OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Unit title:	Research project
Unit number:	6
Level:	5
Credit value:	15
Guided learning hours:	80
Unit reference number:	K/601/0941

UNIT AIM AND PURPOSE

This unit will enable learners to propose, plan and execute a research project that will address a research question relevant to the health and social care sector. Learners will use appropriate tools to select a topic in order to design their own research project before progressing on to analyse and evaluate their research, which will culminate in the presentation of their findings to an audience.

This unit will provide a core understanding of the process of formulating a research specification and working within agreed parameters whilst carrying out research relevant to the health and social care sector. The unit enables learners to develop skills of analysis and evaluation, so they can make beneficial recommendations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

A pass grade is achieved by meeting **all** the requirements in the assessment criteria.

Learning Outcome (LO) The Learner will:	Pass The assessment criteria are the pass requirements for this unit. The Learner can:
LO1 Understand how to formulate a research specification	1.1 formulate and record possible research project outline specifications 1.2 identify the factors that contribute to the process of research project selection 1.3 undertake a critical review of key references 1.4 produce a research project specification 1.5 provide an appropriate plan and procedures for the agreed research specification
LO2 Be able to implement the research project within agreed procedures and to specification	2.1 match resources efficiently to the research question or hypothesis 2.2 undertake the proposed research investigation in accordance with the agreed specification and procedures 2.3 record and collate relevant data where appropriate
LO3 Be able to evaluate the research outcomes	3.1 use appropriate research evaluation techniques 3.2 interpret and analyse the results in terms of the original research specification 3.3 make recommendations and justify areas for further consideration

LO4 Be able to present the research outcomes	4.1	use an agreed format and appropriate media to present the outcomes of the research to an audience

GRADING CRITERIA

A merit grade is achieved by meeting **all** the requirements in the pass criteria **and** the merit descriptors.

A distinction grade is achieved by meeting **all** the requirements in the pass criteria **and** the merit descriptors **and** the distinction descriptors.

Merit Criteria (M1, M2, M3)	Distinction Criteria (D1, D2, D3)
(M1, M2, and M3 are mandatory to achieve a merit grade. Each must be achieved at least once per unit to achieve a merit grade.)	(D1, D2, and D3 are mandatory to achieve a distinction grade. Each must be achieved at least once per unit to achieve a distinction grade.) (In order to achieve a distinction grade, all merit criteria must also have been achieved.)
MANDATORY TO ACHIEVE A MERIT GRADE	MANDATORY TO ACHIEVE A DISTINCTION GRADE
M1 Analyse concepts, theories or principles to formulate own responses to situations.	D1 Evaluate approaches to develop strategies in response to actual or anticipated situations.
M2 Analyse own knowledge, understanding and skills to define areas for development.	D2 Evaluate and apply strategies to develop own knowledge, understanding and skills.
M3 Exercise autonomy and judgement when implementing established courses of action.	D3 Determine, direct and communicate new courses of action.

TEACHING CONTENT

The Teaching Content describes what has to be taught to ensure that learners are able to access the highest grade.

Learners must be able to apply relevant examples to their work. Where examples are given in the Teaching Content these are suggestions; they do not have to be the examples that the learner uses.

LO1 Understand how to formulate a research specification	
Project specifications	(e.g. title/ hypothesis, introduction, methodology, ethical considerations, data sources (e.g. primary, secondary), anticipated outcomes)
Factors	(e.g. current sector issues, cost, personal interest, service-specific requirements, familiarity with context, extend/challenge previous research projects)
Key references	(e.g. existing data which supports context of the project, previously published research projects, own project undertaken previously)
Project plan	(e.g. schedule, periods of fieldwork, time required for data analysis, travelling, contingency)
Procedures	(e.g. review existing research, methodology, data collection, analysis, evaluation and presentation).

LO2 Be able to implement the research project within agreed procedures and to specification	
Resources	(e.g. time, data, financial considerations, subject-experts)
Investigation	(e.g. systematic monitoring, continuous evaluation, extraneous factors)
Record	(e.g. audio, visual, written)
Data	(e.g. referencing, spreadsheets, transcripts, editing).

LO3 Be able to evaluate the research outcomes	
Evaluation techniques	(e.g. formative/summative, internal/external, formal/informal)
Data analysis	(e.g. descriptive statistics, statistical tests, content, qualitative data, computer software tools)
Recommendations	(e.g. reference to hypothesis, reference to purpose, models).

LO4 Be able to present the research outcomes	
Format	(e.g. abstract, referencing, section headings, appropriate to audience)
Media	(e.g. journal publication, professional body conference, documentary, press report).

GUIDANCE

Delivery guidance
It will be beneficial to deliver this unit in a way that uses actual events, industry forecasts or sector specific contexts which offer the learner the opportunity to explore, develop and apply the fundamental principles of the sector or subject area. Typical delivery contexts could include reviewing research papers on a current topic, which would facilitate understanding of the research process. Research practitioners from local institutions could be interviewed to gain insight into the process. Learners will benefit from being encouraged to exercise autonomy and judgement to develop a research project specification in their own area of interest. Learners could adapt their thinking and reach considered conclusions, when selecting evaluation techniques and data analysis tools. Learners would benefit from being presented with subject/sector-relevant problems from a variety of perspectives and from being given the opportunity to explore them using diverse approaches and schools of thought. For example, research papers which address organisational issues, policy and practice from the perspective of the service user and a practitioner could be used. These research papers could be drawn from medical, sociological and psychological approaches.

Assessment evidence guidance
Evidence produced must demonstrate how a learner has met each of the Learning Outcomes and be submitted in the form of a research paper which is presented to an audience which could include service managers, practitioners and/or members of the public. Where group work/activities contribute to assessment evidence, the individual contribution of each learner must be clearly identified. All evidence must be available for the visiting moderator to review. Where learners are able to use real situations or observations from work placement, care should be taken to ensure that the record of observation accurately reflects the learner's performance. This should be signed, dated, and included in the evidence. It is best practice to record another individual's perspective of how a practical activity was carried out. Centres may wish to use a witness statement as a record of observation. This should be signed and dated and included in the evidence.

RESOURCES

Books Moule, P., and Hek. G. *Making Sense of Research: An Introduction for Health and Social Care Practitioners,* 4th edition. Sage Publications Ltd., 2011. ISBN 978-1-84920-778-2 Neale, J. *Research Methods for Health and Social Care.* Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2008 ISBN 978-0-23050-078-5 Cowan, D. (2009) *Research Issues in Health and Social Care*. M&K Update Ltd, 2009.ISBN 978-1-90783-0204
Journals *British Medical Journal* *Health Services Journal* *Public Service Review: Health and Social Care*
Websites www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk – Social Care Online www.hsj.co.uk – Health Service Journal www.publicservice.co.uk – Public Service www.open.ac.uk/health-and-social-care/main/research – Faculty of Health and Social Care
Signposting to other units within the qualification This unit could be linked to all other units, dependent on the context of the research project.