



PSYC13024 Qualitative Research Methodology

Term 1 - 2018

Profile information current as at 14/12/2025 12:39 pm

All details in this unit profile for PSYC13024 have been officially approved by CQUniversity and represent a learning partnership between the University and you (our student). The information will not be changed unless absolutely necessary and any change will be clearly indicated by an approved correction included in the profile.

General Information

Overview

In this unit you will develop a useful toolbox for undertaking qualitative research that is applicable to your chosen career. This unit covers how to design, conduct, analyse and write up qualitative research. It includes issues such as entering the field, ethical issues in qualitative research and dilemmas of reflexivity and voice. We will analyse some intriguing examples of qualitative research to think critically about current issues. We will develop self-awareness and reflexive skills, exploring our own social, economic and political positions and how these shape our views on the world. By producing a piece of qualitative empirical research, you will learn how to apply the knowledge acquired. Qualitative skills are highly sought after in many career paths. Ultimately this unit will equip you with skills that are of benefit to careers in research, business, government, community development and education.

Details

Career Level: *Undergraduate*

Unit Level: *Level 3*

Credit Points: 6

Student Contribution Band: 10

Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: 0.125

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

There are no requisites for this unit.

Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#).

Offerings For Term 1 - 2018

- Distance

Attendance Requirements

All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes – in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

Website

[This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.](#)

Class and Assessment Overview

Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Undergraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

Class Timetable

[Regional Campuses](#)

Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

[Metropolitan Campuses](#)

Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Assessment Overview

1. **Practical Assessment**

Weighting: 30%

2. **Written Assessment**

Weighting: 25%

3. **Written Assessment**

Weighting: 45%

Assessment Grading

This is a graded unit: your overall grade will be calculated from the marks or grades for each assessment task, based on the relative weightings shown in the table above. You must obtain an overall mark for the unit of at least 50%, or an overall grade of 'pass' in order to pass the unit. If any 'pass/fail' tasks are shown in the table above they must also be completed successfully ('pass' grade). You must also meet any minimum mark requirements specified for a particular assessment task, as detailed in the 'assessment task' section (note that in some instances, the minimum mark for a task may be greater than 50%). Consult the [University's Grades and Results Policy](#) for more details of interim results and final grades.

CQUniversity Policies

All University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

Previous Student Feedback

Feedback, Recommendations and Responses

Every unit is reviewed for enhancement each year. At the most recent review, the following staff and student feedback items were identified and recommendations were made.

Feedback from Moodle feedback.

Feedback

Some of the materials used as core and supplementary readings were on topics of little interest to some students, despite illustrating taught concepts well.

Recommendation

Consider replacing some of the supplementary readings with research papers that cover more engaging/interesting topics, and that illustrate taught concepts well.

Feedback from Residential school.

Feedback

Students noted that engagement in residential school assessment tasks was hampered by time and space limitations.

Recommendation

Include more breaks in content delivery, and allocate more preparation time in the lead up to assessment two individual interviews and focus groups. Allocate more time to focus groups, and secure more break away spaces for this activity.

Feedback from Moodle feedback. Email

Feedback

Students appreciated the level of detail provided in assessment feedback, given the novelty of qualitative methods to many of them.

Recommendation

Keep using detailed assessment feedback that is both broken down by rubric component, as well as directly marked on the assessment piece.

Unit Learning Outcomes

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

1. Explain the philosophies and principles behind qualitative research
2. Critique qualitative research presented in existing literature
3. Conduct focus groups, interviews and ethnographic observations
4. Write a qualitative research report

Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes



Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes			
	1	2	3	4
1 - Written Assessment - 25%	•	•		
2 - Practical Assessment - 30%			•	

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes			
	1	2	3	4
3 - Written Assessment - 45%	•			•

Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attributes	Learning Outcomes			
	1	2	3	4
1 - Communication	•		•	•
2 - Problem Solving				•
3 - Critical Thinking	•	•		•
4 - Information Literacy		•		
5 - Team Work			•	
6 - Information Technology Competence			•	
7 - Cross Cultural Competence	•			•
8 - Ethical practice	•		•	•
9 - Social Innovation				
10 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures				

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Graduate Attributes

Assessment Tasks	Graduate Attributes									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 - Written Assessment - 25%	•	•	•	•						
2 - Practical Assessment - 30%	•				•	•	•	•		
3 - Written Assessment - 45%	•		•	•			•	•		

Textbooks and Resources

Textbooks

PSYC13024

Prescribed

Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners

Edition: First (2013)

Authors: Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke

Sage Publications

London , UK

ISBN: 9781847875822

Binding: Other

Additional Textbook Information

You can purchase this book as an e-book. The text also has a companion website that you can access with your purchase.

