Course Title: Qualitative Methods - PhD and M.Res students only. MSC students must enrol on SPS5037 (see separate course outline in webpages for SPS5037)
Course Code: SPS5042
Co-ordinator: Dr Marguerite Schinkel
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Location: SCCJR, Ivy Lodge, 63 Gibson Street
Office hours: Tuesdays 3.15-5pm

Lectures: Tuesdays 5.00pm – 6.30pm (24th September 2019 – 3rd December 2019, 11 consecutive weeks)
VENUE: Gregory Building, 109 (Main Lecture Theatre)

Dissertation Training: Students only attend ONE of the sessions listed below and should select the one they wish to attend when enrolling in MyCampus. Please note that spaces in each group are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Week beginning 30th September – week beginning 2nd December (10 consecutive week)
TUT01: St Andrew’s Building, Room 221, Tuesday 6.45pm-7.45pm
TUT02: St Andrew’s Building, Room 368, Tuesday 6.45pm-7.45pm
TUT03: St Andrew’s Building, Room 221, Wednesday 2pm-3pm
TUT04: St Andrew’s Building, Room 368, Wednesday 2pm-3pm
TUT05: Sir Alexander Stone Building, Room 303, Wednesday 2pm-3pm

Introduction
Qualitative methods are those research techniques concerned broadly with non-mathematical, naturally occurring and non-experimental research practices that look to uncover the meanings and significance of the wide variety of evidence that social researchers collect. Qualitative research includes a broad range of approaches and techniques. The purpose of the course is to introduce students to a number of the most commonly used of these approaches and techniques. These tools include in-depth interviews and focus groups as well as the gathering of data based on observation and textual information. The course aims to develop a practical understanding of the philosophical underpinnings, application and analysis of qualitative methodology for those working in the social sciences.

Course Aims
The lectures are designed to give students grounding in why social science researchers use particular qualitative methodologies and how they may fit into a broader examination of society. The lectures are divided into three blocks: Research Design, Strategy, and Practical Skills; Data Collection Methods; and Analysis. The tutorials are designed to give students time to try out, discuss and critically examine how qualitative methods work in practice. The goals of the course are to give students a) robust introductory knowledge of a range of qualitative methods; b) the ability to build a solid research design; c) the skill to find appropriate qualitative methods that relate to their inquiries and d) the tools and experience to start to implement qualitative methods such as interviewing, focus groups, and analysis with skill and confidence. In addition to methods and research design skills, students acquire skills pertaining to the practicalities of the research process, such as structuring a qualitative dissertation, reviewing and using literature in appropriate ways, and meeting ethical standards and procedures.

Intended Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the different epistemological and ontological positions inherent in different qualitative approaches.
- Recognise the theoretical, political and cultural context of one’s research agenda.
- Have a robust knowledge of the different qualitative methods of enquiry and the data collection strategies available.
- Understand the mechanics of sampling and case selection strategies and their implications for the generation of research findings.
- Understand, critically evaluate, and demonstrate the process of constructing a robust research design that uses qualitative methods.
- Understand criteria for evaluating qualitative research and principles of good practice, including credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, reliability, transparency, validity, reflexivity, social responsivity, ethics, and rigour.
- Have a first impression of software solutions for supporting qualitative inquiry.
Summative Assessment
90%: 4,000 word research proposal in response to a given scenario, a development of formative assessment 2 (see 22 below). To be submitted by January 8th, 2020 (submission instructions will be provided during the course).
10%: participation in formative assessments and peer review.

Formative Assessment
Two formative assessments, delivered after the first two blocks of the course.
1. Critique of the methodology of a published paper, assessing the quality of the qualitative research reported. (1,000 words)
2. Very brief research design (500 words) and discussion of ethics (500 words) in relation to a given scenario. (1,000 words)

Each of these will be peer-reviewed by two other students using Aropä, a web-based system developed by the University for peer review (to be used repeatedly). Following the peer review, tutors will give feedback on the quality of the peer feedback received by those in their tutorials.

Further details concerning the assessment will be circulated in class during late September/early October 2019.

Course Delivery
The course will be delivered as a weekly 90-minute lecture and one weekly hour-long tutorial.

Students are expected to read the required reading associated with each class before each session (further details will be available towards the beginning of Semester 1).

Enrolment
As with all courses, spaces are limited so it is important that you enrol as soon as you are fully registered. To enrol on this course, ensure that you have completed financial and academic registration on MyCampus and then follow the instructions found here: http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/registry/enrolment/#

The course code required to enrol in Qualitative Methods is SPS5037 (for MSc students) or SPS5042 (for MRes and PhD students).

SPS5042 is only designed for MRes and PhD students. SPS5037 is designed only for MSc students. Please enrol in the appropriate course for your degree.

Before registering you must contact your own Academic Unit to check the status of this course as an accredited option within their research training programme.

Note: Further details concerning the course will be provided during Semester 1.