

**University of Nottingham
Economic and Social Research
Council
Doctoral Training Centre**

Module Guide

For the School of Health Sciences

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Introduction

This module guide has been created to give you information about the modules that you can undertake as a PhD student with the School of Health Sciences. The availability and content of these modules may change, so please only use this guide as a reference. These modules aren't specific to the School of Health Sciences; you will be studying with groups of students from different courses across the University that are also interested in research and health.

Attendance at modules needs to be agreed with supervisors. To apply for a module a student must submit a module registration form which has been signed by one of their supervisors.

Please be aware that the M14150 Philosophy of Research module is compulsory for our PhD students. We also strongly recommend that you take either M14152 Foundations of Qualitative Methods or M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis, depending on the methodology you intend to use in your research.

M14150 Philosophy of Research/Social Science

Taught by: Lecture and Seminar

***When
taught:*** **Semester 1**

The module examines the relationship between epistemology, ontology and methodology. In the module we explore the concepts that underpin educational and social research including empiricism, rationalism, interpretivism and realism and their relation to objectivity, causation and validity. The module covers the role of values in social enquiry, and helps students to explore the relevance of these issues for their own research.

M14151 Research Design, Practice & Ethics

Taught by: Lecture and Seminar

***When
taught:*** **Semester 1**

This module focuses on the analytical, practical and ethical organization of social science research. The analytical organization is often referred to as 'research design' and will constitute the bulk of the content of this module. Research design consists of choices necessary to transform a research question into actual research. These choices pertain to strategies and modes of case selection, observation methods, data collection and modes of analysis. Every research question can be elaborated in different ways (i.e., with different designs), none of which will be ideal in all respects as the various choices pertain to trade-offs. Each design has its own implications in terms of costs and in terms of potential threats to the validity of its eventual results. These implications will be elaborated in the module, as well as ways how to handle the resulting choice problems in actual practice. The practical organisation of research is closely related to design choices, but focuses particularly on logistical and timing issues. Ethical organisation of the research involves awareness of ethical issues, of ethical consent procedures and of their implications for research design and practical organisation.

M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods

Taught by: Lecture and Seminar

***When
taught:*** **Semester 2**

This module provides a conceptual overview of the various approaches and debates associated with theory and practice of qualitative research. It examines a range of contrasting perspectives on the design of research including problem identification, selection and sampling, and analysis. Research ethics, and the role of the researcher in generating qualitative data, are key themes which run through the module. Specific consideration is given to the ways in which qualitative and quantitative approaches may be seen as complementary, and the use of mixed methods. The module will also cover the ways in which qualitative research can be evaluated. The module will also facilitate dialogue between members of different social science disciplines, to give an understanding of how some issues or practices may be viewed differently from different disciplinary perspectives.

M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis

Taught by: Lecture and Computing Lab

***When
taught:*** **Semester 1**

The objective of this module is to further students' familiarity with the practice of quantitative data analysis in the social sciences at an intermediate level. The lecture component of the module will explore a variety of the most commonly used statistical methods; in the laboratory component, students will learn to apply these techniques to the analysis of social science data. Through assignments, students will have the opportunity to develop and test their own hypotheses and explanations on major research data sets. The module should provide a sound grasp of the possibilities, methods, and dangers inherent in quantitative social science research.

B74EIS Evaluating interventions, Services & Health & Social Care

Taught by: Online with optional tutorials

When taught: **Semester 2**

This module will introduce students to the main approaches and methods available for the evaluation of health and social care policy and practice. The module will prepare students to assess the effectiveness of the interventions they implement, the programmes and services they deliver and the policies they plan or seek to enact using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Students will be taught frameworks to support their decision-making concerning the appropriate criteria by which to measure effectiveness in different situations. Students will be able to distinguish between interventions, services and policies that aim for the achievement of goals, and outcomes and interventions that are goal free. Students will therefore be equipped to evaluate structures, processes and outcomes and - more importantly - be able to identify where best to evaluate structures, processes or outcomes. The module will prepare students to identify and demonstrate the benefit of interventions to individual users, organisations or whole populations.

B74CSR Principles & Processes of Comprehensive Systematic Review

Taught by: Computer session

When taught: Semester 2

This module will promote an understanding of the process of conducting a comprehensive systematic review of evidence in order to inform the conduct of health care practice. The module will enable students to:

- Critically discuss the role of systematic review within the context of evidence translation, transfer, utilisation and generation and the evidence based health care movement;
- Explore the use of systematic reviews to explore issues relating to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, feasibility, effectiveness and costs of health care interventions;
- Frame an appropriate review question and develop a review protocol relevant to their own area of practice;
- Develop approaches to design an appropriate search strategy;
- Critically explore the processes of assessment of methodological quality, data extraction and data synthesis for a range of health related research;
- Critically discuss the available frameworks for the systematic review of quantitative and qualitative research and the process of meta analysis and meta synthesis;
- Critically discuss the use of a range of evidence, including narrative opinion and text in the process of systematic review.