[View textbooks at the CQUniversity Bookshop](#)

IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)

Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

Teaching Contacts

Danielle Every Unit Coordinator

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Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to qualitative research Part 1 - 05 Mar 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Introduction to qualitative research Part 1	Chapters 1 and 2	

Week 2: Introduction to qualitative research Part 2 - 12 Mar 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Introduction to qualitative research Part 2	No chapter reading this week. I will provide a qualitative research paper to read in preparation for this week's online tutorial on the key elements of a qualitative paradigm.	Zoom online tutorials: Two session options 10am or 7pm on Wednesday 14 March 2018

Week 3: Planning and designing qualitative research Introduction - 19 Mar 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Planning and designing qualitative research Introduction Chapter 3

Week 4: Planning and designing qualitative research Practical applications - 26 Mar 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Planning and designing qualitative research Practical applications	No chapter reading this week. We will be getting together to talk about your research topic. A set of discussion questions is provided on Moodle	Zoom online tutorials: Two session options 10am or 7pm on Wednesday 28 March 2018

Week 5: Residential School - Interviews - 02 Apr 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Interviews	Chapter 4	Residential School in Brisbane

Vacation Week - 09 Apr 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Week 6: Qualitative research with Aboriginal Australians - 16 Apr 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Qualitative research with Aboriginal Australians	I have provided 2 readings for this week. These are research papers reporting on research with Aboriginal Australian communities undertaken by a non-Aboriginal person, and one undertaken by an Aboriginal Australian.	

Week 7: Data analysis Theory - 23 Apr 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Data analysis Theory	Chapter 8	Assignment 1: Interviews and self-reflection, DUE Interviews and self-reflection Due: Week 7 Monday (23 Apr 2018) 9:00 am AEST

Week 8: Data analysis Familiarisation and coding - 30 Apr 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Data analysis Familiarisation and coding	Chapter 10	

Week 9: Data analysis Identifying patterns - 07 May 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Data analysis identifying patterns	Chapter 10	

Week 10: Data analysis Analyzing and interpreting patterns - 14 May 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Data analysis Analysing and interpreting patterns	Chapter 11	Assessment 2: Summarising Qualitative Research and developing a research question DUE Summarising Qualitative Research Papers and Developing a Research Question Due: Week 10 Monday (14 May 2018) 9:00 am AEST

Week 11: Data analysis practical applications - 21 May 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Data analysis Practical application	No chapter reading. I will provide a data set of qualitative interviews to read which we will analyze together in a practical exercise.	Zoom tutorial. Two session options 10am or 7pm on Wednesday 23 May 2018

Week 12: Quality in qualitative research - 28 May 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Quality in qualitative research	Chapter 12	

Review/Exam Week - 04 Jun 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Exam Week - 11 Jun 2018

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
		Assessment 3: Qualitative Research Proposal, DUE
		Qualitative Research Proposal Due: Exam Week Monday (11 June 2018) 9:00 am AEST

Assessment Tasks

1 Interviews and self-reflection

Assessment Type

Practical Assessment

Task Description

Using your research topic and question (developed for Assessment 1) or a different topic/question (but talk to me if you want to use a different one so we can discuss this):

1. Develop five questions for a face-to-face semi-structured interview (your questions may include a main question and prompts)
2. Develop a brief interview guide – include a short opening introduction (not including gaining informed consent), some structuring information, and place your questions into a logical sequence
3. Interview another student and record (audio or audio/visual) your interview

All three of these steps will be done at the residential school. You will be brainstorming your questions with other students, trialing your questions in groups of 3 and giving and receiving feedback, and then re-writing your guide to reflect this.

4. Write a short (500 word) reflection on the interview process

What to include in your reflection

1. How well did your interview questions provide rich, in depth data to answer your research question?
2. What helped/hindered this?

Think about:

- Your introduction (did it set the person at ease by giving them a clear easy to understand overview of what you would be doing together)
- The wording of your questions (was it open, non-leading, short and clear, empathic)
- The structure of your questions (did you begin with more open, less personal questions, did the sequencing of the questions make sense)
- Your listening skills (how was your posture, gaze and attention; what distracted you from listening well, what helped; how well did you include active listening responses)
- Your responsive skills (how well were you able to adapt your language/questions/structure to

the participant's account, what helped/hindered, did the participant seem comfortable; what skills did you use to help elicit a rich, detailed account in the participant's own words; how did you manage responding as a researcher not as 'yourself' – were there any thoughts or feelings that arose that made that difficult)

We will also have time to work on this self-reflection during the residential school

You are to submit: the interview guide, your recording, the reflection

Assessment Due Date

Week 7 Monday (23 Apr 2018) 9:00 am AEST

Return Date to Students

Week 9 Monday (7 May 2018)

Weighting

30%

Minimum mark or grade

15

Assessment Criteria

The key criteria for the assessment are developing a well-worded, logically structured interview guide, (10 marks) conducting an interviewing demonstrating listening and responding skills (10 marks), and providing an insightful balanced reflection on the interview (10 marks).

