

Module specification

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Module Code	SWK706
Module Title	Social Work Research Project
Level	7
Credit value	60
Faculty	FSLS
HECoS Code	100503
Cost Code	GASW
Pre-requisite module	None

Programmes in which module to be offered

Programme title	Core/Optional/Standalone
MA Social Work (Qualified Status)	Core

Breakdown of module hours

Learning and teaching hours	20 hours
Placement tutor support hours	0 hrs
Supervised learning hours e.g. practical classes, workshops	0 hrs
Project supervision hours	10 hrs
Active learning and teaching hours total	30 hrs
Placement hours	0 hrs
Guided independent study hours	0 hrs
Module duration (Total hours)	570 hrs

Module aims

The module aims to provide students with the knowledge and skills to produce a Research Proposal that will guide student to carry out their own Research Project. The key aims of the module are as follows:

- To provide students with in-depth knowledge about a range of research methods, methodologies, and the role of the reflexive researcher that are associated with the process of carrying out research within the social work profession.

- To enable students to construct a research proposal that reflects an accurate understanding of the research process and the process of initiating research in a social work context that is relevant to Wales.
- To provide students with the skills and knowledge to mobilise their research proposal through the writing of a Research Project that is relevant to Social Work.
- To provide students with the skills to carry out a piece of secondary research in the field of social work.
- To provide students with the knowledge and understanding of how to become 'research minded', in both day to day practice and as academic researchers.
- To understand what is meant by 'evidence-based practice' and how academic research impacts on the ways in which social workers and political actors think about social problems and vulnerable individuals and families in Wales.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the end of this module, students will be able to:

1	Demonstrate and apply research knowledge through the writing of a Research Proposal that recognises the relationship between knowledge, evidence, and effective practice.
2	Show a critical awareness of how different research methodologies relate to different methods and techniques of enquiry.
3	Demonstrate an understanding of how Welsh context shapes the nature of social enquiry in the field of social work.
4	Have a critical understanding of how the different research methodologies relate to the wider value base of the social work profession in justifying the choices that researcher make.
5	Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which knowledge is produced in social work research and informs social work practice.
6	Show an in-depth critical awareness of the role of reflexivity in carrying out research in social work.

Assessment

Indicative Assessment Tasks:

This section outlines the type of assessment task the student will be expected to complete as part of the module. More details will be made available in the relevant academic year module handbook.

Assessment 1: Research proposal (1,000 words) The research proposal is submitted in semester 1 and is the basis for the assessment 2 Research Project.

Assessment 2: Research Project (7,000) The Research Project requires students to carry out a piece of secondary research that is relevant to the Social Work profession, and that has been proposed in assignment 1.

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Duration/Word Count	Weighting (%)	Alternative assessment, if applicable
1	1, 2	Written Assignment	1, 000	20%	N/A
2	3, 4, 5, 6	Dissertation/Project	7, 000	80%	N/A

Derogations

N/A

Learning and Teaching Strategies

The modes of study will include interactive lectures, small group discussion, workshops involving contributions by Outside In, and guest speakers. In the second half of the module students will be allocated a research supervisor who they will meet regularly with to consult on the day to day running of their research project.

Welsh Elements

Students can present their work, access forms, resources, email correspondence, work placements and personal tutorials in Welsh.

Indicative Syllabus Outline

An outline of the syllabus is detailed below:

- What is research and how is it relevant to Social Work?
- Methodologies: how do we know what constitutes ‘knowledge’?
- Evidence-based practice: being a researcher in Health and Social Care in Wales.
- Research methods: what tools are available to social work researchers? How do we know which tools do the job best?
- Quantitative or qualitative? How what we ask can shape the limits of what we know.
- Research ethics and social work: what makes research ethical in Social Work? Do we have to sometimes be unethical in order to produce knowledge that is anti-oppressive?
- The research process: how do we decide what it is that we want to research?
- The Research proposal: what is it and how do I construct one?
- Research sources: are some ‘better’ than others? Secondary research and Thematic Analysis.
- The Research Project: what is it and how do I write one?
- Applying methods and methodologies in the Project.
- The techniques of doing a Literature Review.

- Anti-Oppressive Practice when producing research: why does it matter?
- Writing a Methodology section in my Research Project.
- Grassroots and Grey Literature: what can they tell me?
- Synthesizing my findings and making the links back to practice.
- How to write an Abstract.

Indicative Bibliography

Please note the essential reads and other indicative reading are subject to annual review and update.

Essential Reads:

Brookfield, C. & Lewis, J. (2025) *Completing your Research Project: A Guide for the Social Sciences*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Taylor, B, Killick, C & McGlade, A. (2015) *Understanding and Using Research in Social Work*. London: Learning Matters.

Other indicative reading:

Alston, M. and Bowles, W. (2013), *Research for Social Workers: an Introduction to Methods* (3rd ed) London: Routledge.

Bell, L. (2017) *Research Methods for Social Workers*. London: Palgrave.

Best, S. (2012), *Understanding and Doing Successful Research: Data Collection and Analysis for the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge.

Bryman, A. (2012), *Social Research Methods*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Clark, T., Foster L., Sloan, L and Bryman, A. (2021), *Bryman's Social Research Methods*.

Gilbert, N. (ed.) (2008), *Researching Social Life*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.

Gilbert, N. and Stoneman, P. (eds.) (2016), *Researching Social Life*. (4th ed). London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (2013), *Doing Qualitative Research*. 4th ed. London: Sage.

Whittaker, A. (2012), *Research Skills for Social Work*. 2nd ed. London: Sage/Learning Matters.

Administrative Information

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