training opportunities in, qualitative methods: <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/>

Further reading

- Bell, J. (2010) *Doing Your Research Project: a Guide for First-Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*, (Buckingham: Open University Press)
- Berg, B. (2007) Chapters 1 and 2: 'Introduction' and 'Designing Qualitative Research', *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (Harlow: Pearson)
- Burnham, P. (2002) *Research Methods in Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan)
- Burton, D. (ed.) (2000) *Research Training for Social Scientists* (London: Sage)
- Brannen, J. (2004) 'Working Qualitatively' in Seale et al (eds.) *Qualitative Research in Practice* (London: Sage)
- Bryman, A. (2008), Chapter 16: 'The Nature of Qualitative Research', *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Cooper, G. (2008) Chapter 1: 'Conceptualising Social Life' in N. Gilbert *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Ebeling, M. and Gibbs, J. (2008) Chapter 4: 'Searching and Reviewing Literature' in N. Gilbert (ed.) *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Flick, U., Kardorff, E., and Steinke, I. (2004) *A Companion to Qualitative Research* (London: Sage)
- Gilbert, N. (2008) Chapter 2: 'Research, Theory and Method' in N. Gilbert *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Green, N. (2008) Chapter 3: 'Formulating and Refining a Research Question', in N. Gilbert (ed.) *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Mason, J. (2002) 'Introduction: The Challenge of Qualitative Research', Chapter 2 'Designing Qualitative Research', and Chapter 3: 'Data Sources, Methods and Approaches', *Qualitative Researching* (second edition) (London: Sage)
- O'Connell Davidson, J (1994) *Methods, Sex and Madness* (London: Routledge)
- Renzetti, C. and Lee, R. (eds.) (1993) *Researching Sensitive Topics* (London: Sage)
- Ritchie, J and Lewis, J. (2003) *Qualitative Research Practice* Chaps 3-5

- Silverman, D. (2006) Chapter 2: 'What is Qualitative Research?', Chapter 12: 'The Potential of Qualitative Research', *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (London: Sage)
- Silverman, D. (2010) Chapter 2: 'What You Can (and Can't) Do with Qualitative Research', Chapter 6: 'Selecting a Topic', Chapter 7: 'Using Theories', Chapter 8: 'Choosing a Methodology', Chapter 11: 'Writing a Research Proposal', Chapter 16: 'Evaluating Qualitative Research' *Doing Qualitative Research* (London: Sage)
- Spicer, N. (2004) 'Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods', in Seale, C. (ed.) *Researching Society and Culture* (London: Sage)

WEEK 2 Qualitative Interviews

This week, we consider the use of qualitative interviews. The pros and cons of various types of interview techniques will be considered, including structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews and life-histories. We will explore the skills that make for good interviewing, such as how to keep 'on target whilst hanging loose', interviewing on sensitive or difficult topics, establishing a relationship with interviewees and interviewer-interviewee relationships, as well as issues relating to elite interviewing.

Essential reading

- Rubin H. J. and Rubin I. S (1995) 'Keeping on Target While Hanging Loose: Designing Qualitative Interviews', *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (London: Sage)
- Dickson-Swift V. et al. (2009) 'Researching Sensitive Topics: Qualitative Research as Emotion Work', *Qualitative Research* 9(1): 61-79
- Harvey W. S. (2011) 'Strategies for Conducting Elite Interviews', *Qualitative Research* 11(4): 431-441

Seminar questions

1. What are the advantages/disadvantages of structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews?
2. How might researchers go about building trust and rapport with an interviewee?
3. Should researchers disclose personal information about themselves in an interview?

Recommended reading

- Baker, Sarah Elsie and Edwards, Rosalind (2012) *How many qualitative interviews is enough*. Discussion Paper. NCRM. (Unpublished), available: <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/2273/>
- Kathryn Roulston (2010) 'Considering quality in qualitative interviewing', *Qualitative Research* April 2010 vol. 10, no. 2 199-228
- Stina Bergman Blix and Åsa Wettergren (2014) 'The emotional labour of gaining and maintaining access to the field', *Qualitative Research* 1-17
- Edwards, Rosalind and Janet Holland (2013) *What is Qualitative Interviewing?* (London: Bloomsbury) available: http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/3276/1/complete_proofs.pdf

Further reading

- Atkinson, R. (1998) 'The Story Interview', *Qualitative Research Methods* Series 44, Sage University Paper (London: Sage)
- Becker, H. S. and Geer, B. (1969) 'Participant observation and interviewing: a comparison', in G. J. McCall, & J. L. Simmons, *Issues in Participant Observation: a Text and Reader*, Addison Wesley
- Bergen, K. (1993) 'Interviewing survivors of marital rape', in Renzetti and Lee, *Researching Sensitive Topics* (London: Sage)
- Fielding, N. and Thomas, H. (2008) Chapter 13: 'Qualitative Interviewing', in N. Gilbert (ed.) *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Fontana, A., Frey, J.H. (2000) 'The Interview: From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text', in Denzin, N., Lincoln, Y. (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (London: Sage) 645-672
- Hubbard, G (2000) 'The Usefulness of In-depth Life History Interviews for Exploring the Role of Social Structure and Human Agency in Youth Transitions', *Sociological Research Online* 4, 4
- McCormack, C. (2004) 'Storying stories: a narrative approach to in-depth interview conversations' *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* (7, 3): 219-236
- Mason, J. (2002) Chapter 4: 'Qualitative Interviewing', *Qualitative Researching* (second edition) (London: Sage)
- May, T. (1997) 'Interviewing: methods and process', *Social Research* (Buckingham: Open University Press)
- Miller, J. and Glassner, B. (2004) 'The inside and the outside: finding realities in interviews', in D. Silverman (ed.) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (London: Sage)
- Pawson, R. (1996) 'Theorising the interview', *British Journal of Sociology* 47 (2): 295-314

- Peabody, R. et al (1990) 'Interviewing political elites', *Political Science and Politics* 23 (3): 451-55
- Rubin, Herbert J and Irene S Rubin (1995) 'Foundations of Qualitative Interviewing', 'Interviews as Guided Conversations' and 'Choosing Interviewees and Judging What They Say', *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (London: Sage)
- Silverman, D. (2006) Chapter 4: 'Interviews', *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (third edition) (London: Sage)

WEEK 3 Focus groups

This week, we explore the uses and limitations of focus groups, paying particular attention to why researchers use focus groups, considerations concerning how to manage and run focus groups, and methodological and conceptual issues relating to the nature of groups and how data in focus groups can be used or interpreted.

