Module Descriptor

Title	Research Methods		
Session	2025/26	**Status**	Active
Code	JOUR09001	**SCQF Level**	9
Credit Points		**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	2010
School	**Business and Creative Industries**		
Module Co-ordinator	Dr Margaret Hughes		

Summary of Module

The Research Methods module offers students the opportunity to critically engage with the practices and principles of journalism and media research. As well as contributing to their own small research community students receive one-to-one advice and guidance on how to develop their own personal research proposal. While designed as a critical foundation for Journalism Dissertation in Year 4, the module equips those concluding their studies at Level 9 with the academic research skills required to develop intellectually sound approaches to research proposal/pitches including areas such as abstract writing and research design techniques. The module includes an analysis of the research process and designing research as well as a review of research methodologies appropriate to study journalism and communication, such as content analysis, surveys and interviews, case studies and action research. The areas covered will include designing a research process, formulating a research proposal, conducting a literature review and examining a range of methodological approaches to academic research including the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection, as well as techniques for content and discourse analysis.

Key areas:

Research proposal design

Effective research methodologies

Abstract writing

Hypothesis creation

Content and discourse analysis

Qualitative and quantitative approaches

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☒	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☐	Work -Based Learning[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☒ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Critically discuss research processes and practices appropriate to journalism research.
L2	Critically evaluate literature appropriate to journalism research.
L3	Develop a research proposal on a suitable issue in journalism research.
L4	Critically evaluate, discuss and review information from a range of sources.
L5	

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 9** Demonstrating a critical understanding of the appropriateness of research methodologies. Demonstrating detailed knowledge of a chosen research design.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 9** Practicing skills of research critique. Using skills and techniques of research design to produce a research proposal.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 9** Undertaking critical analysis and evaluation of concepts, information and issues.

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

	Critically analysing established research within a literature review. Analysing information from a range of sources. Demonstrating critical awareness, scholarship and originality in addressing practical and ethical issues of research.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 9** Using formal presentation formats for research critiques and proposals. Interpreting and evaluating numerical and graphical data.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 9** Exercising autonomy and initiative in carrying out research activities at the appropriate level. Taking responsibility for own work and responsibilities in team approaches and in meeting deadlines.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	24
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	12
Asynchronous Class Activity	18
Independent Study	146
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources
The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Bryman A. et al. (2021) Bryman Social Research Methods, 9th ed, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Deacon, D. et al (2021) Research Communications: A Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis, 3rd edition, London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Jensen, K. B. et al (2012) Handbook of Media and Communications Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies, 2nd ed, London: Routledge.

Murray, R. (2011) How to Write a Thesis, 3rd ed, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements
In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time. **For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:** Attendance at all classes & seminars; engagement in group & individual in-class activities.

Equality and Diversity
The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code. In line with current legislation (Equality Act, 2010) and the UWS Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights Code, our modules are accessible and inclusive, with reasonable adjustment for different needs where appropriate.
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Arts Media**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	Arts & Media
Moderator	Dr Kenneth Pratt
External Examiner	Dr Fiona McKay
Accreditation Details	N/z
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	1/3

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
(L/O 1,3,4) is a presentation on research proposals (40% of total marks).
Assessment 2
(L/O 2,3,4) will be driven by individually assigned tutors to guide/advise on full research proposal completion. (60% of total marks).
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Presentation	☒	☐	☒	☒	☐	40%	3

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Essay	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐	60%0	

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**
External Examiner updated	Sept 2024	M Hughes