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

Submission

Online

Submission Instructions

You are to submit the interview guide, the recording of your interview, and the self-reflection

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Conduct focus groups, interviews and ethnographic observations

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Team Work
- Information Technology Competence
- Cross Cultural Competence
- Ethical practice

2 Summarising Qualitative Research Papers and Developing a Research Question

Assessment Type

Written Assessment

Task Description

For this assessment, you are to complete four tasks:

1. Choose a research topic
2. Find three (3) academic journal papers reporting on qualitative research on this topic
3. Complete the summary table (provided) for each of these research papers
4. Develop a research question based on this topic and the existing research. Write a short (300 word maximum) rationale for this question using these summarised papers

For the first part, choosing a topic, please attend the morning or evening tutorial in Week 4. In this tutorial each student will bring some potential topics they are interested in, and we will brainstorm together to assist each person to find a suitable topic. You should also read the section on research topics and questions in Chapter 3 of the textbook and listen to the Week 3 lecture which also leads you through how to choose a topic and research question. If you absolutely cannot attend either of the tutorials (and I really recommend that you make every effort to do so as there are a lot of benefits in group discussions), then you will need to post your ideas onto a forum (I will provide a link to this) for an

online discussion.

Once we have decided upon a topic together, you can go ahead and find your three papers and complete the summary table. The summary table should be concise whilst covering the key elements of the paper. The summary of each paper should be a maximum of one page.

The reflection part of this assessment brings together the research topic with the research you have summarised as part of the process of formulating a research question (which you will use again later in your second and third assessments to develop interview questions and a research proposal). Your reflection will include the following:

1. A proposed research question that you have developed on this topic
2. Use the research literature you have summarised to develop a clear rationale for this research question

The rationale should address the following questions (these questions are also covered in your textbook and in the lecture in Week 3):

How will this research question make an original contribution to our knowledge about this issue? In relation to the research you have summarised in your table, does your proposed question explore a new area, will it take a different approach, will it be applied in a new context or with a new sample?

Why is this research question important? You should address this question in reference to what your research question will contribute to the community you are interested in i.e. how will it assist in solving an important problem

Assessment Due Date

Week 10 Monday (14 May 2018) 9:00 am AEST

Return Date to Students

Week 11 Monday (21 May 2018)

Weighting

25%

Assessment Criteria

The key marking criteria for this assessment include choosing an appropriate research topic (3 marks), finding peer-reviewed qualitative research papers (3 marks), accurately and concisely summarising these papers (5 marks for each paper summarised) and developing a clear qualitative research question which is original and provides social benefits (4 marks).

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

Submission

Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Explain the philosophies and principles behind qualitative research
- Critique qualitative research presented in existing literature

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy

3 Qualitative Research Proposal

Assessment Type

Written Assessment

Task Description

This assessment brings together what you have learned in the first two assessments. You are to take the research topic and research question you have already been working with, and flesh this out into a proposal for a piece of qualitative research. (The papers you summarized for your first assessment will also be useful in writing your research proposal, as will the residential school work on interviewing.)

We will use the Qualitative Research Proposal Proforma which I have adapted from the companion website to your textbook. A copy of this is included in the assessment information on Moodle

For the Research Proposal you will provide a social and research rationale for your research questions using a short review of the key findings and gaps in knowledge about your topic, outline how you will collect your data (sample, sample size, recruitment) and how you will analyse your data, and consider the ethical risks of your study and how you will manage these.

The research proposal is a maximum of 2,100 words, excluding references. Referencing is APA format.

To help guide you through the assessment, there are examples of qualitative research proposals available on Moodle and on the textbook's companion website. There are also tutorials to support you throughout the term at each step of the proposal.

Assessment Due Date

Exam Week Monday (11 June 2018) 9:00 am AEST

Return Date to Students

Exam Week Friday (15 June 2018)

Weighting

45%

Minimum mark or grade

50% (23.5/45)

Assessment Criteria

The marking criteria are a modified version of the Independent Assessor Overview which has been used in the past for assessing honours project proposals. A copy of the Marking Guide is available in the assessment information, and also in Moodle under the Assessment tab. The key elements of the marking criteria are: to provide a clear and coherent rationale for your study based on its social relevance and gaps in our research knowledge (15 marks), to propose a suitable sample and sufficient sample size to answer your question (15 marks), to propose a suitable style of analysis which will answer your questions (5 marks), reflect on the ethical dimensions of your study and how you will manage these (5 marks) and follow APA formatting with a clear and coherent structure and style (5 marks).

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

Submission

Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Explain the philosophies and principles behind qualitative research
- Write a qualitative research report

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Cross Cultural Competence
- Ethical practice

Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the [Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#). This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

What is a breach of academic integrity?

A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

Why is academic integrity important?

A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

Where can I get assistance?

For academic advice and guidance, the [Academic Learning Centre \(ALC\)](#) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

What can you do to act with integrity?



Be Honest

If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own



Seek Help

If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)



Produce Original Work

Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem