COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department: Communications and the Arts

Programme: Communications and Media Studies

FHEQ **Level:**   5

Course Title: Research Methods in Media and Arts

Course Code: COMM 5301

Total Hours: 160 (Lev 3-5) (4 US Credit)
Timetabled Hours: 45
Guided Learning Hours: 15
Independent Learning Hours: 100

Credit   16 UK CATS credits
8 ECTS credits
4 US credits

Course Description:

This course equips students with essential research skills tailored to the arts and communications fields. It covers qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, and also uses of interpretative frameworks. Students will learn various approaches to research processes, including formulation of research questions, types of research design, literature reviews, analysis and contextualization, and ethical research. Students will discuss cultural assumptions and biases in research and develop critical reflection and evaluation skills. By the end of the course, students will be prepared to undertake independent research projects relevant to academic and professional settings.

Prerequisites:

40 credits + LIBA 4301 Academic Research and Writing

Aims and Objectives:

Students will learn to formulate research questions, review appropriate literature from specialist journals, and develop research designs indicating suitable methodologies. They will contextualize and apply relevant interpretative frameworks, understand the uses of new technology for information retrieval and data analysis, and indicate appropriate forms of analysis for specific types of data. Additionally, students will demonstrate an understanding of research ethics and engage in self-reflectivity as researchers.

Programme Outcomes:

5AI; 5BII; 5CII; 5DI

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:

- Demonstrates the ability to engage in critical reflection on quantitative and/or qualitative research methods in the field of arts and communications.

- Demonstrates engagement with the selection, application and utilization of disciplinary appropriate methods and interpretative frameworks.

- Delivers work with limited supervision and/or effectively engage in teamwork according to a given brief.

- Demonstrating both critical reflection on ethical principles in the research process and broader discipline, and self-reflection for the capacity of criteria-based evaluation of work.

Indicative Content:

- Quantitative, qualitative, and interpretative approaches to research in communication, media studies, film studies, arts, and visual cultures

- Analytical framework and contextualisation of case studies

- Formulating research questions

- Research design (e.g. inductive, deductive, grounded) and research process

- Information Literacy and Literature Reviews

- Secondary and primary data sources

- Information and digital literacy

- Ethical Reflection/Consideration, including practices in critical self-reflection

- Development of research proposals

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:

This is an active learning course that combines short lectures and class discussions with cooperative teamwork and individual assessment. The lectures and discussions introduce the main points of each method of analysis and discuss weekly readings. The group work aims to illustrate how different methods can investigate a research question. All students are expected to be fully prepared to participate in informal discussions, in class research projects and group presentations.

Indicative Text(s):

Bell, J. (2010) *Doing your Research Project: A Guide for First-time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science.* 5th edn. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Berger, A. A. (2018) *Media Analysis Techniques*. 6th edn. Sage.

Bignell, J. (2002) Media Semiotics. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Method*s. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S. and Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2008) *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies.* London: Sage.

James, A., Kitchin, R. and Leszcynski, A. (eds.) (2021) *Researching Digital Life: Orientations, Methods, and Practice*. Sage.

Maratovski, G. (2024) *Research for Designers: A Guide to Methods and Practices*. 3rd edn. London: Sage.

Ryan-Flood, R. and Gill, R. (eds.) (2010) *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections*. New York: Routledge.

Salmons, J. (2016) *Doing Qualitative Research Online.* London: Sage Publications.

Sarantakos, S. (2013) *Social Research*. 4th ed. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Seale, C. (ed.) (2018) *Researching Society and Culture*. 4th edn. London: Sage.

Stokes, J. (2021) *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies*. 3rd edn. Los Angeles: Sage.

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
First edition document	Nov 2024	