



MQBS8020

Qualitative Research Approaches in Business and Economics

Session 1, Online-scheduled-weekday 2024

Macquarie Business School Faculty level units

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Unit Convener Dr Dale Tweedie dale.tweedie@mq.edu.au
Credit points 10
Prerequisites Permission by special approval
Corequisites
Co-badged status With MQBS7020
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, and 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:

- ULO1:** Explain the role of research philosophy in selecting suitable research methods for a particular study
- ULO2:** Consider the relative advantages and disadvantages of a diverse range of qualitative research methods used in management research in developing a research design
- ULO3:** Address any ethics issues that may arise as part of a research design that involves qualitative methods
- ULO4:** Conduct qualitative research using a basic understanding of different coding

strategies, and a range of typical qualitative methods

ULO5: Develop a basic research proposal based qualitative methods that links the suitability of the proposed method to the nature of the research question, as well as the relative advantages and disadvantages of the proposed method

General Assessment Information

Late Assessment Submission Penalty (written assessments)

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a grade of '0' will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical concern.

For any late submissions of time-sensitive tasks, such as scheduled tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, and/or scheduled practical assessments/labs, students need to apply for [Special Consideration](#).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Critique your preferred method	20%	No	Week 9
Qualitative research design	40%	No	Week 11
Weekly reviews	40%	No	Week 13

Critique your preferred method

Assessment Type ¹: Case study/analysis

Indicative Time on Task ²: 31 hours

Due: **Week 9**

Weighting: **20%**

Select three recent (within the last 5 years) empirical research papers from three different top academic journals that have used a particular research method that you are interested in exploring more deeply, and write a 1,500 word critique of the three papers through critically comparing them on your assessment of the following: 1) Suitability and justification of the chosen method in relation to the research question 2) Technical adequacy of the method application in terms of data collection and analysis

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the role of research philosophy in selecting suitable research methods for a particular study
- Consider the relative advantages and disadvantages of a diverse range of qualitative research methods used in management research in developing a research design
- Develop a basic research proposal based qualitative methods that links the suitability of the proposed method to the nature of the research question, as well as the relative advantages and disadvantages of the proposed method

Qualitative research design

Assessment Type ¹: Qualitative analysis task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **Week 11**

Weighting: **40%**

Prepare a 2,500 word research proposal that is based on a qualitative research design. The report should contain: 1) Your research problem and research question(s) 2) A justification of your choice of qualitative method(s) in relation to your research question(s) based in a literature review of relevant methodological literature 3) The relation of your choice of qualitative method(s) to your onto-epistemic research philosophy 4) An explanation of how you will conduct your analysis 5) A discussion of limitations and next steps

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the role of research philosophy in selecting suitable research methods for a particular study
- Consider the relative advantages and disadvantages of a diverse range of qualitative research methods used in management research in developing a research design
- Conduct qualitative research using a basic understanding of different coding strategies, and a range of typical qualitative methods
- Develop a basic research proposal based qualitative methods that links the suitability of the proposed method to the nature of the research question, as well as the relative advantages and disadvantages of the proposed method

Weekly reviews

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

For each of the sessions from weeks 2-12, write a 500 word review that: 1) Summarises what you believe to be the most important learnings from the seminar and readings in each week, and 2) Critically discuss how the materials covered could relate to your own research project e.g. how might you use some of the points discussed to improve, critique, and/or justify your research project?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the role of research philosophy in selecting suitable research methods for a particular study
- Consider the relative advantages and disadvantages of a diverse range of qualitative research methods used in management research in developing a research design
- Address any ethics issues that may arise as part of a research design that involves qualitative methods
- Conduct qualitative research using a basic understanding of different coding strategies, and a range of typical qualitative methods
- Develop a basic research proposal based qualitative methods that links the suitability of the proposed method to the nature of the research question, as well as the relative advantages and disadvantages of the proposed method

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Please see iLearn for details.

Unit Schedule

WEEK	Title	Topic
1.	Introduction	Introducing qualitative research

2.	Philosophy of social science	Epistemology and qualitative research
3.	Designing qualitative research	Research design, sampling, and ethics
4.	Methods: Interviews & Focus Groups	Interview paradigms, approaches (e.g. semi-structured) and techniques.
5.	Methods: Case studies	Selection, motivation, generalising from cases.
6.	Methods: Ethnography	Ethnography and participant observation, autoethnography
7.	Methods: Action Research	Qualitative questionnaires and document research, action research, arts-based methods
8.	Methods: Content analysis.	Analysing documents and images, including e-research.
	RECESS	
9.	Data analysis: Interview coding methods	Including types of coding (e.g. axial) and coding hierarchies. Hand-in assessment: critique your preferred method
10.	Data analysis tools	NVIVO, e-coding strategies and techniques
11.	Writing qualitative research	Using quotes, developing a story. Hand-in assessment: qualitative research design
12.	Contemporary issues and debates	Current debates on designing, theorising and using qualitative research in business.
13.	Summary and your research	Wrap up and moving your project forward. Assessment deadline: weekly reviews

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). 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](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

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

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

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

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

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

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

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.

Unit information based on version 2024.02 of the [Handbook](#)