Essential reading

- Smithson, J. (2000) 'Using and analysing focus groups: limitations and possibilities', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* (3, 2): 103-119
- Farnsworth, J. and Boon, B. (2010) 'Analysing Group Dynamics within the Focus Group', *Qualitative Research* 10(5): 605-624
- Holbrook, B. and P. Jackson (1996) 'Shopping Around: Focus Group Research in North London', *Area* 28(2): 136-142

Seminar questions

1. What kinds of research questions could focus group research usefully address?
2. What kinds of group dynamics might you encounter in focus group research?
3. How, as a researcher, would you respond to them?

Recommended reading

- Belzile, Jacqueline A and Gunilla Öberg (2012) 'Where to begin? Grappling with how to use participant interaction in focus group design', *Qualitative Research* (12): 459
- Kitzinger, J (2005) 'Focus Group Research: using group dynamics to explore perceptions, experiences and understandings', Holloway I. (ed.) (2005) *Qualitative Research in Health Care* (Maidenhead: OUP) available:
http://www.academia.edu/1621860/Focus_group_research_using_group_dynamics_to_explore_perceptions_experiences_and_understandings
- Kitzinger, J (1995) 'Qualitative Research: Introducing focus groups', *British Medical Journal*, 1995, 311:299, available: <http://www.bmj.com/content/311/7000/299>

Further reading

- Fallon, G. & R. Brown (2002) 'Focusing on focus groups: lessons from a research project involving a Bangladeshi community', *Qualitative Research* 2 (2): 195-208
- Gamson, W. A. (1992) *Talking Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press)
- Gaskell, G. (2000) 'Individual and Group Interviewing', *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: a practical handbook for social research*, M Bauer and G. Gaskell (eds.) (London: Sage)
- Gibbs, A. (1997) 'Focus groups', *Social Research Update*, 19, Winter
- Hyden, L.-C. and Bülow, P.H. (2003) 'Who's talking: drawing conclusions from focus groups – some methodological considerations', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* (6, 4): 305-321
- Krueger, R. A. and Casey, M. (2000) *Focus Groups: A practical guide for applied research* (London: Sage)
- Morgan, D.L. (1997) *Focus groups as qualitative research* (London: Sage)
- Munday, J. (2006) 'Identity in focus: The use of focus groups to study the construction of collective identity', *Sociology* (40, 1): 89-105
- Greenbaum, T. L. (1998) *The Handbook for Focus Group Research*, (London: Sage)
- Överlien, C. et al (2005) 'The focus group interview as an in-depth method? Young women talking about sexuality', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* (84): 331-344
- Warr, D. (2005) 'It was fun but we don't usually talk about these things: analysing sociable interaction in focus groups', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11 200
- Wilkinson, S. (1998) 'Focus group methodology; a review', *International Journal of Social Science Methodology* 1 (3): 181-203
- Wilkinson, S. (1999) 'How useful are focus groups in feminist research?' in R. Barbour & J. Kitzinger (eds.) *Developing Focus Group Research: politics, theory and practice* (London: Sage)

Wilkinson, S. (2004) Chapter 10: 'Focus Group Research' in D. Silverman (ed.) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (London: Sage)

WEEK 4 Ethnography

This week, we consider the use of ethnographic techniques within social science and the various types of observation that can be utilised within fieldwork including participant-observation and covert observation. We pay particular attention to the ethical demands of ethnographic research, issues of access, the key role of gatekeepers, getting on in and 'getting out' of, or disengaging from, the field.

Essential reading

Hobbs, D. (1988) *Doing the Business: Entrepreneurship, the Working Class and Detectives in the East End of London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Devine, F. and Heath, S. (1999) 'Chapter 7: Crime: Hobbs' *Doing the Business*', *Sociological Research Methods in Context* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)

Reeves C. L. (2010) 'A Difficult Negotiation: Fieldwork Relations with Gatekeepers', *Qualitative Research* 10(3) 315–331

Seminar questions

1. How should ethnographers handle questions of access, transparency and confidentiality and researcher-respondent relations in their research?
2. Is covert participant-observation ever justifiable?

Recommended reading

Monahan, T. and Fisher J. A. (2010) 'Benefits of 'Observer Effects': Lessons from the Field', *Qualitative Research* 10(3) 357–376 -

Spicker, Paul (2011) 'Ethical Covert Research', *Sociology* (45, 1: 118-133)

Further reading

Atkinson, P. (1990) *The Ethnographic Imagination* (London: Routledge)

Angrosino, M.V., Mays de Perez, K.A. (2000) 'Rethinking Observation: From Method to Context', in Denzin, N., and Lincoln, Y. (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (London: Sage)

Barley, N. (1986) *The Innocent Anthropologist: Notes from a Mud Hut* (London: Penguin)

Baszanger, I. and Dodier, N. (2004) 'Chapter 2: Ethnography: Relating the Part to the Whole', in D. Silverman (ed.) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (London: Sage)

Berg, B. (2007) 'Chapter 6: Ethnographic Field Strategies', *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (Harlow: Pearson)

Bone, J. (2006) "The longest day": flexible contract, performance related pay and risk-shifting in the UK direct selling sector', *Work, Employment and Society* 20 (1)

Bone, J. (2006) *The Hard Sell: An Ethnographic Study of Direct Selling* (Aldershot: Ashgate)

Bourgois, Philippe (2003) *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio* (New York: Cambridge University Press)

Bryman, A. (2008) 'Chapter 17: Ethnography and Participant Observation', *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Bulmer, M. (1982) 'When is Disguise Justified?', *Qualitative Sociology* 5 (4): 251- 64

Bulmer, M. (1982) *Social Research Ethics: an Examination of the Merits of Covert Participant Observation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan)

Calvey, D. (2008) 'The Art and Politics of Covert Research: Doing 'Situated Ethics', in the Field', *Sociology* 42 (5): 905–918

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (1986) *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (California: Univ. of California Press)

