University of the West of Scotland

Module Descriptor

Session: 2024/25

Title of Module: MSc Research Dissertation CDAS			
Code: CDAS11002	**SCQF Level 11 (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)**	**Credit Points: 60**	**ECTS: 30 (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**
School:	School of Education and Social Sciences		
Module Co-ordinator:	A O'Gorman		

Summary of Module
The CDAS dissertation module forms a major part of the MSc Contemporary Drug and Alcohol Studies programme. The module provides students with the opportunity to consolidate their learning on drug and alcohol issues by conducting an empirical research study on a topic of their choice which is relevant to the programme and agreed with the module co-ordinator. Completion of the Trimester 1 Research Methods module ensures knowledge of a range of research techniques, providing a solid grounding in research methods and theory. Students are required to have an agreed Research Plan and successful completion of the methods module to progress on to the Dissertation. The Dissertation Module provides further advanced drug and alcohol specific research skills through a series of taught workshops. These workshops equip students with the expertise required to conduct a research project independently, and to disseminate findings in line with academic conventions and professional standards. In addition, workshop-based teaching and learning enables students to identify and clarify their research topic, aims, methodology and design; to prepare for fieldwork and data analysis; and to submit a timely research proposal and research ethics application. Ethics applications are required to be submitted to the School Ethics Committee and approval must be obtained before data collection can proceed. On completion of an accepted research proposal, students are allocated a research dissertation supervisor who will provide individual guidance and support in their development as researchers and through the completion of their dissertation.

Module Delivery Method					
Face-To-Face	**Blended**	**Fully Online**	**HybridC**	**Hybrid 0**	**Work-Based Learning**
☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
See Guidance Note for details.					

Campus(es) for Module Delivery						
The module will **normally** be offered on the following campuses / or by Distance/Online Learning: (Provided viable student numbers permit) (tick as appropriate)						
Paisley:	Ayr:	Dumfries:	Lanarkshire:	London:	Distance/Online Learning:	Other:
☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	Add name

Term(s) for Module Delivery					
(Provided viable student numbers permit).					
Term 1	☐	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☒

Learning Outcomes: (maximum of 5 statements) These should take cognisance of the SCQF level descriptors and be at the appropriate level for the module. At the end of this module the student will be able to:	
L1	Demonstrate the ability to critically review and synthesise an extensive body of literature on a specific topic and formulate a research question.
L2	Identify, conceptualise and execute appropriate research methods and ethical considerations required to investigate a research question.
L3	Plan and organise work, exercising autonomy and initiative in professional activities, and discussing and debating with peers and research specialists.
L4	Gather and analyse data using appropriate software where necessary to support and enhance the effectiveness of their research findings and skills
L5	Report independent research project in a dissertation format in line with academic standards and conventions.

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 Level **11** A critical understanding of a range of theories relating to alcohol and drugs. A critical understanding of a range of techniques for the analysis of qualitative and/or quantitative data.

Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	SCQF Level **11**
	Utilising an appropriate range of research methods in order to undertake a substantial research project.
	Plan and execute a significant project of research, through the stages of idea generation, formation and investigation.
	Interpret, critically analyse and utilise primary and secondary sources of information including electronic sources.
Generic Cognitive skills	SCQF Level **11** Consolidate and extend subject specialist knowledge, skills, academic writing practices and thinking.
	Demonstrate the ability to conduct analysis, evaluation and theoretical synthesis.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	SCQF Level **11**
	Communicate with peers and specialists in research.
	Evaluate and interpret data.
	Using appropriate software to support and enhance the effectiveness of their research skills.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with others	SCQF Level **11** Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative to complete a substantial research project from inception to completion.
	Take responsibility for their own work and contribute to the collaborative learning activities of the group.
	Form a supportive and productive research relationship with their dissertation supervisor.
	Systematically identify and address their own learning needs both in current and in new areas, making use of research in source materials as appropriate.
	Deal with complex ethical issues. Develop a critical understanding of the importance of the definition, identification and evidencing of social problems and their contested nature;
	Develop understanding of interdisciplinary research across the social sciences;
	Develop an advanced understanding of evidence-based policy-making and the policy process in relation to contemporary social issues;
Pre-requisites:	Before undertaking this module the student should have undertaken the following:

	Module Code: SSPG1100 7	Module Title: Applied Research Methods in Social Sciences
	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 (Normally totalling 200 hours): (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture/Core Content Delivery	10
Practice Based Learning	10
Tutorial/Synchronous Support Activity	40
Asynchronous Class Activity	20
Independent Study	520
	Hours Total 600

**Indicative Resources: (eg. Core text, journals, internet access)

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

Bell, J. (2010) Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science. (5th ed) Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Open University Press.

Booth, A; Sutton, A; Papaioannou, D (2016) Systematic Approaches to a Successful Literature Review London Sage.

Burnett, J (2009) Doing your social science dissertation. Sage. London

Biggam J. (2008) Succeeding with Your Master's Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Handbook, Open University Press, Berkshire, England:
http://www.mheducation.co.uk/openup/chapters/9780335227198.pdf

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

Seale, C (2017) Researching Society and Culture 4th Edition London Sage.

(**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

It is expected that students will attend all scheduled workshops/seminars and participate with all delivered elements as part of their engagement with their programme of study. (Please refer to UWS Regulation 5.7.) These will be held online to facilitate campus and distance students.

Equality and Diversity

This module is appropriate for any student. Appropriate support can be provided and reasonable adjustments can be made where required. The University will strive to accommodate any equality and diversity issues bought to the attention of the School and module team.

(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	Social Sciences
Assessment Results (Pass/Fail)	Yes ☐ No ☒
School Assessment Board	PG Social Sciences
Moderator	A Shaw
External Examiner	L. Williams
Accreditation Details	
Changes/Version Number	1 Moderator April Shaw

Assessment: (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

A successful application to the MCS School Ethics Committee that demonstrates a critical application of appropriate ethical considerations for the required project. The application must fulfil both School and Subject specific ethical requirements and gain approval within the set time scale in order for students to proceed to data collection.

A literature review which gives students the opportunity to acquire the skills to critically review a body of literature which they wish to further research and ensures engagement with the literature relevant to their research question at an early stage of the module.

The thesis (12000 - 15000 words) worth 100% of the grade.

(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.)

Assessment Outcome Grids (**See Guidance Note)**

Component 1							
Assessment Type (Footnote B.)	Learning Outcome (1)	Learning Outcome (2)	Learning Outcome (3)	Learning Outcome (4)	Learning Outcome (5)	Weighting (%) of Assessment Element	Timetabled Contact Hours
Dissertation/ Thesis	√	√	√	√	√	100%	0

Change Control:

What	When	Who
Further guidance on aggregate regulation and application when completing template	16/01/2020	H McLean
Updated contact hours	14/09/21	H McLean
Updated Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure	19/10/2023	C Winter
Updated UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code	19/10/2023	C Winter
Guidance Note 23-24 provided	12/12/23	D Taylor
General housekeeping to text across sections. .	12/12/23	D Taylor

Version Number: MD Template 1 (2023-24)