1. **Title of the module**

SOCI8990 (SO899) -Research Methods and Dissertation

1. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research

1. **The level of the module (Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

Level 7

1. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

60 credits (30 ECTS)

1. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

Spring term (term 2) and summer term (term 3)

1. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

None

1. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

Social Work MA (compulsory stage 2 module)

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

8.1 demonstrate advanced knowledge of the range of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques and a capacity for independently evaluating their respective strengths and weaknesses in addressing particular kinds of research question;

8.2 Undertake critical analysis of research-based concepts drawn from social work and related disciplines, understanding of their distinctive epistemological status and the contribution of these concepts to the knowledge base of social work practice;

8.3 Demonstrate capacity for the critical evaluation of research in providing “explanations of the links between definitional processes contributing to social differences (for example, social class, gender, ethnic differences, age, sexuality and religious belief) to the problems of inequality and differential need faced by service users” (QAA 2008: 8);

8.4 Possess the ability to read and interpret tables of data, graphs and/or charts containing numerical and/or statistical information with the capacity to critically evaluate their potential relevance in social work practice;

8.5 Possess the ability to deploy techniques of analysis and enquiry in order to critically evaluate research strategies, research findings, and the reliability and validity of information in primary sources (e.g. refereed research articles);

8.6 Possess the potential commensurate with master’s level study to apply research skills in order to evaluate, inform and advance social work practice, including a practical understanding of how to use research-based evidence in forming judgements and making decisions;

8.7 Show originality in the critical analysis of literature relevant to a chosen topic area, including consideration of research from both qualitative and quantitative paradigms and its relevance for practice;

8.8 Possess the capacity to formulate a research question; produce a research proposal, and plan and execute a piece of independent research using primary and/or secondary data sources;

8.9 Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the complex social, ethical and political context in which social work research, and other research relevant to social work practice, takes place.

1. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

9.1 **Possess**  the capacity for self-directed and independent study and the application of learning to the production of a single piece of original research;

9.2 Demonstrate skills in communicating with others in a group context, making contributions appropriately and professionally;

9.3 Possess the ability to analyse and interpret statistical and numerical data in the form of tables, charts and/or graphs as presented in the context of research articles, reports and policy documents, including the findings of large-scales surveys

1. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

The aims of this module are threefold:

Firstly, to equip students to become ‘critical consumers’ of research as practitioners by providing them with the knowledge and understanding necessary to evaluate research appropriately;

Secondly, to provide students with the opportunity to independently carry out an in-depth inquiry to investigate a research question(s) of their choice, producing a coherent review of the relevant literature, a logical discussion and a clearly communicated set of conclusions in the form of a dissertation;

Thirdly, to prepare students to become ‘research-minded’ practitioners in order that they have the capacity to undertake research in practice settings and/or take a lead role in supervising others in such work.

The module provides an introduction to a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods including different types of interview (narrative, biographical, in-depth, semi-structured, structured) ethnography, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires, experimental and quasi-experimental research, randomised controlled trials, documentary and textual analysis, systematic reviews and meta-analysis, and approaches that involve mixing methods. The module outlines the different epistemological and ideological foundations of contrasting research paradigms.

The module includes exposure to the techniques involved in analysing both qualitative and quantitative data, as well as considering ethical issues relating to research. The module will demonstrate the existence and value of repositories of both quantitative and qualitative data and how these may be accessed and utilised.

Each week students are provided with research articles that are compulsory reading for discussion in seminars/workshops. Each reading provides an example of methods as used in research, their potential in addressing specific kinds of research question, and their relevance for social work practice.

Students are required to draft a dissertation proposal for reviewing or evaluating an aspect of social work theory or practice. Through this they are required to apply their learning on the module through the interpretation of study findings and the development of coherent recommendations for social care and social work.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**

Alston, M and Bowles, W (2003) *Research for Social Workers: An Introduction to Methods* London: Routledge

Bryman A (2015) 5th Ed. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press

Humphries, B (2008), *Social Work Research for Social Justice,* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan

Padgett, K (2008)2nd Ed*. Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research* London: Sage

Shaw, I., Briar-Lawson, K., Orme, J and Ruckdeschel, R (2010*) The Sage Handbook of Social Work Research*, London: Sage

Teater, B., Devaney, J., Forrester, F., Scourfield, J. and Carpenter, J. (2016) *Quantitative Research Methods for Social Work: Making Research Count,* Red Globe Press.

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Total contact hours: 32

Private study hours: 568

Total study hours: 600

1. **Assessment methods**
   1. Main assessment methods

Dissertation (12000 words) – 100%.

13.2 Reassessment methods

Like-for-like

1. ***Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods (section12) and methods of assessment (section 13)***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module learning outcome** | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 8.6 | 8.7 | 8.8 | 8.9 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.3 |
| **Learning/ teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Private Study | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Lectures | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Seminars /support sessions | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dissertation | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |

1. **Inclusive module design**

The School recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance (see Annex B Appendix A) have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

a) Accessible resources and curriculum

b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods

1. **Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered**

Medway

1. **Internationalisation**

The module is designed to meet the requirements of UK professional registration. The range of generic skills which will be developed are applicable to international contexts, the specific skills have potential international relevance and reference may be made to learning from practice and policies from other countries.

**FACULTIES SUPPORT OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet) |
| 21/04/2017 | Minor | Spring 2017 | 13 |  |
| February 2018 | CMA update | Spring 2019 | N/A |  |
| 27/01/2019 | Major | January 2019 | 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14 | No |