Coffey, A. (1999) *The Ethnographic Self* (London: Routledge)

Denscombe, M. (1998) 'Observation', *The Good Research Guide* (Buckingham: Open University Press)

Fielding, N. (2008) Chapter 14: 'Ethnography', N. Gilbert (ed.) *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)

Flick, U. (2002) parts 3, 5, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (London: Sage)

Flick, U., Kardorff, E., and Steinke, I. (2004) *A Companion to Qualitative Research* (London: Sage) (section 5)

Foley, D. (2002) 'Critical ethnography; the reflexive turn', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 15 (4): 469-90

- Hammersley, P. and Atkinson, P. (1983) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Holdaway, S. (1997) 'Constructing and Sustaining 'Race' within the Police Workforce', *The British Journal of Sociology* 48 (1): 19-34
- Homan, R. (1991) *The Ethics of Social Research* (London: Pearson Education)
- Herrera, C. D. (1999) 'Two Arguments for 'covert methods'', in *British Journal of Sociology* 50 (2): 331–343
- Lofland, J. and Lofland, I. (1984) *Analysing Social Settings: a Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis* (Wadsworth)
- Lynch, M (2000) 'Against reflexivity as an academic virtue and source of privileged knowledge', *Theory, Culture and Society* 17 (3): 26-54
- Mahoney, D. (2007) 'Constructing reflexive fieldwork relationships; narrating my collaborative storytelling methodology', *Qualitative Inquiry* 13 (4): 573-94
- Mason, J. (2002) 'Chapter 5: Observing and Participating', *Qualitative Researching* (London: Sage)
- Merton, R. K. (1972) 'Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge', *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1): 9- 47
- Polsky, N. (1971) *Hustlers, Beats and Others* (London: Penguin)
- Silverman, D. (2006) 'Chapter 3: Ethnography and Observation', in *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (London: Sage)
- Richardson, I. (2000) 'Evaluating ethnography', *Qualitative Inquiry* 6 (2): 253-55.
- Thomas, J. (1993) *Doing critical ethnography* (London: Sage)
- Van Maanen, J. (1988) *Tales of the Field. On Writing Ethnography* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press) Chapters 1&2.
- Walsh, D. (2004) 'Chapter 17: Doing Ethnography', in C. Seale (ed.) *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Warren, C. (1988) *Gender Issues in Field Research* (London: Sage)
- Westmarland, L. (2001) 'Blowing the Whistle on Police Violence', *British Journal of Criminology* 41 (3): 523-35
- Winlow, S. et al (2001) 'Get Ready to Duck: Bouncers and the Realities of Ethnographic Research on Violent Groups', *British Journal of Criminology* 41 (3): 536- 48

WEEK 5 Documentary and Archival Research

This week, we discuss the use of archives and differing methods of documentary analysis. The range of documentary sources relevant to social research projects is immense, extending from personal papers such as letters and diaries, to intermediate materials like legal records, archives and newspaper reports, to official documents such as national and local government materials, as well as includes datasets generated by government-sponsored censuses and surveys. Recently, paper and film-based sources have been augmented by the rapid growth of electronic databases, accessible through the Internet, and, particularly recently, secondary data sources. With regard to the latter, we consider debates among social scientists on whether the use of secondary qualitative data is beneficial or harmful to social research.

Essential reading

- Scott, John (1990) 'Assessing Documentary Sources', *A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research* (Polity Press), pp. 19-35
- Prior, L. (2004) 'Chapter 5: Doing things with Documents', in D. Silverman (ed.) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (London: Sage)
- Haynes, J.C. & Jones, D.J. (2012) 'A Tale of Two Analyses: The Use of Archived Qualitative Data' *Sociological Research Online*, vol. 17, pp. 1-9

Seminar questions

1. What kinds of documentary sources could constitute data?
2. How might you interpret the significance of documents?
3. What can/do documents *do*?
4. In what circumstances would you consider secondary data analysis?

Recommended reading

- Prior, L. (2008) 'Repositioning Documents in Social Research', *Sociology* 42(5): 821–836
- Dag Stenvoll and Peter Svensson (2011) 'Contestable contexts: the transparent anchoring of contextualization in text-as-data', *Qualitative Research* (11): 570):
<http://qrj.sagepub.com/content/11/5/570>

Further reading

- Allum, N. and Arber, S. (2008) 'Chapter 19: Secondary Analysis of Survey Data', in N. Gilbert (ed.) *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Atkinson, P. & Coffey, A. (2004) 'Chapter 4: Analysing Documentary Realities', D. Silverman, (ed.) *Qualitative research: theory, method and practice* (London: Sage)
- Bishop, L. (2007) 'A Reflexive Account of Reusing Qualitative Data: Beyond Primary/Secondary Dualism', *Sociological Research Online* 12 (3)
- Blaxter, M. (2007) 'Commentary on a 'Reflexive Account of Reusing Qualitative Data': beyond Primary/Secondary Dualism', *Sociological Research Online* 12 (3)
- Broom, A., Cheshire, L. and Emmison, M. (2009) 'Qualitative Researchers' Understanding of their Practice and the Implications for Data Archiving and Sharing', *Sociology* 43 (6): 1163- 80
- Bryman, A (2008) 'Chapter 13: Secondary analysis and official statistics', *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Corti, L., Foster, J. and Thompson, P. (1995) 'Archiving qualitative research data', *Social Research Update* Issue 10 <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU10.html>
- Corti, L. (1993) 'Using diaries in social research', *Social Research Update* 5, Summer
- Dale, A. et al. (1988) *Doing Secondary Analysis*, Unwin Hyman
- Gibson, W. & Brown, A. (2009) *Working with Qualitative Data* (London: Sage) chapters 5 and 9
- Gillies, V. and Edwards, R. (2005) 'Secondary Analysis in Exploring Family and Social Change: Addressing the Issue of Context', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 6 (1)
- Hakim, C. (1982) *Secondary Analysis in Social Research: a guide to data sources and methods with examples* (George Allen & Unwin)
- Hammersley, M. (ed.) (1993) *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice* (London: Sage) [esp. ch.5 and chap 12].
- Hammersley, M. (2010) 'Can We Re-Use Qualitative Data Via Secondary Analysis? Notes on Some Terminological and Substantive Issues', *Sociological Research Online* 15 (1)
- Hammersley, M. (1997) 'Qualitative Data Archiving: Some Reflections on its Prospects and Problems', *Sociology* 31 (1): 131- 42
- Lee, R. M. (2000) *Unobtrusive Methods in Social Research* (Open University Press)
- Heaton, J. (1998) 'Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data', *Social Research Update* Issue 22
- Mason, J. (2007) 'Re-Using Qualitative Data: on the Merits of an Investigative Epistemology', *Sociological Research Online* 12 (3)
- Moore, N. (2007) '(Re)Using Qualitative Data', *Sociological Research Online* 12 (3)
- Platt, J. (1981) 'Evidence and proof in documentary research', *Sociological Review* 29, 1: 31-66
- Plummer, K. (2002) *Documents of Life* (London: Sage)
- Savage, M. (2005) 'Revisiting Classic Qualitative Studies', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 6 (1)
- Seale, C. (2001) 'Chapter 26: Using data archives for secondary analysis', in Seale, C. (ed.)
- Silva, E. B. (2007) 'What's Yet to be Seen? Re-Using Qualitative Data', *Sociological Research Online* 12 (3)
- Thompson, P. (2000) 'Experiences of Re-analyzing in Qualitative Research', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 1 (3)

