

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	Social Sciences and Humanities
Programme:	MA International Relations; MA Communication for Social Change
FHEQ Level:	7
Course Title:	Research Methodology
Course Code:	INR 7100
Total Hours:	200
Timetabled Hours:	39
Guided Learning Hours:	21
Independent Learning Hours:	140
Credits:	20 UK CATS credits 10 ECTS credits 4 US credits

Course Description:

Introduces students to the process of social science research, including the ability to work from libraries and institutional archives, and developing skills in academic research design and methods, with a focus on the field of international relations and global politics. Students are encouraged to develop independent thought by discovering, evaluating, and making appropriate use of a wide range of approaches to research and associated academic writing. This course assists students with the identification of their own research interests as they move towards choosing a thesis topic and develop a research question and project plan, while introducing students to some of the key qualitative and quantitative research methods used in the discipline.

Prerequisites:

MA students only

Aims and Objectives:

- To introduce students to the process of developing planning and conducting MA level autonomous research.
- To examine the range of qualitative and quantitative research designs, approaches methods and techniques available to scholars in the field.
- To engage critically with both academic texts and primary sources.
- To consider the ethical and safeguarding dimension of research, particularly as this applies in research dealing with security, conflict, radicalism terrorism and extremism.
- To consider a range of different cultural approaches to epistemology and research methods

Programme Outcomes:

MA INR: B; E; F; G; H

MA CSC: B3; B4; C2; C5; D1; D4

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following learning outcomes.
- Engages with and critically reflects upon on the different quantitative, qualitative, and creative methodological tools used in International Relations while developing research question and research plans.
- Demonstrates the ability to exercise initiative in organising and pursuing set projects and assignments.
- Demonstrates the ability to utilize quantitative, qualitative and creative research methods in the context of International Relations, and the skills necessary to effectively communicate research methods and findings.
- Demonstrate professional presentation skills, and the ability to pitch material to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Demonstrate understanding of the specific ethical and wellbeing challenges of conducting research in the fields of security, conflict, radicalism, terrorism and extremism.

Indicative Content:

Research design and project planning

Qualitative, quantitative, and creative research methods.

Methods for conducting primary research including library and archival research.

Methods for engaging critically with texts, and evaluating primary, secondary and tertiary sources.

Thesis writing including logical and structured narratives and arguments supported by relevant primary and secondary evidence.

Presentation of proposed research projects.

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

The course will consist of weekly postgraduate seminars, which will follow the structure set out within the course syllabus and will serve a number of functions: seminars provide a framework for the course; address critically the relevant literature in specific areas, examine concepts, theories and case studies, and enable students to engage in group discussion and dialogue, and autonomous learning. Seminars rely upon active student participation, mediated by the Course instructor. By examining and discussing issues and problems in a seminar setting, students as junior research colleagues will be able to learn from each other and resolve questions that arise in the course of the lectures and readings. Seminars will only be useful to the extent that they are prepared for and participation in discussions and debates is an essential aspect of this. All students will be required to participate. Tutorial opportunities will also be available for research supervision and other academic support.

Indicative Text(s):

- Lowndes, V. et al. 2017. Theory and Methods in Political Science. Palgrave Macmillan. 4th Ed.
- Choi, S. et al. 2017. Critical Methods for the Study of World Politics. New York and London: Routledge.
- Halperin, S. and O. Heath 2020. Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 3rd Ed.
- Kara, H. 2015. Creative Research Methods in the Social Sciences. UK: Polity Press.
- May, T. 2011. Social Research: Issues, Methods, and Process. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. 4th Ed.
- Ackerly, B.A., M. Stern, and J. True 2006. Feminist Methodologies for International Relations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Journals

Web Sites

See syllabus for complete reading list

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Revised aims and objectives	Oct 10, 2022	
Revision – annual update	May 2023	
Revision – programme outcomes update	Oct 2023	
Programme name updated	January 2024	

Total Hours Updated	April 2024	