



University of the  
West of England

## MODULE SPECIFICATION

**Code:** UMPC64-30-M

**Title:** Ways of Knowing: Research  
Methodologies

**Version:** 1

**Level:** M

**UWE credit rating:** 30

**ECTS credit rating:** 15

**Module type:** Standard

**Owning Faculty:** FBL

**Field:** Human Resources Management

**Valid from:** 1 September 2001

**Discontinued from:**

**Contributes towards:** MA Business and Management Research, MA Applied Social Research, Doctor of Business Administration

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Co-requisites:** None

**Excluded combinations:** None

### **Learning outcomes:**

The module aims to enable students to understand the significance of the alternative epistemological positions that provides the context for theory construction, research design and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques.

The learning outcomes will be:

#### Cognitive Skills:

- An understanding of and an ability to apply a critical analysis to a range of theoretical and research paradigms.
- An appreciation of the contextual relevance of such theories and paradigms in research design and in the selection of appropriate analytical techniques.

#### Transferable skills:

- An acute understanding of the relevance of theorisation/epistemology in the analysis of all issues.
- An ability to engage with complex and intellectually challenging concepts.

### **Syllabus outline:**

The module is divided into three blocks.

#### Block One, Sessions 1-3:

An overview of and introduction to various paradigms, drawing in particular on the evolution and development within and between the research paradigms.

- Session One: Positivism and its variants, antecedents and developments (e.g. materialism, realism, structuralism)
- Session Two: Constructivism, interpretivism and their variants, antecedents and developments (e.g. idealism, methodological relativism, phenomenology, hermeneutics)
- Session Three: Critical approaches and the "Posts"- post-modernism, post-structuralism and post-feminism.

Block Two, Sessions 4-9:

Three double session case studies taking examples from current ESRC thematic priorities<sup>1</sup>. These will examine critically research in the case study area using a range of different paradigms.

Block Three, Session 10:

Summary session bringing out key theoretical/practical issues covered in the preceding classes.

**Teaching and learning methods:**

The module will be delivered using a mixture of seminar classes, guided readings and student presentations. Specifically:

Sessions 1-3: Mixture of lecturer presentation and seminar discussion informed by prior reading.

Sessions 4-9: Students will prepare with guided readings beforehand. In class, pairs of students will be responsible, in turn, for making presentations to class. Students presenting will be required to prepare a brief (3-4 page) handout for the rest of the group to accompany their presentations.

Session 10: Mixture of staff and student led seminar discussion

**Indicative sources:**

Berger, P. & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. New York: Anchor Books.

Blaikie, N. (1993). *Approaches to Social Enquiry*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Burrell, G. & Morgan, G. (1979). *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life*. Aldershot: Gower.

Butler, J. & Scott, J.W. (Eds.) (1992). *Feminists Theorize The Political*. London: Routledge

Cuff, E. & Payne, G. (Eds.) (1979). *Perspectives in Sociology*. London: Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Eichler, M. (1988). *Non Sexist Research Methods*. London: Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin

Frost, P.J., Lewin, A.Y., & Daft, R.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Talking About Organization Science: Debates and Dialogues from Crossroads*. London: Sage.

Fuller, S. (1988). *Social Epistemology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Fuller, S. (1993). *Philosophy of Science and its Discontents* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). London: The Guilford Press.

Golinski, J. (1998). *Making Natural Knowledge: Constructivism and the History of Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hacking, I. (1983). *Representing and Intervening*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hacking, I. (1999). *The Social Construction of What?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hammersley, M. (Ed.) (1993). *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice*, London: Sage

Harding, S (Ed.) (1987). *Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Research Issues*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Hassard, J. (1993). *Sociology and Organization Theory: Positivism, Paradigms and Postmodernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hennessey, R. (1993). *Materialist Feminism and the Politics of Discourse*. London: Routledge

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<sup>1</sup> Currently these encompass: economic performance and development; environment and human behaviour; governance and citizenship; knowledge, communication and learning; lifecourse, lifestyle and health; social stability and exclusion; work and organisations.

Hollis, M. & Lukes, S. (1982). *Rationality and Relativism*. Oxford: Blackwell.  
 Hughes, J. (1990). *The Philosophy of Social Research*, (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), Essex: Longman Group Ltd.  
 Jay, M. (1973). *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923-1950*, London: Heinemann.  
 Knorr-Cetina, K.D. (1981). *The Manufacture of Knowledge*. Oxford: Polity Press.  
 Kuhn, T. S. (1970). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
 Lyotard, J.F. (1984). *The Postmodern Condition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.  
 Natter, W., Schatzki, T.R. & Jones J.P. (Eds.) (1996). *Objectivity and Its Other*. London: Guilford Press.  
 Oakley, A. (2000). *Experiments in Knowing: Gender and Method in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge: Policy Press  
 Rorty, R. (1979). *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.  
 Sayer, A. (1992) *Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), London: Routledge  
 Shapin, S. (1994). *A Social History of Truth*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
 Smircich, L. & Calas M. (Eds.) (1995). *Critical Perspectives on Organization and Management Theory*, Aldershot: Dartmouth.  
 Smircich, L. & Calas M. (Eds.) (1995). *Post-Modern Management Theory*, Aldershot: Dartmouth.  
 Turner, B.S. (ed) (2000). *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), Oxford: Blackwell  
 Winch, P. (1990). *The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). London: Routledge

**Assessment**

**Weighting between components A and B**

**A: 50%**

**B: 50%**

**ATTEMPT 1**

**First Assessment Opportunity**

**Component A**

**Description of each element**

1 Presentation of group work by each individual student

**Element weighting**  
100%

**Component B**

**Description of each element**

1 Written work of 7500 words length exploring methodological aspects of chosen topic.

**Element weighting**  
100%

**Second Assessment Opportunity (further attendance at taught classes is not required)**

**Component A**

**Description of each element**

1 Individual presentation on an allocated topic.

**Element weighting**  
100%

**Component B**

**Description of each element**

1 Re-worked re-submission of original work from first assessment.

**Element weighting**  
100%

**SECOND (OR SUBSEQUENT) ATTEMPT Attendance at taught classes is required.**

Specification confirmed by .....Date .....  
 (Associate Dean/Programme Director)