WEEK 6 Reading Week

No lecture or seminar

WEEK 7 Visual Methods

In this session we consider the use of visual research methods – including where visual images are utilised by researchers as a form of data elicitation as well as where visual images are generated as a form of data that is to be analysed. We will consider questions such as what can researchers achieve using visual methods? How might visual data be collected, and what kinds of issues should researchers consider in relation to data analysis? Ethical issues concerning the ownership and sharing of visual images in the research process will be addressed.

Essential reading

- Harper, D. (1998) 'An argument for visual sociology', *Image-based Research: A Source book for Qualitative Researchers*, Jon Prosser (ed.) (London: Falmer Press)

- Allan, A. (2012) 'Power, Participation and Privilege - Methodological Lessons from Using Visual Methods in Research with Young People', *Sociological Research Online* 17(3)
- Rosalind Hurworth (2003) 'Photo-Interviewing for research', *Social Research Update* (Spring 2003), available at: <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU40.html>

Seminar questions

1. For what kinds of research questions might the use of visual images for the purposes of data-elicitation be useful?
2. How/why might researchers use visual images as data?
3. Are there any pitfalls in using visual methods?
4. How should researchers handle issues of confidentiality/consent in using visual data?

Recommended reading

- Banks, M (2001) 'Research strategies', *Visual Methods in Social Research* (London: Sage)
- Harper, Douglas (2010) 'Talking about pictures: A case for photo elicitation', *Visual Studies* (17,1: 13-26)
- Pink, Sarah (2001) *Doing Visual Ethnography* (London: Sage)
- White, Allen, Naomi Bushin, Fina Carpena-Méndez and Cairíona Ní Laoire (2010) 'Using visual methodologies to explore contemporary Irish childhoods', *Qualitative Research* April 2010 vol. 10 no. 2 143-158

Further reading

- Banks, M. (1995) 'Visual research methods', *Social Research Update* (11, Winter 1995), available at: <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU11/SRU11.html>
- Mannay, Dawn (2010) 'Making the familiar strange: can visual research methods render the familiar setting more perceptible?', *Qualitative Research* (10, 1: 91-111)
- Meo, Analía Inés (2010) 'Picturing Students' Habitus: The Advantages and Limitations of Photo-Elicitation Interviewing in a Qualitative Study in the City of Buenos Aires', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 9(2)
- Pain, Helen (2012) 'A Literature Review to Evaluate the Choice and Use of Visual Methods', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(4)
- Pink, S. (2001) 'More visualising, more methodologies: on video, reflexivity and qualitative research', *Sociological Review*
- Prosser, Jon (ed.) (1998) *Image-based Research: A Source book for Qualitative Researchers*, (London: Falmer Press)
- Rose, G. (2001) *Visual Methodologies* (London: Sage)
- Wiles, Jon Prosser, Anna Bagnoli, Andrew Clark, Katherine Davies, Sally Holland, Emma Renold (2008) *Visual Ethics: Ethical Issues in Visual Research*, ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper, National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM/011)
- Woodward, Sophie (2008) 'Digital Photography and Research Relationships: Capturing the Fashion Moment', *Sociology* October 2008 vol. 42 no. 5 857-872

WEEK 8 Qualitative methods in practice

This week, we will focus on the practical use of qualitative methods. In preparation for this week's seminar, please select one of the methods covered in the unit so far, and conduct a trial use of this method. You will need to prepare some preparatory notes and reflections on the method afterwards to bring to the seminar for discussion with the group.

Please consult Appendix 2 of this unit guide for advice and instructions for this week's task.

In the seminar, we will discuss your notes and reflections and consider what the use of particular methods in practice reveal about the value and limitations of particular methods.

Week 9 The digital as a resource and an object of study

In this session, we consider issues relating to digital research. We will look at the digital mode of communication and society as a tool and as a site of research. We will be addressing 'the politics of method' as the apparent need in new methods for researching the digital and digital research, and the difference between various ways of studying digital society – e.g. focusing on how people use digital media and with what consequences, or analysing digital data to assemble the social in either qualitative or

quantitative ways, or both. The public/private trap as well as various methods to collect digital data will also be discussed.

Essential reading

- Burrows, R. and M. Savage (2014) 'After the Crisis?' Big Data and Methodological Challenges of Empirical Sociology', *Big Data & Society*, April-June: 1-6
- Marres, N. (2012) 'The Redistribution of Methods: On Intervention in Digital Social Research, Broadly Conceived', *Sociological Review* 60(S1): 139-165
- Ruppert E. et al. (2013) 'Reassembling Social Science Methods: The Challenge of Digital Devices', *Theory, Culture & Society* 30(4): 22-46

Seminar questions

1. If the digital is a new social mode, do we need new methods to research it?
2. What is the object of study in digital research – technology or society?
3. What particular ethical issues are raised by digital data collection?