B74MMR Mixed Methods in Health Research

Taught by: Lecture

When taught: Intensive block in May

Pre-requisites: M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Research or equivalent to be determined by convenor

The module will explore the philosophical and practical foundations for using mixed methods in health research. Mixed methods research will be explored by considering issues around conceptualising and designing mixed methods research to selecting methods, analysing and interpreting data and reporting findings.

B74SET Social Epidemiology: theories and methods for understanding the social determinants of health

Taught by: Lecture and workshop

When taught: Intensive block in June

Pre-requisites: M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

This module covers the methods and measurements used in social epidemiology. The basic epidemiological measurements will be introduced alongside the methods of measuring these through the various study types. The strengths and weaknesses of each study type will be considered. We will also consider the concept of causation and the controversies in its measurement.

This module will consider how social class and deprivation are measured in the UK and the advantages and disadvantages of these measures. We will discuss some of the available data sources and their limitations. Finally we will cover methods of statistical analysis.

M14201 Measurement Models

Taught by: Computer Lab

When taught: Intensive block in February

Pre-requisites: M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

This module focuses on the use of methods commonly used to assess whether a set of variables can be assumed to measure the same underlying phenomenon (often referred to as a latent factor, trait, or dimension). If that is the case, the information from the separate variables can be combined into a composite measure (multiple item measurement), which yields important benefits for further analysis. The module will focus in particular on two methods that are very frequently used in the social and behavioural sciences: factor analysis (including exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis) and item-response scaling (including Mokken and Rasch scaling). The module covers both kinds of measurement models, practical considerations in actual applications, empirical examples from different disciplines, and hands-on training.

M14205 Structural Equation Modelling

Taught by: Computer Lab

When taught: Intensive Block in March

Pre-requisites: M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

This module focuses on the use of structural equation models (SEM, sometimes known by the name of the software, e.g., AMOS, LISREL, etc.) in empirical social research. SEM is sometimes referred to as 'causal' modelling, because of the possibility to specify a full causal model and subject it to empirical scrutiny. Such models differ from, e.g., regression and ANOVA models because they do not distinguish between a single dependent variable, and all other variables being independent. Instead, the distinction is between exogenous (not influenced by other variables, reflected in a graphical representation of the model by the absence of 'incoming' arrows) and endogenous variables (which are influenced by others, shown in graphical representations by 'incoming' arrows). Endogenous variables can simultaneously be influenced by other variables and exert influence on yet other ones. Under certain conditions SEM can even model reciprocal effects between variables. This allows the development of empirical models that are closer to substantive theories, as well as the explicit comparative evaluation of rivaling causal theories. The module covers the methodological background of SEM, practical considerations in actual applications, empirical examples from different disciplines, and hands-on training.

M14207 Text Analysis

Taught by: Computer Lab

When taught: Intensive Block in May and June

Pre-requisites: M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

This module provides an overview of different ways in which textual material can be systematically analysed, the application of these approaches in different social sciences, the assumptions involved, and their requirements in terms of practical procedures and computer software. This module aims to provide a wide-ranging overview of different methods and approaches in textual analysis, identify the specific aims and assumptions of various approaches, and compare their merits and problems. It will also discuss a range of practical issues relating to data sources, data management, and the use of content analysis software. At various points during the module, participants will have the opportunity to explore the relevance of various approaches to their own research problems and gain practical experience, e.g. computer assisted content analysis.

M14160 Intermediate Quantitative Analysis

Taught by: Computer Lab

When taught: Intensive Block in June

Pre-requisites: M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

The objective of this module is to introduce students to specific issues of quantitative data analysis relevant to cross-sectional survey data. The lecture component of the module will explore the most common issues that arise when examining survey data. This includes issues such as: measurement error, survey non-response, missing data, weighting, recoding, and merging data sets. The lecture will focus on cross-sectional survey data. Finally, the lecture will discuss the relative strengths of different survey modes: face-to-face, telephone and Internet. In the laboratory component, students will learn to address the most common issues, using a range of the most popular survey data sets: including the National Annenberg Election Survey, General Social Survey, European Social Survey and the European Election Studies. Through assignments, students will have the opportunity to develop and test hypotheses and explanations using major survey data sets. The module should provide the skills necessary to take one or more survey data sets, and conduct the data management and analysis necessary to conduct a full scale research project.

