



Module Specification

Approaches to Educational Research

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Approaches to Educational Research

Module code: UTLGY7-45-M

Level: Level 7

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 45

ECTS credit rating: 22.5

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School of Education and Childhood

Partner institutions: None

Field: Secondary Education and Lifelong Learning

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: This module will introduce students to a range of methodologies and methods and their application within educational research. These will be located within a recognised ethical framework. The culmination of this module will be a research proposal to support the transition to Stage 2.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: Introduce students to a range of methodological debates within educational research.

Equip students with a range of contrasting approaches to data collection and analysis within an ethical framework.

Support students to design a robust and manageable research project at doctoral level.

Outline syllabus: Indicative Content:

What is research

Planning for research

Methodology

Data collection

Data analysis

Research ethics

Validity and trustworthy data

UWE internal doctoral processes

Writing for a doctorate

Critical theory in education

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: This substantial 45-credit module consolidates participants' learning across the programme and deepens their engagement with the ethical dimensions of educational research. Delivered primarily face to face, with complementary online resources, the module supports students in developing a critical awareness of the ethical principles, responsibilities, and dilemmas that shape research in diverse international contexts.

Participants will explore a range of ethical frameworks, including institutional, professional, and culturally situated perspectives. Through case studies, structured discussions, and guided readings, students will consider how ethical principles—such as informed consent, confidentiality, safeguarding, positionality, reciprocity, and power dynamics—inform responsible and respectful research practice. The module encourages participants to examine ethical issues not as procedural requirements alone, but as integral to the design, conduct, and impact of their research.

Collaboration continues to play a central role, with opportunities for students to work together in research design workshops, peer-review groups, and ethics-focused discussions where they can share their developing ideas and learn from the diverse professional and cultural backgrounds of the cohort. These collaborative spaces help refine thinking, strengthen ethical awareness, and build confidence in articulating and defending methodological decisions.

Specialist support from the University Library will be available throughout the module, including sessions on conducting ethically informed literature searches, managing and storing data responsibly, and preparing documentation for institutional ethical review.

The module culminates in two major assessed components:

An ethics proposal form, demonstrating participants' ability to anticipate and address ethical issues relevant to their chosen research context.

A detailed research proposal, outlining the theoretical framing, research questions, methodology, and ethical considerations that will inform the next stages of their

doctoral journey.

By the end of the module, participants will have a well-developed, ethically sound research proposal and the confidence to progress to the next stage of their doctoral studies with clarity, rigour, and integrity.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Critically engage with appropriate research paradigms and demonstrate how these paradigms frame and direct their own intended research.

MO2 Design a coherent and robust research proposal enquiring into an appropriate area within education.

MO3 Critically explain a range of data collection methods and analysis strategies justifying those chosen within their own intended research.

MO4 Articulate developed understanding of ethical issues in relation to the educational research process as they apply to participants and settings, providing a strategy to address potential issues within their own intended research.

Hours to be allocated: 450

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 360 hours

Staff-guided learning = 90 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://uwe.rl.talis.com/index.html) via the following link <https://uwe.rl.talis.com/index.html>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: A) What is/are the assessment task(s)?

Assessment A: Ethical Review Application (20%) — 2,000 words

Students will complete an ethical review application form in which they identify,

analyse, and justify the ethical considerations relevant to their proposed research. This task enables students to demonstrate their understanding of ethical frameworks, risk assessment, and principles of responsible research practice.

Assessment B: Research Proposal (80%) — 5,000 words

Students will produce a substantial research proposal that draws together key topics covered in the module, including research design, methodology, data collection, and data analysis. The proposal must clearly articulate the rationale, aims, theoretical framing, and proposed methodological approach for the student's planned doctoral research.

B) Why is this assessment being used?

The assessment strategy is designed to support students in developing the foundational skills required for doctoral-level research.

The ethical review application familiarises students with the formal processes and expectations of institutional ethics committees, and ensures they can identify and respond to ethical challenges within their proposed study. This early engagement embeds responsible research practice and helps design out plagiarism by requiring students to apply ethical principles specifically to their own developing project.

The research proposal enables students to synthesise module content and demonstrate achievement of all learning outcomes. Producing a detailed proposal is essential preparation for doctoral research and aligns with programme requirements, as it is expected to form the basis of the CP1 process at the start of Stage 2. This assessment mirrors real-world academic practice, building students' capacity for independent inquiry, critical engagement with methods, and coherent academic writing.

Together, these assessments directly support progression through the programme and ensure students are well prepared for the next stage of their doctoral journey.

C) How will students be supported to meet the assessment requirements?

Students will receive structured support throughout the module, including:

Formative assessment opportunities, such as draft sections of the ethics form, research proposal outlines, or methodology workshops, allowing students to receive feedback and refine their work prior to final submission.

Guidance on assessment expectations, including marking criteria, exemplars, and detailed briefings on ethical review processes and proposal structure.

Regular tutorial discussions to help students shape their research focus, clarify methodological choices, and ensure alignment with learning outcomes.

Study skills and academic writing support signposted where needed, enabling students to meet doctoral-level standards in argumentation, criticality, and academic integrity.

This support framework ensures students are fully prepared to complete both assessments and successfully transition into Stage 2 of the programme.

Assessment tasks:

Written Assignment (First Sit)

Description: 5000 word research proposal

Weighting: 80 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Written Assignment (First Sit)

Description: 2000 word ethical review application.

Weighting: 20 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Written Assignment (Resit)

Description: 5000 word research proposal

Weighting: 80 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Written Assignment (Resit)

Description: 2000 word ethical review application.

Weighting: 20 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Doctor of Education (International) [Frenchay] EdD 2025-26

Doctor of Education (International) [Blended] EdD 2026-27

Educational Research (International) [Frenchay] PGDip 2026-27