Recommended reading

- Back, L. (2013) 'Live Sociology: Social Research and Its Futures', *Sociological Review* 60: 18-39
- Marres, N. (2015) 'Why Map Issues? On Controversy Analysis as a Digital Method', *Science, Technology & Human Values* 40(5): 655-686
- Morey Y. et al. (2011) Public Profiles, Private Parties: Digital Ethnography, Ethics and Research in the Context of Web 2.0. In: Heath, S. and Walker (eds.) *Innovations in Youth Research*. London: Palgrave, pp. 195-209. Available at: http://opus.bath.ac.uk/47275/1/Public_profiles_private_parties.pdf
- Murthy, D. (2008) 'Digital Ethnography: An Examination of the Use of New Technologies for Social Research', *Sociology* 42(5): 837-855
- Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *Netnography – Doing Ethnographic Research Online* (London: Sage). Chapter 1 'Cultures and Communities Online' available here: http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/31333_01_Kozinets_Ch_01.pdf and Chapter 2 'Understanding Culture Online' here: http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/31334_02_Kozinets_Ch_02.pdf

Further reading

- Beer, D. and R. Burrows (2013) 'Popular Culture, Digital Archives, and the New Social Live of Data', *Theory, Culture & Society* 30(4): 47-71
- Blok, A. and MA Pedersen (2014) Complementary Social Science? 'Quali-Quantitative Experiments in a Big Data World', *Big Data & Society* July-December: 1-6
- boyd, d. and K. Crawford (2011) 'Six Provocations for Big Data', paper presented at Oxford Internet Institute's *A Decade in Internet Time: Symposium on the Dynamics of the Internet and Society* available at http://softwarestudies.com/cultural_analytics/Six_Provocations_for_Big_Data.pdf
- James, N. and H. Busher (2009) *Online Interviewing* (London: Sage Publications Ltd)
- Hine, C. (2015) *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied and Everyday*. London: Bloomsbury
- Kasmer, M.M. and B. Xie (2008) "Qualitative Interviewing in Internet Studies: Playing with the media, playing with the method", *Information, Communication and Society*, 11(2): p. 257-278
- Latour, B. et al. (2012) "'The Whole Is Always Smaller Than Its Parts" – a Digital Test of Gabriel Tarde's Monads' *British Journal of Sociology* 63(4): 590-615
- Law, J. (2004) *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*. London: Routledge
- Lupton, D. (2016) 'Digital Companion Species and Eating Data: Implications for Theorising Digital Data-Human Assemblages' *Big Data & Society* January-June: 1-5
- Lupton, D. (2012) *Digital Sociology: An Introduction* available at <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/8621/2/Digital%20Sociology.pdf>
- Lupton D. and B. Williamson (2017) 'The Datafied Child: The Dataveillance of Children and Implications for Their Rights', *New Media & Society*, 19(5): 780-794
- Lury, C. (2012) 'Going Live: Towards an Amphibious Sociology', *Sociological Review* 60:184-197
- Madsen, AK. (2015) 'Tracing Data – Paying Attention: Interpreting Digital Methods Through Valuation Studies and Gibson's Theory of Perception', pp.257-279 in Kornberger et al. (eds) *Making Things Valuable*. Oxford: Oxford University Press available at https://www.academia.edu/19768480/Tracing_Data_Paying_Attention_-_Interpreting_digital_methods_through_valuation_studies_and_Gibson_s_theory_of_perception
- Madsen, AK et al. (2016) 'Big Data: Issues for an International Political Sociology on Data Practices 1' *International Political Sociology* 10(3): 275-296

- Mayer-Schonberger, V. and K. Cukier. (2013) 'Chapter 2: More', pp. 19-31 in *Big Data: A Revolution That Will Transform How We Live, Work, and Think*. London: John Murray
- Morozov, E. (2013) *To Save Everything, Click Here: Technology, Solutionism, and the Urge to Fix Problems that Don't Exist*. London: Allen Lane
- Orton-Johnson, K. and N. Prior (Eds) (2013) *Critical Perspectives in Digital Sociology*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan
- Pink S. et al. (2017) 'Mundane Data: The Routines, Contingencies and Accomplishments of Digital Living', *Big Data & Society* January-June:1-12
- Rogers, R. (2013) *Digital Methods*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Savage, M. and R. Burrows. (2007) 'The Coming Crisis of Empirical Sociology', *Sociology*, 41(5): 885-899
- Uprichard, E. (2012) 'Being Stuck in (Live) Time: The Sticky Sociological Imagination', *Sociological Review* 60: 124-138

WEEK 10 The ethical researcher

In this session we will reflect on the various aspects concerning research ethics that we have addressed throughout this unit, to consider the range of issues that researchers need to consider in developing ethically grounded research, including informed consent, transparency, confidentiality, power relations, research on and with marginalised groups, the purposes of research, research with powerful groups and elites, and the politics of doing research.

Essential reading

- Berg, B. L. (2012) 'Chapter 3: Ethical Issues', *Qualitative Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (Pearson Education)
- McAreevey, R. and Muir, J. (2011) 'Research Ethics Committees: Values and Power in Higher Education', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 14(5): 391–405
- Pittaway, E. et al. (2010) "'Stop Stealing Our Stories": The Ethics of Research with Vulnerable Groups', *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 2(2): 229-251

Seminar activity

1. What aspects of your research raise ethical issues?
2. What are the ethics procedures in the School and how would you apply them to your own research? Are they adequate?
3. In what ways might the researched have, or lack, power within the research relationship? What are the implications of this for developing ethical research practice?

