Module Descriptor

Title	Designing Your Dissertation Project		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	
Code	SOCY09056	**SCQF Level**	9
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Education and Social Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Karen Cooper		

Summary of Module

This module equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary to design their honours year dissertation projects.

Taking a step-by-step approach, the module introduces students to key decisions that need to be made during the design of a research project, such as: choosing a suitable topic; crafting "budding" dissertation questions; building a justification and identifying suitable approaches for sampling, collecting and analysing empirical data or published evidence. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to think about the ethics of their proposed dissertation projects and to consider the ways in which research shapes, as well as documents, the issue being explored.

Where possible, students have opportunities to hear from honours year students who are engaged in their dissertation projects. Students will be able to ask dissertation students about their experiences, tips and suggestions.

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)	

[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

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	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of a chosen topic to be researched in honours year.
L2	Critically justify key choices made in the development of an honours year dissertation proposal.
L3	Demonstrate critical knowledge, understanding and skills in research design.
L4	Demonstrate critical understanding of the moral and ethical issues involved in conducting a dissertation project and how these can be managed appropriately.
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** Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of research design, including techniques for sampling, data collection and data analysis.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 9** Application of critical knowledge and understanding to produce a robust dissertation proposal
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 9** Critical presentation of research question(s) and how they can be explored within the confines of an honours year dissertation project
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 9** Ability to orally present of a budding dissertation proposal and to field / respond to questions from the audience.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 9** Ability to develop a detailed dissertation proposal under the supervision of the teaching team.

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	12
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	24
Asynchronous Class Activity	10
Independent Study	154
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources

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

- Burnett, J. (2009) Doing your social science dissertation. London: Sage.
- Clark, T., Foster, L., Sloan, L. and Bryman, A. (2021) Bryman's social research methods. 6th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2023) Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. 6th edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: 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

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:

The university is committed to providing a supportive learning environment that actively facilitates student success. In this module, there is a high degree of student-led flexibility. You are academically engaged if you are regularly engaged with scheduled live sessions on-campus. You should also undertake work in your own time, including engaging with seminar exercises and Group Work in preparation for seminar discussion, course-related learning resources, and with timely completion and submission of assessments.

Whilst we understand that there may be times when conflicting priorities make participation challenging, for you to gain the most from this module it is recommended that you participate in all scheduled live classes and complete your self-directed learning activities in a timely manner.

It may be difficult to pass the assessment associated with this module if you are not regularly engaging with the module work and live classes. We may reach out to check how things are

going and offer support if we observe that you have not been attending sessions or completing online 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. Module materials comply with University guidance on inclusive learning and teaching, and specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS policy and regulations.
(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**
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	UG Social Sciences
Moderator	Chloe McLean
External Examiner	E Matchett
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Oral Presentation (30%)
Assessment 2
Assessment 2 Dissertation Proposal (70%)
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	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	30	14.5

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☒	☒	☐	70	18.5

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