

SW7016

FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT (Capstone)

MA in Professional Education and Training

Advanced Social Work

(60 credits at level 7)



This module is required for students undertaking studies at Masters Level and is normally taken after achieving PG Diploma Level. The module will provide students with the experience of utilising principles of research and academic writing and thus demonstrate the intellectual skills learnt on the course. Students are expected to critically review research and to evaluate the evidence underpinning their own practice. The module will provide students with the opportunity to implement the knowledge and skills developed during the previous modules by conducting research focused on a topic of their choice related to their area of practice with the support of a research supervisor. The module will enhance students' presentation and publication skills as the assessment includes writing an abstract, presenting a poster and writing an article suitable for publication in a peer reviewed journal.

AIMS

- To equip graduates with the skills to undertake a research project relevant to the student's practice area in order to apply theoretical, analytical and other research skills.
- To provide students with the knowledge to critically reflect on the research process and experiences.
- To extend the student's critical appraisal skills to effectively communicate findings in appropriate ways (conference abstract and journal paper).
- To develop academic expertise in a particular sub-speciality of their choice related to their practice area.

LEARNING OUTCOMES On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:

- Discuss and critically evaluate research methodologies, methods and research ethics.
- Examine and critically appraise the relevant literature, policy and research evidence.
- Identify a relevant, manageable project and construct appropriate research question(s).
- Demonstrate expertise in the management and implementation of research, including selecting and justifying relevant research designs, with specific attention to time management, research governance and ethics, data analysis, interpretation, synthesis, contextualisation with relevant research and appraisal of implications for social work practice.

- Critically reflect on different stages and experiences of the research and communicate effectively the key findings of the research to a relevant audience identifying areas for future research.

CURRICULUM CONTENT (INDICATIVE)

The topic of the research project and question(s) will be developed and rationalised during the course of study through a series of tutorials, workshops, and discussions between the students, academic supervisor(s), colleagues and the module leader.

The research project should involve either collection of new data or analysis of a pre-existing data set. Where it is not possible for students to access suitable data sets, a meta-analysis or systematic review may be acceptable after scrutiny and approval by the academic supervisor, module leader and course director. The module will build upon the fundamental principles associated with undertaking and applying research skills in practice, in relation to the following key areas:

- Foundations of scientific thought: ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods
- Research in social sciences and in social work: its purposes and processes
- Research paradigms: positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, critical/feminist paradigm, participatory inquiry paradigm, post-structuralism
- Different methodologies in social research: experimental or quasi-experimental studies, ethnographies, participant observation studies, interview studies, focus groups, historical studies, case studies, historiography, ethno-methodology, narrative studies, action research projects, participatory action research, evaluation studies
- Undertaking a systematic literature review – Database searches, critical reading and analysis
- Research project designing, planning, thinking about ethical issues particular to individual research contexts, negotiating access and implementation
- Establishing the quality of a research project: validity/transferability, reliability/dependability, objectivity/reflexivity, truth/credibility, generalisability/local-groundedness
- Ethical issues in the conduct of research
- Collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data - Quantitative and qualitative data analysis, with or without the use of software programmes (e.g., SPSS, NVivo)

- Writing a research proposal
- Management of information interpreting the evidence and reporting the findings
- Presenting the findings using tables and graphs as appropriate
- Dissemination of the findings: writing for peer reviewed journals and poster presentation
- Reflect critically on the different stages of the research process, on the encountered challenges, on how these were dealt with and lessons learned.
- Communicate reflections in a comprehensive well structured written account.

HOW YOU WILL LEARN ON THIS MODULE

Key note lectures will be used to introduce material, to provide guidance for further independent studies and to summarise and contextualise topics studied through guided pre-reading and knowledge acquired through professional activity. Examples of current research will be frequently used to illustrate theories and best practice. Workshops and group tutorials, will offer students the opportunity to engage in problem solving activities which will be designed to help students to address the research questions.