Recommended reading

- University of Bristol Research Ethics <http://bristol.ac.uk/research/support/governance/ethics/ethics.html>
 Faculty of Social Sciences and Law- Application for Ethical Review, available from
<http://bristol.ac.uk/fssl/current-staff/research-ethics/#Support>
- Hammersley M (2010) Creeping ethical regulation and the strangling of research. *Sociological Research Online* 15(4): 16. <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/16.html>

Further reading

- David, M. Edwards, R. and Aldred, P. (2001) 'Children and school-based research; informed consent or educated consent?', *British Educational Research Journal*, 27 (3)
- Fisher, CB and Anushko AE (2008) 'Research ethics in social science', *Social Research Methods* (P. Alasuutari et al (eds.) (London: Sage)
- Gilbert, N. (2008) 'Chapter 8: The Ethics of Social Research', *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage)
- Glucksmann, Miriam (2009) *Women on the Line* (London: Routledge) Introduction
- Hammersley, M. and Paul Atkinson (1995) 'Ethics', *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (London: Routledge)
- Harden, J., Scott, S., Backett-Milburn, K. and Jackson, S. (2000) 'Can't Talk, Won't Talk?: Methodological Issues in Researching Children', *Sociological Research Online*, vol. 5, no. 2, <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/5/2/harden.html>
- Kent, J., Williamson, E., Goodenough, T. and Ashcroft, R. (2002) 'Social Science Gets the Ethics Treatment: Research governance and ethical review' *Sociological Research Online*, vol. 7, no. 4, <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/7/4/williamson.html>
- Mauthner, M. Birch, M. Jessop, J. and Miller, T. (eds) (2002) *Ethics in Qualitative Research* (London: Sage)

- May, Tim (2001) 'Values and ethics in the research process', *Social Research* (Buckingham: OUP): <http://www.mheducation.co.uk/openup/chapters/0335206123.pdf>
- Punch, M. (1985) *The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork* (London: Sage)
- Rodgers, J. (1989) 'Trying to get it right: undertaking research involving people with learning difficulties', *Disability and Society* 14 (4)
- Roth, W. (2004) 'Political ethics, unethical politics', *Forum for Qualitative Research* 5 (3)
- Ryen, A. (2004) 'Ethical Issues', Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J.F. and Silverman, D. (eds) *Qualitative Research Practice* (London: Sage) pp.230-247.
- Silverman, D. (2006) 'Chapter 9: Research Ethics', *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (London: Sage)
- Spicker, P. (2007) 'Research without consent', *Social Research Update* 51
- Truman, C. (2003) 'Ethics and the ruling relations of research production', *Sociological Research Online* 8 (1)
- Wiles, R., Charels, V. Crow, G. and Heath, S. (2004) 'Informed Consent and the research Process', ESRC Research Methods Festival, University of Oxford
<http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods/publications/documents/wiles.pdf>
- Wiles, Rose, Sue Heath, Graham Crow & Vikki Charles (2005) Informed Consent in Social Research: A Literature Review, *NCRM Methods Review Papers*, NCRM/001,
<http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/85/1/MethodsReviewPaperNCRM-001.pdf>

WEEK 11 Researcher-researched relationships

This session will develop our focus on questions of the power relations of research and relations between the researcher and research participants. In particular, the session will consider how the researcher's identity, subjectivity, politics and ethics can shape the research process, and why questions of reflexivity have become so central to qualitative researchers, what kinds of relationships researchers build with research participants, including respondents and gate-keepers; issues of 'giving back' to researched groups; and we will discuss ideas about how to generate relationships and practices of mutuality and reciprocity in small to medium scale research projects such as those which might be conducted within a Masters or doctoral research programme. Some key questions that will be addressed include: what are the implications of insider and outsider research? What issues should researchers consider when researching 'across difference'? What are the challenges of 'same-ness' for researchers carrying out research as insiders? Should researchers take sides? Should research be politically committed? What and who is research for?

Essential reading

- Islam, N (2000) 'Research as an Act of Betrayal: Researching Race in an Asian Community in Los Angeles', *Race-ing Research, Researching Race*, Jonathan Warren (ed.) (New York: New York University Press)
- Tang, N. (2002) 'Interviewer and Interviewee Relationships between Women', *Sociology* 36 (3): 703-721
- Becker, H. (1967) 'Whose Side are we On?', *Social Problems* 14 (3): 239- 47

Seminar questions

1. What issues should the researcher consider when researching participants that are different or similar to them?
2. Is 'insider research' easier than 'outsider research'?
3. What kinds of relationships should researchers have with the researched?
4. Does research ever particularly benefit the researched? Can you think of any examples?

Recommended reading

- Oakley, Ann (2015) 'Interviewing Women Again: Power, Time and the Gift', *Sociology* (Online First DOI: 10.1177/0038038545580253)
- Gunuratnam, Yasmin (2003) *Researching 'Race' and Ethnicity: Methods, Knowledge and Power* (London: Sage)
- Fawcett, B and Hearn, J (2004) 'Researching others: epistemology, experience, standpoints and participation', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* (7, 3: 201-218)
- Letherby, G. (2002) 'Claims & disclaimers: knowledge, reflexivity and representation', *Sociological Research Online* 6(4) <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/6/4/letherby.html>
- Clark, Tom (2010) "On being researched": Why do people engage with qualitative research?', *Qualitative Research* (10: 399)

