



RESEARCH SKILLS PROGRAMME (RSP) FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS



2020/2021

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Welcome to the Research Skills Programme (RSP)

I am delighted to welcome you to the Research Skills Programme (RSP) for postgraduate students in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences. This Programme offers all PGR students in the Faculty the option to attend a series of research seminars to support their development as researchers.

The HaSS *Research Skills Programme* (RSP) is an optional programme run through the HaSS Graduate School and open to all PGR students. The programme consists of several seminars, each relating to a particular skill or knowledge aspect relevant to your research training. You are welcome to attend as many of these sessions as you like and find useful for your development. The programme is structured into four Units, each consisting of several seminars.

Additional research training may be available through your School or Department. You should check with your supervisor and your School's PGR Director the training that you must or can complete as part of your postgraduate degree.

We hope that you enjoy the sessions and find the Programme stimulating and valuable. The sessions encourage interaction, with an emphasis on student involvement, and offer hands-on activities and opportunities to share your own research experiences.

For any questions or suggestions on the Programme, please email the Graduate School staff at: hass-postgrad@strath.ac.uk

On behalf of the staff involved in the Programme, I wish you a successful academic year.

*Prof Daniela Sime,
Associate Dean (Public Engagement & Impact)*

Outline of sessions

All sessions run 2:00-4:00 pm. Please register for each session in advance through the registration links provided. Use Eventbrite to book and cancel attendance, if needed, rather than emailing staff to say you want to attend or cancel. Zoom links will be emailed to registered students 48 hours before each class.

DATE	TOPIC	FACILITATOR
UNIT 1		
LIT REVIEWING AND QUALITATIVE METHODS		
4th Nov	<i>Writing a critical lit review</i> Register at: https://litreviewing.eventbrite.co.uk	Prof David Kirk
2nd Dec	<i>Carrying out interviews & focus groups</i> Register at: https://interviewsandfqs.eventbrite.co.uk	Dr Mark Carver
19th Jan	<i>Content analysis and analysing social media text</i> Eventbrite link: https://analysingcontent.eventbrite.co.uk	Dr Mark Shephard
28th Jan	<i>Collaborative film making as research method</i> Eventbrite link: https://filminresearch.eventbrite.co.uk	Dr Maddie Breeze
10th Feb	<i>Ethical issues in research</i> Eventbrite link: https://ethicslearning.eventbrite.co.uk	Dr Laura Steckley
UNIT 2		
QUANTITATIVE METHODS		
24th Feb	<i>Quantitative research: Introductory issues and sampling</i> Eventbrite link: https://quantsclass1.eventbrite.co.uk	Prof Bernard Harris

10th Mar	<i>Obtaining data, questionnaire design and introductory statistics</i>	Prof Bernard Harris
	Eventbrite link: https://quantsclass2.eventbrite.co.uk	
UNIT 3	VIVA PREPARATION AND PUBLISHING	
31st Mar	<i>Preparing for your viva</i>	Prof Daniela Sime
	Eventbrite link: https://vivapreparation.eventbrite.co.uk	
28th April	<i>Writing for publication</i>	Prof David Kirk
	Eventbrite link: https://writeingforpublication.eventbrite.co.uk	
UNIT 4	ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT	
12th May	<i>Getting your research into use: Engaging the public, having policy and practice impact</i>	Prof Daniela Sime
	Eventbrite link: https://impactagenda.eventbrite.co.uk	
26th May	<i>Teaching skills for postgraduates</i>	Prof Claire McDiarmid
	Eventbrite link: https://teachingatuni.eventbrite.co.uk	
10th June	<i>Presenting at conferences & networking</i>	Prof Daniela Sime
	Eventbrite link: https://presentingandnetworking.eventbrite.co.uk	

Programme overview

The Research Skills Programme (RSP) offers you a range of training activities, with flexibility to identify your priorities and plan your skills development independently, based on your learning needs. Research Councils, other research sponsors and employers, are asking universities to adopt a holistic approach to developing researchers. Postgraduate researchers are expected to develop a range of generic and transferable skills to a high level, to prepare them for their future career in academia or other fields and make them competitive at an international level.