Timetable

| Date | Time am | Time pm |
|----------|---------------|---------------|
| 14.10.19 | 10.00 - 13.00 | 14.00 - 16.00 |
| 28.10.19 | 10.00 - 13.00 | 14.00 - 16.00 |
| 11.11.19 | 10.00 - 13.00 | 14.00 - 16.00 |
| 25.11.19 | 10.00 - 13.00 | 14.00 - 16.00 |
| 10.12.19 | 10.00 - 13.00 | |
| 20.01.20 | 10.00 - 13.00 | |
| 17.02.20 | 10.00 - 13.00 | |
| 20.04.20 | 10.00 - 13.00 | |

You will be allocated a supervisor and one-to-one tutorials with your supervisor will help you to explore topics in depth, sharing experiences and ideas and developing your evaluative cognitive and communication skills (10 hours). You will need to arrange your tutorials with your supervisor. Supervisors will also provide support

with the ethics application, design and conduct of fieldwork, data analysis and writing up of findings. Students will also receive support and formative feedback from their supervisors with the development of the poster, writing of the abstract and preparing the paper.

A range of learning resources will be made available. A Virtual Learning Environment will be used to support the teaching and learning process and will hold lecture notes, PowerPoint presentations, relevant review articles, and useful websites. Kingston University learning resources will be integrated into the module as a source of literature and further support.

HOW YOU WILL BE ASSESSED

This module will be assessed by one formative and two summative components representing students' efforts:

1. **Formative assessment:** Preparation of an application for the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (including a research proposal of 1,000 words). This will describe background, aims and objectives, research design and proposed method of analysis and it will also address ethical considerations.
2. **Summative assessment:** Oral conference presentation (maximum 20 minutes followed by 10 minutes questions and answers). This presentation will include results of a systematic literature review of the students' chosen topic, their research question/s and design, and findings from fieldwork. Students will be encouraged to prepare a Powerpoint presentation and a handout with more extensive notes as well as make use of graphics and tables.

Content, presentation skills and dealing with questions will all be assessed by two examiners. This presentation will also help the students to prepare the other summative assessment element, the research paper.

3. **Summative assessment:** Research paper for publication (between 2000 and 5000 words, depending partly on the journal guidelines for submission). A research paper will be prepared which is suitable for submission to an appropriate peer reviewed scientific journal. Students must choose a journal that is aligned to the subject area of their research. The paper, including the word count, needs to comply with the guidelines for authors as provided by the editorial board.

The module assessments are designed to assess the students' development of a critical, evaluative and reflective approach to research and an applied understanding of research theory, data collection techniques and analyses. It assesses the students' capacity to rationalise, plan, manage and communicate the findings from undertaking research independently. The assessments encourage the development of academic writing skills for publication and effective presentation of data.

MAJOR CATEGORIES OF ASSESSMENT

| DEFINITIVE CATEGORY | KIS | INDICATIVE DESCRIPTION | PERCENTAGE |
|---------------------|-----|---|----------------|
| Practical Exam | | Oral Conference presentation (20 minutes plus 10 minutes Q&A) | 30% |
| Coursework | | Ethics research proposal (1000 words) | 0% (formative) |
| Coursework | | Paper for publication (2000 to 5000 words) | 70% |
| | | | 100% |

Costs

The cost of the module is **£2,900 GBP** for this academic year 2019/20

Applying for the module

If you are currently registered for the PG Diploma PET or a current MA PET student, please send an email to the Postgraduate Programmes Administrator pgsocialwork@sgul.kingston.ac.uk (copied to David Nilsson D.Nilsson@sgul.kingston.ac.uk) **by 1st September 2019** stating that you wish to take this module in the academic year 2019-20. Please ensure that you re-register on the system when you are sent a reminder email.

If you are returning to study after taking your PG Diploma, you will need to re-apply on the Kingston University Post Graduate Application Form online. Please discuss your plans with David Nilsson and complete the PG Application form. Please



**GREATER
+ TOGETHER**

Kingston and St George's
Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education

contact the PG office (*number and email below*) for guidance on the on-line application form.

If you require further details about the module, please contact

Postgraduate Programmes Administrator – Jacqueline Williams
Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education (Social Work)
Room 0004 Frank Lampl Building
Kingston University
Kingston Hill
Kingston upon Thames
KT2 7LB

T: 0208 417 5498 | Email: pgsocialwork@sgul.kingston.ac.uk

Module Leader

Dr. David Nilsson on 0208 417 6578 / Email: D.Nilsson@sgul.kingston.ac.uk