M14208 Advanced Methods in Survey Analysis

Taught by: Computer Lab

When taught: Intensive Block in June

Pre-requisites: M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

M14160 Intermediate Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

The objective of this module is to familiarise students to specific issues of quantitative data analysis relevant to longitudinal survey data. The lecture will focus on longitudinal survey data: rolling cross-section, pooled cross-section, and repeated measures (panel). In the laboratory component, students will learn to address the most common issues of longitudinal survey analysis, using a range of the most popular survey data sets: including the National Annenberg Election Survey, General Social Survey, European Social Survey and the European Election Studies. Through assignments, students will have the opportunity to develop and test hypotheses and explanations using major survey data sets. The module should provide the skills necessary to take one or more survey data sets, and conduct the data management and analysis necessary to conduct a full scale research project.

L34100 Individual and Group Interviews

Taught by: Lecture

When taught: Intensive Block in May

Pre-requisites: M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods or equivalent to be determined by the convenor

This block will involve practically-oriented sessions where to explore a variety of individual and group interview approaches. This will include focus groups as well as structured, semi-structured, and more open-ended styles of interviewing (including narrative approaches). It will also consider the use of stimulus material, vignettes, and critical incidents as possible ways of structuring interview interactions. Sessions will include practical demonstrations of interviewing, and will involve the analysis of interview transcripts, along with published research papers, which use different analytical approaches. Among a range of issues that will be considered, it will discuss some of the ethical issues that can arise when this type of fieldwork is being conducted, and there will be plenty of opportunity for group members to draw upon their own research experiences within this and other discussions. This is a hands-on module.

L34095 Advanced Ethnography

Taught by: Lecture

When taught: Intensive Block in June

Pre-requisites: M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods or equivalent to be determined by the convenor

This module considers in detail 'ethnography' as a qualitative research method. It explores the underlying principles and practices of the approach, which, broadly speaking, involves studying people 'at first hand', in detail, usually at length and in the context in which they live, work, play etc. It will explore:

- Key concepts and approaches
- Important ethnographic studies
- Critiques, strengths and weaknesses
- Designing and planning your own ethnographic study.

Students will experience a range of learning methods including lectures, workshops, film viewings, student presentations and group work. The course will explore the historic development of the ethnographic tradition from its inception in the field of anthropology (e.g. Malinowski), early use in sociology (including the Chicago School's research into urban sociology). It will consider the contested terrain of defining what constitutes ethnographic research and how it has been conceptualised and theorised, paying particular attention to researcher subjectivity and how this impacts 'hands-on' research. Data-collection methods including interviewing, participant observation, text collection and photography will be explored in great detail, and students will be required to design a study with the above considerations in mind.

L34098 Analysing Verbal & Visual Interaction

Taught by: Lecture

When taught: Intensive Block in May

Pre-requisites: M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods or equivalent to be determined by the convenor

This module covers three distinct but related methodological approaches to studying verbal and visual interaction, highlighting both similarities and differences between them. We will firstly introduce the concept and principles of discourse analysis and the practices that it involves. We will then focus on conversation analysis, and explore the differences between this approach and discourse analysis. Finally, we will consider ethnomethodologically informed video analysis. We will conclude with an examination of the strengths and limitations of using video data, and the ways in which it can be presented in written work. This is a hands-on module. Throughout the two days we will experience what work using these different approaches involves and discuss the practical, ethical and theoretical issues that are raised by our activities.

L34096 Archival Methods

Taught by: Lecture

When taught: Intensive Block in May

Pre-requisites: M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods or equivalent to be determined by the convenor

Archival methods and documents in general are often neglected in sociology, but they have been central to the practice of many other related disciplines, including history, political science and more recently, anthropology. Indeed there is a resurgence of interest in the archive (both public and private) across cultural studies and, in particular, memory studies. Informed by insights from other disciplinary contexts, this module will explore how and why the archive as a research site might similarly be of interest to qualitative sociologists and investigate how archival documents can be used in research. The module will therefore both offer an introduction to archive theory and a hands-on introduction to working with a variety of archival documents. The module will consider the following issues:

- How might we define the status and purpose of the archive and its contents?
- How does the archive's status and purpose influence our mode of engagement with it?
- What are the politics of the archive? What 'traces' are present, what missing, with what gendered, 'raced', classed etc. results?
- How have historians and others worked with and within the archive, given these limitations?
- What are the advantages and limitations in 're-using' qualitative archived data?
- Approaches to interpreting archival documents.