In April 2011, the Research Councils issued the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) (see Appendix in this Booklet), which specifies four domains and four sub-domains, encompassing the knowledge, intellectual abilities and professional standards to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills required to be a successful researcher. The four main domains are:

- Knowledge and intellectual abilities (domain A)
- Personal effectiveness (domain B)
- Research governance and organisation (domain C)
- Engagement, influence and impact (domain D)

The Research Councils are also funding the Vitae Programme (see www.vitae.ac.uk) to support postgraduate researchers and their supervisors through a range of activities, including courses, publications and online resources.

The Research Skills Programme provided through the Graduate School in HaSS is informed by the above guidelines and aims to support you in developing as a rounded professional and prepare you fully for your future career. It runs in conjunction with the Researcher Development Programme (RDF) available at University level.

The Programme this year has four units, with workshops/seminars available under each of these and addressing the different domains from the Researcher Development Framework (RDF). These include:

- Literature Reviewing and Qualitative methods
- Quantitative methods
- Viva and publishing
- Engagement and Impact

The programme is not compulsory and is open to all postgraduate students in HaSS, including those on Masters programmes. You can complete the Programme over the duration of one or more years and you can attend any of the sessions that are relevant to you and your training.

Advance registration is required of all participants, as timings might change or sessions may be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. Registration is done online, through the links provided under each of the sessions (see page 12 ff for links).

Programme reading

This is a generic list of reading materials for the Programme, most of which are available in the University library. Further reading materials may be provided at each workshop by individual presenters.

Bryman, A. (2015) *Social research methods*, 5th edition, Oxford University Press.

Burnell, I. and Roffey-Barentsen, J. (2020) *Completing your EdD: The essential guide to the doctor of Education*, Emerald Publishing.

Cresswell, J.H. (2018) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*, 5th edition, London: Sage.

Cresswell, J.H. and Poth, C. (2018) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*, 4th edition, London: Sage.

Christensen, P. and James, A. (2017) *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*, 3rd edition, London: Routledge.

Descombe, M. (2017) *The Good Research Guide for small-scale social science research projects*, 6th edition, Open University Press (guide on data collection, methods and analysis).

Fairclough, N. (2016) *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*, London: Routledge.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (2019) *Ethnography: Principles in practice*, 4th edition, London: Routledge.

Hart, C. (2018) *Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination*, London: Sage.

Israel, M. and Hay, I. (2006) *Research ethics for social scientists*, London: Sage.

Jesson, J.; Matheson, L.; Lacey, F. (2011) *Doing your literature review: Traditional and Systematic techniques*, London: Sage.

Kara, H. (2015) *Creative research methods in social sciences*, Policy Press.

Leavy, P. (2019) *Handbook of art-based research*, Guildford Press.

May, T. (ed.) (2002) *Qualitative research in action*, London: Sage.

Mannay, D. (2015) *Visual, narrative and creative research methods*, Routledge.

Matthiesen, J. and Binder, M. (2009) *How to survive your doctorate: What others don't tell you*, Open University Press.

- Mitchell, C. et al. (2017) *Participatory visual methodologies: Social change, community and policy*, London: Sage.
- Murray, R. (2017) *How to write a thesis*, Open University Press.
- Murray, R. (2009) *Writing for academic journals*, Open University Press.
- Murray, R. (2015) *How to survive your viva: defending your thesis in an oral examination*, Open University Press.
- Oliver, P. (2010) *The student's guide to research ethics*, 2nd edition, Open University Press.
- O'Leary, Z. (2010) *The essential guide to doing your research project*, London: Sage.
- O'Reilly, M.; Ronzoni, P. and Dogra, N. (2013) *Research with children: Theory & Practice*, London: Sage.
- Phillips, E. and Pugh, D. (2015) *How to get a PhD: A handbook for students and their supervisors*, 5th edition, Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Pink, S. (2013) *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research*, 3rd edition, London: Sage.
- Punch, K. (2006) *Developing effective research proposals*, London: Sage.
- Rose, G. (2016) *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*, 4th edition, London: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2017) *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*, London: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2019) *Interpreting qualitative data*, 6th edition, London: Sage.
- Tarling, R. (2005) *Managing Social Research: A practical guide*, Routledge.
- Thomas, D. R. and Hodges, I.D. (2010) *Designing and managing your research project: Core knowledge for social and health researchers*, London: Sage.
- Townsend, K. and Saunders, M. (2015) *How to keep your research project on track: Insights from when things go wrong*, Edward Elgar Print.
- Wallace, M. and Wray, A. (2016) *Critical reading and writing for postgraduates*, 3rd edition, London: Sage.

