Module Descriptor

Title	Research Design		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	
Code	CHSS10007	**SCQF Level**	SCQF 10
Credit Points	30	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	15
School	**Education and Social Science**		
Module Co-ordinator	TBC		

Summary of Module

This module helps you build the confidence and skills to design and carry out your own research project on topics that matter to children, young people, families, and communities. You will explore both creative and written research approaches, so you can see how research can be practical, engaging, and directly useful for your future career in education, social care, health, youth or community work. You will be introduced to core ideas such as ontology, epistemology, and methodology, and learn how these philosophical perspectives influence the kinds of questions researchers ask and the methods they choose. Step by step, you will practise spotting meaningful research problems in your field and turning them into clear, focused questions that can be explored in real-world settings. Throughout the module, you will work on designing a research study, thinking carefully about how to select appropriate methods, address ethical issues, and plan a realistic project you could carry out as an emerging researcher. You will have opportunities to develop a rigorous research strategy capable of generating valid and insightful findings, while also strengthening your creative problem-solving and project-management skills, including meeting deadlines and working independently.

By the end of the module, you will have a critical understanding of how research philosophy informs research design and the diverse methods available to you. You will be able to identify complex issues in your chosen area, design a thoughtful study to investigate them, and feel more prepared for final-year projects, postgraduate study, or research-informed practice in professional roles with children and families.

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	Demonstrate a critical understanding of key research philosophies, including ontology, epistemology, and methodology, and explain how these foundations inform decisions made within a methodology chapter.
L2	Identify, justify, and articulate a research problem or focus, showing an ability to translate real-world or theoretical issues into coherent and academically robust research questions.
L3	Design an appropriate research strategy by selecting and defending suitable qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches, ensuring alignment between research aims, methodology, and methods.
L4	Critically evaluate and apply ethical principles relevant to childhood studies research, demonstrating an ability to justify ethical choices within a methodology chapter.
L5	Demonstrate the ability to plan, organise, and communicate a detailed methodological framework, including sampling, data collection, and analytical techniques, ensuring that the final written work reflects academic rigour and methodological coherence.

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 10** Evidence detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding, showing critical engagement with the conceptual underpinnings of Childhood Studies.

[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

	Constructively critique theories, practice and research in the areas of child development, well-being, participation and learning for multiple childhoods. Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the professional skills needed for practice(s) promoting mutually respectful professional relationships. Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which Childhood Studies as a paradigm through a range of established research methodologies. Synthesise knowledge and understanding that leads to originality in relation to human rights, diversity, equity, social justice, and inclusion in relation to young children, families and communities.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF Level 10** Engage in critical evaluation and analysis. Write for different purposes, including but not limited to persuasion, explanation, description, evaluation, and judgement, hypothesis and summary. Carry out empirical studies ethically, involving a variety of methods of data collection, relating to ecological context relating to Childhood Studies. Use skills, techniques, practices that are specialised and/or advanced at the forefront of professionals working with children, families and communities. Have an excellent ability to be attuned to perspectives of Childhood Studies and, where appropriate, act as an advocate for children, families and communities.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF Level 10** Use the communication skills necessary to converse, debate, negotiate, persuade. Use digital technology and social media appropriately in a range of contexts and reflect on the experiences. Present or convey, formally and informally, information about specialised topics to informed audiences. Interpret, use and evaluate a wide range of numerical and graphical data to set and achieve goals/targets. Communicate with peers, senior colleagues and specialists on a professional level.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF Level 10** Demonstrate strong critical engagement with the challenges and constraints of, multi-professional, inter-professional, and multicultural working. Demonstrate some originality and creativity in responding to professional issues. Critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in relation to Childhood Studies. Make judgements where data/information is limited or comes from a range of sources. Offer professional insights, interpretations and solutions to problems and issues.

Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF Level 10** Access, retrieve, organise and use a range of sources of information, including primary sources, and critically evaluate their relevance. Independently initiate, design, and carry out a research project with appropriate supervision, evidencing a high degree of competence and reflexive engagement with theoretical, practical and methodological implications and limitations. Apply a range of research skills independently and develop implications for future practice, and/or professional roles. Manage complex ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices. Recognise the limits of these codes of practice in relation to research and seek guidance where appropriate.

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

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 30-credit module includes 300 learning hours, normally including 48-60 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	18
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	18
Personal Development Planning	35
Independent Study	229
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	300 Hours

Indicative Resources
The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes: Bryman, A., Bell, E., Harley, B. and Bryman, A. (2026) *Bryman's Social Research Methods*. 7th edn. Oxford University Press. Bell, J. and Waters, S. (2018) *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers*. 7th edn. Open University Press.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2021) *Thematic analysis: a practical guide*. Sage Publications Ltd.

Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2018) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th edn. SAGE Publications.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.) (2018) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 5th edn. SAGE Publications.

Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E. (2021) *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. 12th edn. Pearson

(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:** In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are defined as academically engaged if they are regularly engaged with timetabled teaching sessions, course-related learning resources including those in the Library and on VLE, 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. Aligned with the overall commitment to equality and diversity stated in the Programme Specifications, the module supports equality of opportunity for students from all backgrounds and with different learning needs. Using VLE, learning materials will be presented electronically in formats that allow flexible access and manipulation of content (part-time and distant learning students should check with their programme leader for any queries). The module complies with University regulations and guidance on inclusive learning and teaching practice. 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	**Education**
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	Early Years

Moderator	TBC
External Examiner	TBC
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	1

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Written – 3,500 Words
Assessment 2
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**
Written	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	100%	3 hrs

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%	3 hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**
New module	February 2026	Julie Ovington
