



FOBE820

Qualitative Research Approaches in Business and Economics

S1 Evening 2018

Business and Economics Faculty level units

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	4
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	7
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	8
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	8
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	10

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

(Admission to MActPrac or MBkgFin or MCom or MIntBus) and permission by special approval

Corequisites

Co-badged status

FOBE720

Unit description

This unit provides students with an introduction to theoretical and empirical research approaches informed by qualitative methods of inquiry within the business and economics discipline. It seeks to develop students' understanding of the contexts in which qualitative research can be undertaken. Topics covered include grounded theory, hermeneutical analysis, discourse analysis, heuristic and narrative methods of investigation, typology, and participant observational. Students will also develop the ability to analyse, conduct, and evaluate qualitative forms of research.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Understand commonly used qualitative research approaches in business and management research

Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences

Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices

Demonstrate an awareness of contemporary ethical issues in research and strategies for addressing them

Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments on the basis of data

General Assessment Information

All written assignments or written components of assignments must be submitted online through Turnitin.

All assignments are due at midday on the Thursday of the due week.

Assignments are to be your independent AND original work. Written assignments will be formal in style, include appropriate source citation and reference lists and use a standard 12-point font. You may use section headings in essays if you wish.

Please put a word count on the front page of your assignment and ensure that you reference appropriately using the APA style.

Standard penalties will be applied where assignments exceeded the prescribed length by 10% or more and for lateness.

Students *may be required* to discuss their knowledge of assignment content with their lecturer or tutor to verify student authorship.

There will be a deduction of 20% of the total available marks made from the total awarded a mark for each 24 hour period or part thereof that the submission is late (for example, 25 hours late in submission– 40% penalty). This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for special consideration is made and approved.

Marking Criteria

Grade	Description of Grade
Fail	Falls short of satisfying most requirements for Pass. There are missing or partial or superficial or faulty understanding and application of the fundamental concepts in the field of study; missing, undeveloped, inappropriate or confusing argumentation; incomplete, confusing or lacking communication of ideas in ways that give little attention to the conventions of the discipline.
Pass	Satisfies all of the basic learning requirements for the course, such as knowledge of fundamental concepts and performance of basic skills (such as basic writing, research and referencing skills, skills in providing direct evidence for claims, application of theory, and analytical writing skills); demonstrates sufficient quality of performance to be considered satisfactory or adequate in the course. Mistakes in execution of skills and grasp of fundamental concepts are frequently and consistently observable.

Credit	Demonstrates ability to use and apply fundamental concepts and skills of the course, going beyond mere replication of content knowledge or skill (such as basic writing, research and referencing skills, skills in providing direct evidence for claims, application of theory, critical thinking, and analytical writing skills) to show understanding of key ideas, awareness of their relevance, some use of analytical skills, and some originality or insight. Demonstrates sufficient quality of performance to be considered good or effective in the course. Poor execution of skills and grasp of fundamental concepts are often observable.
Distinction	Demonstrates awareness and understanding of deeper and subtle aspects of the course, such as ability to identify and debate critical issues or problems, ability to solve non-routine problems, ability to adapt and apply ideas to new situations, and ability to invent and evaluate new ideas. Demonstrates mastery of basic skills (such as basic writing, research and referencing skills, skills in providing direct evidence for claims, application of theory, critical thinking, and analytical writing skills). Demonstrates sufficient quality of performance to be considered very good or very effective in the course. Very Good execution of skills and grasp of fundamental concepts are mostly observable.
High Distinction	Demonstrates imagination, insight, originality or flair in relation to relevant learning objectives; and the work is interesting or surprising or exciting or challenging or erudite. Excellent execution of basic skills (such as basic writing, research and referencing skills, skills in providing direct evidence for claims, application of theory, critical thinking, and analytical writing), and excellent knowledge of fundamental concepts are uniformly observable. Demonstrates sufficient quality of performance to be considered outstanding or excellent or first-rate.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Assignment 1</u>	20%	No	10pm Thursday of Week 4
<u>Assignment 2</u>	40%	No	10pm Thursday of Week 8
<u>Assignment 3</u>	40%	No	10pm Thursday of Week 13

Assignment 1

Due: **10pm Thursday of Week 4**

Weighting: **20%**

What are research problems and questions?

Your task in this assignment is to write a 1,000 word essay to critically explain:

- (1.) What a research problem *statement* is and how it is developed in academic research,
- (2.) What a research *question* is and how it is developed in academic research,
- (3.) What should the research problem statement and research question enable a researcher to do in relation to contributing to knowledge, and
- (4.) State your own research problem and question, explaining how you developed them, and how they will help you make an original contribution to knowledge.

This essay relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate an awareness of what research problem statements and questions are and how

they are created

- Demonstrate an ability to create your own research problem statement and question

You should consult research methods/methodology research in journal articles and research methods textbooks.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices
- Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments on the basis of data

Assignment 2

Due: **10pm Thursday of Week 8**

Weighting: **40%**

Identifying gaps that matter

In 2,000 words, critically appraise at least 3 of the most recent qualitative articles and one major (most recent) review article (i.e., a literature review article), plus any recent additional quantitative, mixed method or conceptual articles from top ranked journals that speak to your research question. If you cannot find a suitable review article you could consider a special issue related to your research in a top journal or an edited book that is relevant from a top academic publishing house.

Keep in mind that if you claim there are no qualitative research publications that are relevant to your research question, I will do a literature search myself and if I find that there are suitable publications out there I will fail your assignment for not answering the question.

Prepare a 2,000 word analytical, concept- and problem-focused literature review of these publications by, first, conducting a review of your publications substantive contribution relative to your research question. You should focus on problems in the literature (relative to your research question) around the scope of research, findings and theory. This includes identifying any theoretical gaps or problems and discussing methodological issues that are relevant and that would help you answer your research question.

This assignment will assist with writing the literature review for your thesis in year two of the M Res. and your final assignment.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Understand commonly used qualitative research approaches in business and management research.
- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences
- Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices;
- Demonstrate an awareness of contemporary ethical issues in research and strategies for addressing them.
- Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments on the basis of data.

Keep in mind that you are reviewing literature in this assignment and that literature reviews are analytical and synthesising rather than descriptive. You should think about structuring this assignment around the most important issues (relative to your research question) that arise from your synthesis. Do not structure the assignment on an article by article basis because you cannot create an effective synthesis that way.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand commonly used qualitative research approaches in business and management research
- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences
- Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments on the basis of data

Assignment 3

Due: **10pm Thursday of Week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

Qualitative research design and analysis report

Prepare a research report of 3,000 words that contains an introduction that includes a brief statement of (1) your research problem and research question/s, (2) a literature review that justifies (ontologically, epistemologically/axiologically) your choice of qualitative methods as a way to answer your research question/s, (3) an explanation of how you will conduct the analysis, (4) provides a significant example of your analysis and discussion of the data, and (5) a

conclusion.

The paper is a chance for you to demonstrate that you can design a study, conduct your analysis, and communicate your findings. These are all skills that you need to have mastered before you begin your thesis in year two. You will have to collect a small sample of data for this assignment.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Understand commonly used qualitative research approaches in business and management research.
- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences
- Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices;
- Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments.

You can use assignments one and two as bases for this one. However, I do expect that you improve on your work in those assignments and make additions and subtractions to them based on your changing research question and growth in your knowledge.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand commonly used qualitative research approaches in business and management research
- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences
- Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices
- Demonstrate an awareness of contemporary ethical issues in research and strategies for addressing them

Delivery and Resources

A number of digital tools for collaborative problem solving are useful in research. It will assist you to bring an internet-enabled laptop or tablet to class.

Additional resources

Writing and grammar tools:

- Proofreading <http://www.elearnhub.org/best-grammar-editing-proofreading-tools-everyb>

[ody-know/](#)

- Writing <https://www.authorea.com/product>
- Referencing <http://libguides.mq.edu.au/content.php?pid=114111&sid=986645>, and
- Grammar analysis http://writersdiet.com/?page_id=4
- Grammarly <https://www.grammarly.com/office-addin/windows>
- Endnote <http://libguides.mq.edu.au/EndNotePC>

Unit Schedule

Week	Wisdom Studio Reading Topics	Notes
1	Introduction & expectations	
2	Writing in the research process	Writing and grammar tools http://www.elearnhub.org/best-grammar-editing-proofreading-tools-everybody-know/
3	Research paradigms, & the research process	Clarifying how you will think about and do your research next year
4	Ontology & Epistemology	What are your assumptions and what approach will you take to creating knowledge?
5	Analysis & interpretation	What theoretical knowledge does your data address?
6	Case study method	Case study is more than you think
6	Interview method	It's not just a chat
8	Interpretation practicum	Learning by doing
9	Ethnographic method	Learning by doing
10	Ethnography of the mall practicum	Learning by doing (field trip)
11	Grounded theory data coding practicum	Learning by doing
12	Discourse analysis practicum	Learning by doing
13	Back to basics	

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and

Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices
- Demonstrate an awareness of contemporary ethical issues in research and strategies for addressing them
- Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments on the basis of data

Assessment task

- Assignment 3

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand commonly used qualitative research approaches in business and management research
- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences
- Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand commonly used qualitative research approaches in business and management research
- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences
- Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of research methods and be able to make informed methodological choices
- Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments on the basis of data

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Discuss different forms of data and outline their differences
- Demonstrate an awareness of contemporary ethical issues in research and strategies for addressing them
- Do qualitative research by constructing problem-oriented literature reviews, formalising meaningful research questions, handling and evaluating a range of evidence, and be able to deduce arguments on the basis of data

Assessment task

- Assignment 3

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Demonstrate an awareness of contemporary ethical issues in research and strategies for addressing them

Assessment task

- Assignment 3