Planning your development

How should I plan my development?

It is important to take time to plan your training and development early on in your postgraduate career, but also to revisit your development plan regularly throughout your degree, as your needs may change as your research and postgraduate career progress. The Researcher Development Framework (see Appendix) is a useful place to start.

You might want to think of your development in terms of:

- Subject specific knowledge – many covered through your degree, in your School or Department;
- Generic skills – or discipline specific skills, many covered in this Programme;
- Transferable skills- for which training is available through the Researcher Development Programme.

Use the Professional Development Planner (provided by *Vitae*) to map out the skills you would like to develop. *Vitae* now charges a fee for this, but other planners are also available:

<https://rdfplanner.vitae.ac.uk/>

You should consult with your supervision team and ask their advice on skills and knowledge that might be useful and sessions that you should attend, to make sure that you attend the appropriate training in relation to your needs and the stage of your research and development. They can recommend opportunities for development and support you in attending these. You can also discuss your training needs with the PGR co-ordinator in your School.

Training objectives you aim to achieve should be SMART:

- **Specific:** in both meaning and focus
- **Measurable:** how will you know you will have achieved progress
- **Advantageous:** what's the personal advantage?
- **Realistic:** can you complete it in the time you have?
- **Time limited:** with deadlines and milestones for completion

An example of a SMART objective would be: *I will attend a workshop on time management by the end of first semester, to make me better at organising my time and have a more satisfactory work/life balance.*

You should review your initial development plan at least yearly (possibly at the same time with your annual review) and add new skills you may need for the later stages of the project and further on, in your career. It is important to see your development as an ongoing process and see yourself as 'in charge' of driving it and identifying opportunities to achieve your objectives.

Which skills should I develop and... where? how? when?

This depends on which School you are based in, which degree you are taking, your previous experience of research and the requirements explained in the letter offering you a place on your course. Your School's Postgraduate Research Director and the Graduate School can clarify these issues further for you.

If you are a doctoral student, you are required to complete 60 credits as part of your postgraduate training. The main options available to you are through the University's Researcher Development Programme (RDP). The RDP also allows you to claim credits for activities completed outside the university- check their website for details. You should discuss these options with your supervisors and PGR co-ordinator. Other credit-bearing activities may be available through external providers.

The Researcher Development Programme (RDP) is a comprehensive university-wide programme of career development opportunities to support postgraduate research students and staff. Delivered in partnership with all Faculties and Professional Services, the RDP is designed to meet the needs of our diverse research and postgraduate community. The RDP recognises all career paths and aims to enhance your skills and competencies for current and future roles within academic and other sectors. Visit the [Researcher Development Programme website](#) for more information.

Each School might also provide research skills courses or opportunities for students to develop specialist knowledge and skills, for example by allowing you to attend research skills sessions on Masters programmes or staff-led research seminars. Your supervisors and PGR Director will direct you to these, but you should also ask around and find out what is available in your School. If you have a specific training need for which provision does not exist at University level, discuss this with your PGR Director, they might know of opportunities available with providers from outside the university.

What should I do first?

- Familiarise yourself with the activities available through the RDP/RSP and the process for registration;
- Register early for the sessions you want to attend, as classes are very popular;
- Complete a 'needs analysis' to identify the research skills that you need to develop each year;
- Introduce yourself to the PGR Director in your School and to the other postgraduate students;
- Find out what research activities are available to you in your School, for example, research seminars you can attend;
- Familiarise yourself with the facilities and the people in the Graduate School and get to know the people who can support you.