Further reading

- Anderson, B. (2001) 'Just another job? Commodification and domestic labour', *Gender and Development* 9 (1)
- Back, L. and Solomos, J. (1993) 'Doing Research, Writing Research: the Dilemmas of political intervention in research on racism' *Economy and Society* 22 (2): 178- 99
- Bloor, M. (2004) 'Chapter 16: Addressing Social Problems through qualitative research', in D. Silverman (ed.) *Qualitative Research*
- Bowes, A. M. (1996) 'Evaluating an Empowering Research Strategy: Reflections on Action- Research with South Asian Women', *Sociological Research Online*.
- Calhoun, Craig (2008) 'Foreword', *Engaging contradictions: theory, politics, and methods of activist scholarship* (University of California Press: California)
- Carter, J. (2004) 'Research note: reflections on interviewing across the ethnic divide', *International Journal of Social Science Methodology* 7 (4) 345-53
- David, M. (2002) 'Problems of participation: the limits of action research', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, vol. 5(1), pp.11-17
- Dodson, L., Piatelli, D. and Schmalzbauer, L. (2007) 'Researching Inequality through Interpretive Collaborations Shifting Power and the Unspoken Contract', *Qualitative Inquiry* 13 (6): 821-843
- Finch, J. (1984) 'It's great to have someone to talk to; the ethics and politics of interviewing women', in C. Bell and H. Roberts (eds.) *Social Researching: Politics, Problems and Practices* (London: Routledge)
- Finlay, L. (2002) 'Negotiating the swamp: the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice', *Qualitative Research* 2 (2): 209-30
- Ganga, D and Scott, S (2006) 'Cultural "Insiders" and the Issue of Positionality in Qualitative Migration Research: Moving "Across" and Moving "Along" Researcher-Participant Divides', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (7/3)
- Gill, F. and Maclean, C. (2002) 'Knowing your Place: Gender and Reflexivity in two Ethnographies' *Sociological Research Online*, 7 (2) <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/7/2/gill.html>
- Gomm, R. (2004) 'Chapter 12: Evaluative and Emancipatory Research', *Social Research Methodology: a Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)
- Goodson, L and Phillimore, J (2012) 'Community research: opportunities and challenges', *Community Research for Participation* (Bristol: Policy Press)
- Hammersley, M. (1992) 'On Feminist Methodology', *Sociology* 26 (2): 187- 206
- Hammersley, M. (2000) *Taking Sides in Social Research* (London: Routledge)
- Hammersley, M. and R. Gomm (1997) 'Bias in Social Research', *Sociological Research Online*
- Harding, S. (ed.) (1987) *Feminism and Methodology* (Buckingham: Open University Press)
- Hoong Sin, C. (2007) 'Ethnic-matching in Qualitative Research: Reversing the Gaze on "White Others" and "White" as "Other"', *Qualitative Research* 7(4) 477-499
- Humphries, B. (1997) 'From Critical Thought to Emancipatory Action: Contradictory Research Goals', *Sociological Research Online*
- Kelly, L. Burton, S. and Regan, L. (1994) 'Researching Women's Lives or Studying Women's Oppression? Reflections on what Constitutes Feminist Research' in Maynard, M. and Purvis, J. (eds.) *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective* (London: Taylor and Francis)
- Leibling, A. (2001) 'Whose side are we on? Theory, Practice and Allegiances in Prisons Research', *British Journal of Criminology* 41: 4762- 484
- Letherby, G. (2003) *Feminist Research in Theory and Practice* (Buckingham: Open University Press)
- May, T. (2001) 'Chapter 3: Values and Ethics in the Research Process', in *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*, 3rd ed. (Buckingham: Open University Press)
- Nencel, L. (2005) 'Feeling gender speak: intersubjectivity & fieldwork practice with women who prostitute in Lima Peru', *European Journal of Women's Studies* 12 (3): 345-361
- Oakley, A. (1981) 'Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms' in H. Roberts (ed.) *Doing Feminist Research* (Boston: Routledge)
- Oakley, A. (1998) 'Gender, Methodology and People's Ways of Knowing: Some Problems with Feminism and the Paradigm Debate in Social Science', *Sociology* 32 (4): 707- 31
- Partington, G. (2001) 'Qualitative research interviews: identifying problems in technique', *Issues in Educational Research* 11 2 32-44
- Ramazonoglu, C (1992) 'On feminist methodology: male reason versus female empowerment', *Sociology* 26 (2): 207-12.
- Reinharz, S. (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Roberts, H. (1981) *Doing Feminist Research* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul)
- Silverman, D. (2006) 'Chapter 11: The Relevance of Qualitative Research', *Interpreting Qualitative Data*

- Sin, Chih Hoong (2007) 'Ethnic-matching in qualitative research: reversing the gaze on `white others' and `white' as `other'', *Qualitative Research* (7: 477)
- Stanley, L. (1990) *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology* (London: Routledge)
- Temple, B and Moran, M (eds.) (2006) *Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines* (Bristol: Policy Press)
- Todhunter, C. (2001) 'Undertaking Action Research: Negotiating the Road Ahead', *Sociological Research Update*
- Truman, C., Mertens, D. and Humphries, B. (2000) *Research and Inequality* (London: Sage)
- Young Jr, AA (2006) 'Experiences in ethnographic interviewing about race: The inside and outside of it' in *Researching Race and Racism*, M Bulmer and J Solomos (eds.) (London: Routledge)

Week 12 Reading Week

No lecture or seminar this week.

Appendix 1: Research design framework

The following sets out a framework for the Research Design assessment, indicating what kinds of areas it needs to address. Some of these areas may overlap (e.g. 'aims' and 'objectives'; 'methodology' and 'rationale for chosen methodology'). You don't need to use these as headings, but as elements that should be addressed somewhere in your Research Design.

The Research Design should be based on the use of qualitative methods. It is acceptable to outline a mixed quantitative-qualitative methods approach to answering your question and to address the qualitative element(s) here. Please do not go into detail about the use of quantitative methods as these will not contribute to your grade for this assessment.

It is expected that the Research Design will include references to methods/methodological literatures, and so it must include a bibliography. The bibliography *does not* form part of the 1,500 word count.

Research question

Outline your research question, with some *brief* context as to its significance (e.g. in addressing a particular social-scientific problem), and a *brief* explanation its relationship to which field of study (to which field do you wish to make a contribution?)

Aims and objectives

What do you wish to achieve in this research? (I.e. what are its aims?)

How will you achieve these aims? What you will need to do/achieve to meet these aims? (I.e. what are its objectives?)

Methodology

Explain why a qualitative approach is best suited to studying your research question

What methods will be used? And how?

What kinds of sampling decisions does your research involve?

What kinds of issues or challenges will you encounter in implementing your methods?

If there are different phases/methods to the research, how do they relate to each other?

Rationale for chosen methodology

Why is this design best suited to addressing the question that you are posing?

Will this methodology enable a different, clearer perspective on the research problem you have identified?

Ethical issues

Are there any ethical or political issues involved in implementing the methods you've chosen?

Bibliography

Please use the Harvard system of referencing.

Appendix 2: Using qualitative methods: practical session week 8

In preparation for the seminar in week 8, you are asked to engage practically with a qualitative research method of your choice from the methods covered in the unit from weeks 2-7 (c.f. interviews, focus groups, ethnography, documentary analysis and visual methods).

This will take the form of conducting a pilot of a particular method before the seminar in week 8.

To prepare for the seminar, you will need to choose a method, think about the use of the method in relation to the relevant readings, pilot the use of the method (some suggestions on this are below), and note some reflections on your approach to and experience of using the method. Please bring a summary of your preparation, method and reflections to the seminar for feedback and discussion.

Below are some suggestions on how to go about a pilot of each of the methods. You are welcome to adapt these suggestions or propose alternatives – perhaps in order to pilot an approach related to research that you are planning for your Masters dissertation or PhD. Do talk to your seminar tutor about adapting this practical session to your needs or interests. Ultimately, it is intended to be beneficial for developing your own research.

