**Module Descriptor**

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| **Title** | Social Sciences Dissertation | | |
| **Session** | 2025/26 | **Status** | |
| **Code** | SSPG11004 | **SCQF Level** | 11 |
| **Credit Points** | 60 | **ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)** | 30 |
| **School** | **Education and Social Sciences** | | |
| **Module Co-ordinator** | I McPhee | | |

**Summary of Module**

As a triple-weighted module, the dissertation is likely to be as challenging as it is rewarding. With the advice of the module coordinator and a research supervisor, you will propose, design, and if required gain ethical approval, to conduct an extended piece of written research, focused on a research question appropriate to your degree pathway.

This triple module offers students the opportunity to critically engage in-depth with issues in social science, investigating literature, the theoretical context of your topic, selecting appropriate methodology and methods, and developing skills in data collection and analysis.

During T1, and T2, the module team offers dissertation workshops, designed to support students with different aspects of the dissertation, such as refining a research topic, structuring the dissertation and ethics.

The dissertation is designed to provide students with the opportunity to determine, under the guidance of a supervisor, the content and focus of a major part of their study and assessment. It provides an opportunity for the student to engage with research methodology, to develop skills in data collection and analysis, and results in a deeper and more extensive understanding of a specific topic. As well as the personal reward of investigating a research topic of importance, the project management, technical and analytical skills that you develop in this module are transferable to a range of professional environments, both within and beyond university.

• Develops critical approaches to understand contemporary social issues.

• Engages students evaluating research data and academic and sources of evidence.

• Engages students in critical evaluation and effective use of social sciences methods.

| Module Delivery Method | On-Campus[1] ☒ | Hybrid[2] ☒ | Online[3] ☐ | Work -Based Learning[4] ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Campuses for Module Delivery** | ☐ Ayr<br>☐ Dumfries | ☐ Lanarkshire<br>☐ London<br>☒ Paisley | ☐ Online / Distance Learning<br>☐ 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** | |
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| **L1** | Demonstrate a critical understanding of selection of the theories, principles, ideas, facts, concepts, and terminology relating to the chosen topic area; |
| **L2** | Plan and execute a significant project of research, investigation, or development; |
| **L3** | Draw on information from a variety of sources, including academic research publications, to offer sound and distinct insights on chosen research topic; |
| **L4** | Develop as an independent researcher by planning, designing, executing, and writing up a research project. |
| **L5** | |

| **Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills** | |
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| **SCQF Headings** | **During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:** |
| **Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)** | **SCQF 11**<br>Students will develop critical knowledge and understanding of key theories and concepts in analysing and discussing social sciences |
| **Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding** | **SCQF 11**<br>Students will apply knowledge and understanding of contemporary social issues in class-based discussions, online forums, and in assessment practice |
| **Generic Cognitive skills** | **SCQF 11**<br>Students will develop a range of academic and professional skills including those relevant to critical reflection on assessing evidence |

[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

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| **Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills** | **SCQF 11**<br>Students will engage with a range of modes of communication, oral, literary, and in online forums in the VLE Aula |
| **Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others** | **SCQF 11**<br>Students will have opportunities to work in groups and will work autonomously to discuss and debate contemporary social issues |

| **Prerequisites** | **Module Code** | **Module Title** |
|---|---|---|
| | **Other** | |
| **Co-requisites** | **Module Code**<br>SSPG11007 | **Module Title** Applied Research Methods in Social Sciences |

| **Learning and Teaching** | |
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| 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.<br>600 hours over 3 trimesters | |
| **Learning Activities**<br>During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below: | **Student Learning Hours**<br>(Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities) |
| Lecture / Core Content Delivery | 24 x 3 |
| Practice-based Learning | 12 x3 |
| Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity | 6 x 3 |
| Asynchronous Class Activity | 6 x 3 |
| Independent Study | 152 x 3 |
| Please select | |
| **TOTAL** | 600 |

**Indicative Resources**

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

Bryman, A. (2016) Social research methods (4th Ed). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Skott, B. P. and Ward, M. eds., 2013. Active Learning Exercises for Research Methods in Social Sciences. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506335179

Wellington, J. and Szczerbinski, M. (2007) Research Methods for the Social Sciences. 1st edn. Bloomsbury Publishing. Available at: https://www.perlego.com/book/875030/research-methods-for-the-social-sciences-pdfQUalitativ emetods for the social sciences

Berg, B., (2017) Qualitiative research methods for the social sciences: Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences, Global Edition (available as an e print inUWS library).

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| Thomas, R. M. & Brubaker, D.L. (2008) Theses and dissertations: a guide to planning, research, and writing. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Corwin 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** |
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| **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.**<br>**For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:** |

| **Equality and Diversity** |
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| **The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.** |
| **(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**

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| **Divisional Programme Board** | **Social Sciences** |
| **Overall Assessment Results** | ☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded** |
| **Module Eligible for Compensation** | ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**<br>**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** | Pg Social Sciences |
| **Moderator** | ESS Division staff |
| **External Examiner** | K Markus |
| **Accreditation Details** | |
| **Module Appears in CPD catalogue** | ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No** |
| **Changes / Version Number** | |

| **Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)** |
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| **Assessment 1** |
| MSc dissertation thesis of 1500 words submitted to Turnitin in Aula (100% weighting) |
| **Assessment 2** |
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| **Assessment 3** |

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| (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.<br>(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** |
| dissertation | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☐ | 100 | |

| **Component 2** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Assessment Type** | **LO1** | **LO2** | **LO3** | **LO4** | **LO5** | **Weighting of Assessment Element (%)** | **Timetabled Contact Hours** |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |

| **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** |
|---|---|---|
| Learning resources updated | March 2025 | Iain McPhee |
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