What should I do later?

- Discuss training needs with your supervisors regularly, ask them for support in identifying training opportunities;

- Regularly update your online portfolio of training completed (in Neptune), reflect on learning done and review your training needs; this will also count as evidence of research development at your formal reviews;
- Develop networks with more experienced doctoral students and early career researchers in your School, to find out about other opportunities for development, and to have an on-going network of support;
- Complete the feedback forms on events you attend, to help us make the programme better!

Who can help

There are several people who could help you identify your training needs and develop these, including:

- Your supervisory team- they should be able to support you in identifying your training needs and opportunities to develop these and provide ongoing support;
- Your School's PGR Director- they may know about discipline-specific opportunities, sources of funding, networks of support in your field etc. (see contact details at the end of this Booklet);
- Other doctoral students/early career researchers in your School- they could suggest workshops and conferences they have attended, professional networks, informal meeting places etc.;
- The Graduate School- can guide you through the University's support services, workshops available, provide general information on courses and ongoing support; check also www.strath.ac.uk./rdp
- The staff delivering the workshops- they come from a range of Schools within the Faculty and they can answer your questions on the content of individual workshops.

For any general enquiries, on the research skills training and other events provided in HaSS, please contact the Graduate School: hass-postgrad@strath.ac.uk

Outline of seminars

UNIT 1 - LITERATURE REVIEWING AND QUALITATIVE METHODS

Workshop 1, 4th November 2020

Prof David Kirk, School of Education

Writing a critical literature review

Register at: <https://litreviewing.eventbrite.co.uk>

This session will discuss in detail the purpose and scope of a literature review in Social Sciences, how to go about planning and conducting a review, and how to use the review to inform the research design. The second part will discuss aspects of writing a literature review, including use of references, and will give students the opportunity to raise their own questions in relation to completing a literature review.

Workshop 2, 2nd December 2020

Dr Mark Carver, School of Education

Interviews and focus groups

Register at: <https://interviewsandfqs.eventbrite.co.uk>

This workshop explores the theoretical and practical issues involved in planning and organising interviews and focus groups with research participants. We will weigh the advantages and disadvantages of using each method, the main issues to consider in identifying suitable interviewees and participants, and the practical issues involved in planning interview schedules, designing the best questions, setting up meetings and conducting the interviews/groups. There will be opportunities for practising your own interviewing skills and discussing your own experience/research plans.

Workshop 3, 19th January 2021

Content analysis and analysing social media text

Dr Mark Shephard, School of Politics

Register at: <https://analysingcontent.eventbrite.co.uk>

This session will focus on analysing social media text or more easily 'content analysis' (with examples from social media, parliamentary texts etc. + with brief section on discourse analysis, i.e. how is it different from content analysis) and a discussion of manual versus machine coding.

Workshop 4, 28th January 2021
Dr Maddie Breeze, School of Education
Collaborative film making as a research method
Register at: <https://filminresearch.eventbrite.co.uk>

This workshop will explore the potential of using art-based methods, like film, in research and discuss the methodological and ethical implications of working with visuals, from the initial stages of data collection to the subsequent stages of analysis and use of visuals in dissemination materials.

Workshop 5, 10th February 2021
Dr Laura Steckley, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Ethical issues in research
Register at: <https://ethicslearning.eventbrite.co.uk>

This workshop will look in detail at the key ethical issues involved in research with individuals, including vulnerable groups, and detail the steps you need to follow in securing ethical approval for your research. Issues of consent, confidentiality, anonymity and others are discussed in relation to direct examples from research in Social Sciences. This session is aimed mainly at students on professional doctorates and part-time students, but anyone can attend.

UNIT 2- QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Workshop 6, 24th February

Prof Bernard Harris, School of Social Work & Social Policy

Understanding and undertaking quantitative research: Introductory issues and sampling

Register at: <https://quantsclass1.eventbrite.co.uk>

This is the first of two introductory sessions on quantitative methods. It has two basic aims: first, to enable students to become more familiar with the use of basic statistical concepts in other people's research; and, second, to encourage you to use these concepts in your own research projects. The session looks at the value of quantitative research and offers some 'reasons for counting'. It then looks at the problem of operationalisation before introducing some key concepts, such as validity, reliability and causality. The next sections look at the process of quantitative research and some of the criticisms to which it is subject. The final section introduces issues associated with sampling and the problem of generalisation.