Qualitative interviewing pilot

In preparation for this seminar, please design and conduct a short interview (this could be anyone in your family, peer or friendship groups), of about 30 minutes, to enable you to gather data to address a question of your choosing.

Please do not record the data from this interview. Please explain to your respondent that this is a training exercise undertaken as part of your postgraduate degree programme, and that none of the data generated by the interview, or the identity of or identifying details relating to the interviewee, will be stored or communicated for any research purpose.

Before the interview consider:

- How will you introduce the topic?
- What is the most appropriate approach to interviewing?
- What kind of interview schedule or guide should you use? (If any)
- What kinds of questions should you ask? *How* should you ask them?
- What kind of relationship should you try to achieve with your interviewee?
- How should you conclude the interview?

After the interview (immediately, or as soon as possible, afterwards), write some reflections on the following questions:

- What kind of data did you achieve?
- How easy was it to generate data to answer the research question?
- What kind of relationship did you have with the interviewee and did that shape the data? How? Did that help or hinder the research?

Bring your reflections to the seminar for discussion.

Focus group pilot

In preparation for this seminar, please design and conduct a short focus group (this could be with members of your family, peer or friendship groups), of about 30 minutes, to enable you to gather data to address a question of your choosing.

Please do not record the data from this focus group. Please explain that this is a training exercise undertaken as part of your postgraduate degree programme, and that none of the data generated by the focus group, or the identities of or identifying details relating to the participants, will be stored or communicated for any research purpose.

Before the focus group consider:

- For what kinds of questions would focus group data be useful/appropriate?
- How will you introduce the topic to your respondents?
- What kinds of methods will you use for prompting discussion?
- What kind of role should you adopt as the focus group moderator?
- How will you manage group interactions and dynamics?
- How should you conclude the focus group?

After the focus group (immediately, or as soon as possible, afterwards), write some reflections on the following questions:

- What kind of data did you achieve from the focus group?
- How easy was it to generate data to answer your research question?
- What kind of dynamic emerged in the group? What were the relations between groups members like? How did you manage these? How easy was it to manage relations between group members?
- What kind of relationship did you have with the group and (how) did that affect the data? Did that help or hinder the research?

Bring your reflections to the seminar for discussion.

Ethnography/participant-observation pilot

In preparation for this seminar, please design and conduct a short participant-observation in a public place, to enable you to gather data to address a question of your choosing.

Please do not record any personal information from this participant-observation. If you are asked by anyone at the site of the observation about your presence, or if you decide to disclose your presence to anyone at the site, please explain that you are conducting a training exercise which is being undertaken as part of your postgraduate degree programme, and that none of the information you are gathering, or the identities or identifying details of anyone at the site, will be stored or communicated for any research purpose.

Before the observation consider:

- For what purposes would you seek to gather ethnographic data?
- What kinds of interactions with people at the site are appropriate for your ethnographic approach?
- Should you disclose your presence? To whom? Should you undertake any interviewing as part of your ethnography?
- What are you looking for?
- How do you think you could log/record data from your participant-observation?
- How should you exit the field?

After the participant-observation (immediately, or as soon as possible, afterwards), write some reflections on the following questions:

- What kind of data did you achieve?
- How easy was it to generate data to answer the research question?
- Did participant-observation enable insights that could not have been achieved through interviewing alone?
- What kind of relationship did you have with participants at the site, and did that shape the data? How? Did that help or hinder the research?

Bring your reflections to the seminar for discussion.

Documentary analysis pilot

In preparation for this seminar, please select some documents for analysis. In selecting and analysing the documents, consider the following questions:

- For what kinds of questions is documentary analysis appropriate?
- What criteria are you using for selecting the documents?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the documents' credibility, representativeness, authenticity or meaning?
- How accessible/public/restricted/private are these documents? What does that reveal about them?
- Who created or archived or distributed the documents? And for whom?
- Is it helpful/possible to consider what these documents *do*?

Following the analysis, write some reflections on the following questions:

- What kind of data did you select and why? How useful was it for addressing your research question? Was anything left out?
- How easy is to evaluate the significance, representativeness, credibility, etc. of documents?
- (How) is it possible to analyse what documents *do*?

Bring your reflections to the seminar for discussion.

Visual methods pilot

In preparation for this seminar, you will need to decide whether you wish to use visual methods *to elicit data* or to analyse visual images *as data*.

Visual methods for data-elicitation

In preparation for this seminar, you will need to consider various ways images might be used for data-elicitation and why, by working with an interviewee, a participant or a group.

Please do not record the data from any interview, diary or focus group. Please explain to your respondent(s) that this is a training exercise undertaken as part of your postgraduate degree programme, and that none of the data generated in the interview, diary or focus group, or the identity of or identifying details relating to the interviewee, will be stored or communicated for any research purpose.

Consider the following questions:

- For what purposes might you use visual images to elicit data?
- Do you wish to use found images or to ask your research participant to create images in order to elicit data?
- Will the use of the images take place in interview, a diary or focus group?
- If you are introducing the images, what kinds of images will you select/create and why/how?

Following the pilot, write some reflections on the following questions:

- What kind of data did you achieve? How useful was it for addressing your research question?
- Do you think the use of images changed the nature of the data you collected? If so, how?
- Did your participant's interpretation of the image differ from your own? If so, did it surprise you? And what do you conclude from this?

Bring your reflections to the seminar for discussion.

Analysing visual data/images

In preparation for this seminar, please select some visual data/images for analysis. In selecting and analysing the visual data/images, consider the following questions

- For what kinds of questions is visual data analysis appropriate?
- What criteria are you using for selecting the images?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the images' credibility, representativeness, authenticity or meaning?
- Who created or archived or distributed the visual data? And for whom?

Following the analysis, write some reflections on the following questions:

- What kind of data did you select and why? How useful was it for addressing your research question? Was anything left out?
- How easy is to evaluate the significance, representativeness, credibility, etc. of visual data?
- (How) is it possible to determine meaning of visual data/images?
- What meanings, if any, did you derive from looking at, through or behind the visual data/image?

Bring your reflections to the seminar for discussion.

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