L34102 Health Economic Evaluation Principles & Practicalities

Taught by: Lecture

When taught: Intensive Block in May

Pre-requisites: M14153 Fundamentals of Quantitative Analysis or equivalent to be determined by convenor

This module will introduce the student to the basic building blocks of health economic techniques and concepts in order for them to critically appraise studies in health economics and to be aware of the steps necessary to conduct an economic appraisal. It will introduce them to cost and resource in health economics and some key definitions. It will examine different ways of outcome measurement as it effects economic appraisal and specifically the use of utility measures using the EQ5D as an exemplar to illustrate the use of index measures. The module will cumulative in techniques of economic appraisal and a practical exercise to allow the theory learnt to be put into practice. The course will use practical examples throughout and involve a number of exercises designed to enable the student to practically conceptualise the techniques taught.

L34097 Researching Media, Culture & Society

Taught by: Lecture

When taught: Intensive Block in April

Pre-requisites: M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods or equivalent to be determined by the convenor

This module will explore a selection of key debates and issues in the Anglo-American media in order to introduce students to a range of i) theories about popular media and ii) different approaches to studying a range of media genres. It problematises the role of the media in contemporary culture and society in three specific contexts: 'Gender and identity'; 'Science and Society' and 'Culture and Citizenship'. Drawing on these contexts and case studies, it will equip students with appropriate theoretical and methodological tools to critically analyse a range of media texts and audienceship practices. Students will practice various research methods by experimenting with different methodological and analytical approaches. The first part of the module, 'Gender and Identity', will explore feminist theories about popular media, with the emphasis on exploring research methods and methodologies appropriate for analysing gendered mediated representations as they intersect with other axes of difference such as 'race', class and sexuality. The second part, 'Science and Society', aims to engage students with the way that the media frame issues through culturally situated language and images, exploring the advantages and disadvantages of these ways of framing, steering and stimulating public debate about science and technology. The third part of the module, 'Culture and citizenship' will explore issues around media and citizenship with a focus on culture, ideology and politics.

L34111 Researching Public Policy & Management

Taught by: Seminar

When taught: Intensive Block in May

This module covers some of the main approaches to researching public policy and public management. The module will consider the role of theory in policy-related studies and then explore the pros and cons of the following designs/methods: comparative research (in particular cross-country research), researching networks and governance arrangements, use of performance indicators, elite interviewing and the evaluation of policies and cost-benefit analysis. The module will use case studies to illustrate the designs, methodologies and methods discussed.

XX4915 Mixed Methodology in Social Research

Taught by: Seminar

When taught: Intensive Block in May

Pre-requisites: M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods and M14153 Fundamentals in Quantitative Methods or equivalent to be determined by the convenor

This module covers the theoretical and practical aspects of mixed methodology. Firstly, we will explore the theoretical and ethical dimensions of mixed methodology. This is followed by an examination of the different types of mixed methods, including discussions regarding the strengths and limitations of using this approach. Finally, we will engage with the practical aspects of collecting data using mixed methods, and associated analytical strategies. Throughout the two day module, we will engage in discussion, debate and practical tasks in order to experience various aspects of using a mixed methods approach to research. A context for the module will be mixed methods in educational research but with application to other social science areas.

XX4916 Video and Participatory Approaches in Social Research

<i>Taught by:</i>	Lecture and practical workshops
<i>When taught:</i>	Intensive Block in May
<i>Assessment:</i>	Storyboard plus commentary outlining modality/type of proposed video, its design and ethical considerations
<i>Pre-requisites:</i>	M14152 Foundations in Qualitative Methods or equivalent to be determined by the convenor

This module considers the methodological and ethical issues raised by working with video and a range of participants who are engaged at different levels in the participatory research process. It explores the distinction between video as a data collection tool, video production as a process for generating data, and the potential use of a range of video products throughout the research process from access through to dissemination. This is a hands-on module based on over twenty years of research experience working with video on an eclectic mix of research projects. The sessions introduce tasks that incorporate storyboarding and filming, in preparation for making a short film. It will be taught over one whole day and two half days. A typology of five different modalities will be referred to as a means of reflecting on the degree of integration of video in the participatory research process and as a way of revealing the different contributions video can make to the core purposes of the participatory research process. Each modality will also be used to link the use of video across a range of research paradigms and traditions. The afternoon of the first day will be based around group work. The session will introduce tasks that incorporate storyboarding and filming. The following half day session will review these group materials in preparation for making a short 'trigger video'. The last half day session will evaluate these films and accompanying materials in preparation for individual assignments. Throughout the two days we will experience the practical issues arising from working with video and discuss these together with the methodological and ethical issues that inevitably arise.