Workshop 7, 10th March

Prof Bernard Harris, School of Social Work & Social Policy

Obtaining data, questionnaire design and introductory statistics

Register at: <https://quantsclass2.eventbrite.co.uk>

This is the second of two introductory sessions on the use of quantitative methods. It begins by looking at some of the ways in which quantitative data can be obtained, with particular reference to the use of content analysis, structured observation and secondary data analysis. It then looks in more detail at issues associated with questionnaire design. The second half of the session provides a brief introduction to statistics. It looks at different types of descriptive statistic and the presentation and analysis of statistical data. It concludes by looking at the concept of statistical significance and the basic principles of correlation and regression.

UNIT 3- VIVA PREPARATION AND PUBLISHING

Workshop 8, 31st March

Prof Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy

Preparing for your viva

Register at: <https://vivapreparation.eventbrite.co.uk>

This workshop will start with an overview of the viva process and examine the University's regulations in relation to examining. It will detail the roles of the examiners and the structure of the viva exam, and then discuss possible questions and how best to answer these in a viva exam. It will then offer some 'hints and tips' on preparing for the viva and conclude with a simulation of a viva situation.

Workshop 9, 28th April

Prof David Kirk, School of Education

Writing for publication

Register at: <https://writeingforpublication.eventbrite.co.uk>

This seminar will discuss how to choose a journal and how to optimise the chance of your submission being accepted. The presenter will also give an insight into the reviewing process and the editors' decision making.

UNIT 4– ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

Workshop 10, 12th May 2021

Prof Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy

Getting research into use: Engaging the public, having policy and practice impact

Register at: <https://impactagenda.eventbrite.co.uk>

This workshop will look at the best approaches to making your research accessible for wider audiences, including the general public, policy makers and practitioners. It will detail the best ways to identify potential research users and the process of ‘translating’ research findings into policy and practice implications. It will then offer some ‘hints and tips’ on preparing to speak about your research to the general public and a simulation of a public forum where everyone will present their research in a plain language format.

Workshop 11, 26th May 2021

Prof Claire McDiarmid, School of Law

Teaching skills for postgraduates

Register at: <https://teachingatuni.eventbrite.co.uk>

In this seminar, we will consider various aspects of teaching to assist PGR students in undertaking this work. These include:

- preparation: consideration of learning outcomes and teaching to meet these;
- different formats: e.g. lecture; tutorial, seminar
- audience: preparation for and interaction with;
- delivery - style; manner; ways to engage;
- use of visual aids including powerpoint;
- use of other media / ways to engage;
- linking teaching with research.

Workshop 12, 10th June 2021

Prof Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy

Presenting at conferences and networking

Register at: <https://presentingandnetworking.eventbrite.co.uk>

This workshop explores the opportunities and potential pitfalls of presenting at conferences. We consider all aspects of conference presentations: which conferences to consider; writing successful abstracts; creating visual presentations; the importance of engaging your audience and holding their attention; networking and developing relationships. At the end of the workshop, you should feel confident about presenting at conferences and ready to share your research!

Support available for your development

There are many people who can help with your research and skills development throughout your studies at Strathclyde.

Your supervisors

You should work with your supervisors to identify early your training needs and then review these regularly in your supervision meetings. An annual Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is an expectation now of many research funders. Your supervisor(s) can advise on what courses you should attend and when, opportunities that may be available externally and potential sources of funding. They also know the discipline-specific opportunities and networks and may advise you on how to access these.

It is important however that you take charge of your skills development and you do not expect your supervisor(s) to 'take care' of your skills development. You should be proactive in reviewing your skills on a regular basis and identify opportunities for development and then perhaps discuss these with your supervisor(s). Remember also that for most students there is a minimum credit completion requirement of 60 credits before you can submit your thesis for the viva examination.

The review process

During the Annual and Interim reviews, which are part of the doctoral process, you will be asked to discuss your skills development plan. This is a good opportunity to reflect on your ongoing development and perhaps review previous plans, as your development needs will change. Also, you can ask the reviewer's opinion on your progress with your skills development and opportunities they might recommend for your specific discipline.

Your School

In your School, there are several individuals who can support you in your research and development, in addition to your supervisory team. After your supervisors, the Postgraduate Research Director is your first point of contact and they should be able to answer questions you might have about PG life, events organised at School level, the review process, and they will also put you in touch with other doctoral students. The

PGR co-ordinator will also inform you of training programmes available in your School and which you must complete.

At School level, there will be other doctoral students and early career researchers who may offer support, especially in the initial stages. Aim to introduce yourself to colleagues and people in your School and make your research interests known, so that people can include you in relevant activities. The Graduate School can also allocate you a mentor-another PhD student who can signpost things for you.

Find out early about events organised in your School, like research seminars or specialist groups which you might join. When the opportunity arises, introduce yourself to your Head of School and let them know about your area of work and interests.

The Graduate School

See <http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/courses/gradschool/>

As a postgraduate research student in HaSS, you are part of the Graduate School. Created in 2010, the Graduate School objective is to ensure that you have a first class environment in which to pursue your research. Throughout your research, you will be able to rely on the Graduate School Support Team to provide an accessible point of personal contact and information about all aspects of postgraduate life at Strathclyde. Check out the Graduate School Handbook and the Graduate School Sharepoint for more details on support available, which includes training events, information on research events, support with funding and much more.

[Graduate School SharePoint](#)

Strathclyde Researcher Development Programme (RDP)

This is the University's programme of supporting the development of doctoral and early career researchers, which offers a range of courses, events, online resources and opportunities to develop skills for your current and future career. Check out their [website](#) regularly, for information and also to see courses on offer.

Careers Services

The University's Careers Service offers support through a team of qualified careers advisors available to provide impartial and confidential careers guidance to all postgraduate students and early careers researchers. You can use their Resource Centre, access information online, attend workshops organised regularly on different aspects of your development or make an appointment to see an advisor.

See <http://www.strath.ac.uk/careers/pgr/>

Vitae and resources for researchers

Vitae (www.vitae.ac.uk) was established and funded by the UK Government to support researchers' skills development. Its mission is to support not only students, but also researchers, supervisors, research managers. Vitae provides a diverse range of resources online through their website and organises a range of events which are usually free to students, especially those funded through scholarships from the Funding Councils. Check out their website for information and events.

Useful contacts

HaSS Graduate School

hass-postgrad@strath.ac.uk

University RDP enquiries

researcher.development@strath.ac.uk

HaSS Staff with Research/PGR responsibilities

FACULTY LEVEL

Prof Ian Rivers, **Dean of Faculty**

hass-deansoffice@strath.ac.uk

Dr Mark Ellis **Head of the Graduate School**

m.ellis@strath.ac.uk

Helen Larmour, **Graduate School Manager**

helen.larmour@strath.ac.uk

SCHOOL LEVEL

School of Education

PGR Director

Prof Kate Wall

kate.wall@strath.ac.uk

School of Government & Public Policy

PGR Director

Dr Heinz Brandenburg

heinz.brandenburg@strath.ac.uk

School of Humanities

PGR Directors

Prof Richard Finlay (History, Modern Languages) richard.finlay@strath.ac.uk

Dr David Goldie (English, Gender Studies, Journalism and Creative Writing)

d.goldie@strath.ac.uk

School of Law

PGR Directors

Dr Saskia Vermeulen saskia.vermeulen@strath.ac.uk

Prof Cyrus Tata cyrus.tata@strath.ac.uk

School of Psychological Sciences & Health

PGR Director

Dr Louise Brown Nicholls hass-psh-pgr@strath.ac.uk

School of Social Work and Social Policy

PGR Director

Prof Kat Smith katherine.smith.100@strath.ac.uk

Appendix: Researcher Development Framework

