

University of the West of Scotland

Module Descriptor

Session: 2024/25

Title of Module: Social Science Dissertation			
Code: SSPG11004	SCQF Level: 11 (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)	Credit Points: 20	ECTS: 10 (European Credit Transfer Scheme)
School:	School of Education and Social Sciences		
Module Co-ordinator:	I McPhee		
Summary of Module			
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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					
Face-To-Face	Blended	Fully Online	HybridC	Hybrid 0	Work-Based Learning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Add name

Term(s) for Module Delivery					
(Provided viable student numbers permit).					
Term 1		Term 2		Term 3	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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 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.

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

	Students will develop critical knowledge and understanding of key theories and concepts in analysing and discussing social sciences	
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	SCQF Level 11 Students will apply knowledge and understanding of contemporary social issues in class-based discussions, online forums, and in assessment practice	
Generic Cognitive skills	SCQF Level 11 Students will develop a range of academic and professional skills including those relevant to critical reflection on assessing evidence	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	SCQF Level 11 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 Level 11 Students will have opportunities to work in groups and will work autonomously to discuss and debate contemporary social issues	
Pre-requisites:	Before undertaking this module the student should have undertaken the following:	
	Module Code:	Module Title:
	Other:	
Co-requisites	Module Code:	Module Title:

*Indicates that module descriptor is not published.

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. This is a sixty-credit module.	
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	24 x3

Practice Based Learning	12 x3
Tutorial/Synchronous Support Activity	6 x3
Asynchronous Class Activity	6 x3
Independent Study	152 x3
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	
	Hours Total 200 x 3 = 600
**Indicative Resources: (eg. Core text, journals, internet access)	
<p>The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes</p> <p>Bryman, A. (2012) <i>Social research methods</i> (4th Ed). Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Creswell, J. W. (2014) <i>Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches</i>. (4th Ed). London: Sage.</p> <p>Denscombe, M. (2010) <i>The good research guide: for small scale research projects</i>. 4th ed. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Open University Press.</p> <p>Jesson, J. (2011) <i>Doing your literature review: traditional and systematic techniques</i>, London: Sage.</p> <p>Leedy, P. D. & Ormrod, J. E. (2010) <i>Practical research : planning and design</i> (9th Ed.). Saddle River, N. J. : Pearson Education.</p> <p>Machi, L. & McEvoy, B. (2009) <i>The literature review</i>. Thousand Oaks : Corwin.</p> <p>McMillan, K. & Weyers, J. (2011) <i>How to write dissertations & project reports</i>. 2nd ed. Harlow: Pearson Education.</p> <p>Murray, R. (2011) <i>How to write a thesis</i>. 3rd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.</p> <p>Oliver, P. (2012) <i>Succeeding with your literature review: a handbook for students</i>. Maidenhead: Open University Press.</p> <p>Orna, E. & Stevens, G. (2009) <i>Managing information for research: practical help in researching, writing and designing dissertations</i>. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.</p>	

- Preece, R. (1994) *Starting research: an introduction to academic research and dissertation writing*. London: Pinter.
- Robson, C. (2007) *How to do a research project: a guide for undergraduate students*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Robson, C. (2011) *Real world research: a resource for users of social research methods in applied settings*. 3rd ed. Chichester: Wiley.
- Rudestam, K. E. & Newton, R.R. (2007) *Surviving your dissertation: a comprehensive guide to content and process*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Rugg, G. & Petre, M. (2007) *A gentle guide to research methods*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Rumsey, S. (2008) *How to find information: a guide for researchers*. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Smith, P. (2011) *How to write an assignment: proven techniques for producing essays, reports and dissertations that succeed*. Oxford: How to Books.
- Swetnam, D. (2000) *Writing your dissertation: how to plan, prepare and present successful work*. 3rd ed. Oxford: How to Books.
- Thomas, R. M. & Brubaker, D.L. (2008) *Theses and dissertations: a guide to planning, research, and writing*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Corwin Press.
- Thompson, P. & Kamler, B. (2013) *Writing for Peer-Reviewed Journals*, London: Routledge.
- Walliman, N.S. R. (2011) *Your research project: designing and planning your work*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.
- Wisker, G. (2009) *The undergraduate research handbook*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

(*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.

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](#).

(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 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
School Assessment Board	Social Sciences
Moderator	Teaching team
External Examiner	L Gaston
Accreditation Details	NA
Changes/Version Number	1

Assessment: (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

Learning and teaching in this module includes engagement with the University's Learning Experience Platform, Aula. Learning resources are embedded within Aula.

Students will demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes for the module by submitting a practice component of assessment (recording of a one-to-one career guidance/development interview) and a written component of assessment. Students will receive clear guidance relating to the submission of assessment.

Component 1 MSc thesis of 1500 words submitted to Turnitin in Aula (100% weighting)

(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	Timetable Contact Hours
	X	X	X	X	-	100%	54

Combined Total for All Components						100%	36 hours
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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)