



**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX  
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**Research Methods in Clinical Psychology  
Academic Year: 2016-17  
916C8  
Credits 15  
Spring Term 2017**

**Module Convenor: Dr. Kathy Greenwood**

**NOTE: Most of the questions you need answers to about this module are in this document. Please read it fully and carefully before your first seminar.**

NOTE: This document concerns the structure and content of the module. If you have questions about procedures, please consult the School of Psychology Administration Office in Pev1 2A13 or via [psychology@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:psychology@sussex.ac.uk)

**MODULE INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS****Module Structure, Aims and Objectives****Module outline**

This module begins by describing what research is, and then discusses a number of ways in which research can be conducted, with special attention being paid to the role of the scientific method in clinical psychology research. The module then describes why clinical psychologists might want training in research, and what kinds of questions they are interested in addressing. The bulk of the module is concerned with describing and evaluating a range of research designs and methods used by clinical psychology researchers. We consider the impact of research on clinical practice, and the module ends with a discussion of the ethical and practical issues that clinical psychologists are likely to encounter while undertaking research in the real world.

**Module Learning Outcomes.****Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, a successful student should be able to:

1. Describe and evaluate a range of research methods that can be used in clinical psychology research.
2. Describe the types of research questions that are central to clinical psychology research.
3. Critically evaluate the ethical issues relevant to clinical psychology research.

**Module Contact Information**

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## Teaching and Learning

*The syllabus details for the module are available via links on the Psychology teaching web pages and via Sussex Direct.*

### ▪ **Workshops**

The teaching for this module will take place in ten x two hour workshops.

- Please see your timetable on Sussex Direct for details of *when* and *where* your workshops will be held.

To avoid disruption to the majority, please try to arrive at least 5 minutes before the start time of the workshop (see attendance etiquette in Psychology programme handbook).

It is **CRUCIAL** for you to understand that formal assessment on this module will be based on material covered in the workshops **and** your “essential reading” for each week. It is also important for you to understand that workshops will **NOT** attempt to ‘cover’ all such material. That is, workshops are not intended to provide an alternative to you learning the material in your essential reading. Any attempt to rely solely on learning material presented in workshops will severely restrict your ability to do well during formal assessment of this module. Workshops are intended to fulfil functions other than repeating or précising material covered in the essential readings.

Workshops on this module are intended to perform several functions. First, they allow students to review material covered in prior lectures and associated essential reading. All students **must** do at least the essential reading before the seminar. In addition, there will usually some additional readings that will be assigned to some of you each week by your seminar leader. These are designed to supplement the essential reading and to provoke lively discussion in the seminar.

A second function of the workshops is ‘interrogate’ at least some of the material covered in prior lectures and associated essential reading. This will be done by use of particular exercises you will learn about on a week-by-week basis. Again, students **must** have done the essential reading and seminar quality will improve to the extent that each student has gone beyond this in areas of particular interest to them.

Third, workshops will be used to provide students with the means of developing oral and listening skills that will unarguably be of tremendous benefit to them throughout their university career and beyond. Through the exchange of ideas and perspectives, you will develop a deeper understanding of the issues covered in the module. This crucial function of workshops also provides a uniquely active way of learning which is not possible in lectures or by private study

Fourth, workshops allow students a chance to get to know each other and to discuss material of mutual interest and relevance in a supportive social setting. Learning at university is not and should not be a competitive exercise. Your learning will benefit to the extent that you share your

insights and problems with others and support and encourage them to do the same with you. This will often lead to collaborative learning opportunities *outside* formal teaching contexts.

You should note that all the study skills advice in existence suggests that straightforward 'absorption' of material (i.e., reading, listening, rote-learning and memorising) should take up about 20% of learning time. The other 80% should come from 'interrogating' that information (e.g., looking for links, attempting to summarise and synthesise, looking for strengths and weaknesses and possible improvements, applying to different areas, etc.).

- **Independent study** The difference between studying at university and study you may have done previously is that at university the emphasis is on you finding out things for yourself. Just as fitness clubs attempt to foster and facilitate (but cannot impose) fitness, universities attempt to foster and facilitate (but cannot impose) academic excellence. Results will (and can only) come as a direct result of *you* making appropriate use of the facilities at your disposal. Lectures, seminars and the like are there to support and guide your independent learning – they are not there to “pass information from tutors’ heads to students’ notebooks without passing through the brains of either.” Not everything you will need or want to know will be covered in the lectures, seminars or essential readings. You need to become familiar with the material you are guided towards, but you also need to learn to ‘manipulate’ that material: apply it to new domains, compare and contrast across topics, synthesise it, evaluate it, consider its relevance to issues of interest to you, supplement it, etc. This can only be done by being interested and working hard because you want to. As we shall learn below, an exclusive focus on passing exams will *undermine* that motivation and will make you perform less well as a result. Thus, study because you want to learn and stop when you have answers to your own satisfaction for the questions you care about. Finally, note that independent study is study you engage in outside of formal contact hours with faculty – it does not have to be solitary (see under ‘workshops’ above).

- **Study Direct** You are encouraged to access module materials and use the module forum in Study Direct. This is the best way to share ideas amongst your fellow students and ask questions about the module. Module convenors and tutors would prefer to receive queries via the Study Direct module forum than by email.

## Books and Reading

- This is the core text for this module, and it is recommended that you buy a copy.

**Barker, C., Pistrang, N., & Elliott, R. (2015) Research Methods in Clinical Psychology: an introduction for students and practitioners. 3rd Edition. Chichester, UK: Wiley.**

You will need to go beyond this text in preparing for seminars and assessed work. Use it as a starting point to orient yourself to particular fields of interest, and then pursue other material that appears to you to be relevant. Weekly readings will be posted on the module Study Direct site.

### Other recommended books:

Evans, I., Thornton, H., Chalmers, I & Glasziou, P. (2011) Testing treatments: Better research for better health care, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: Pinter and Martin.

Field, A. & Hole, G. (2003) How to design and report experiments. London: Sage.

Kazdin, A. (2014) Research Design in Clinical Psychology. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pearson Education Limited

Marks, D.F. & Yardley, L. (2004) Research methods for clinical and health psychology. London: Sage.

Miles, J. & Gilbert, P. (Eds.) (2005) A handbook of research methods for clinical and health psychology. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Roberts, M.C. & Ildardi, S.S. (2003) Handbook of research methods in clinical psychology. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

## Assessment

Assessments deadlines and methods of submission can be found on your assessment timetable via Sussex Direct.

Information on the following can be found at the link below:

- Submitting your work
- Missing a deadline
- Late penalties
- Exceptional circumstances
- Exams
- Help with managing your studies and competing your work
- Assessment Criteria

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/examinationsandassessment>

## **E-submission**

From 2016/17, Masters and MRes students taking PG year modules will usually be asked to submit assessments electronically where assessments are text-based, for example, an essay. Your Sussex Direct - Assessment Deadlines & Exam Timetable will give all assessment details, including whether the assessment is to be submitted via e-submission through Sussex Direct or via a different method. Feedback for all e-submission assessments will also be provided electronically.

Please refer to the frequently asked questions available on the following webpage for further information:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/tel/submission/students/esubmission>

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/tel/submission/students/faqs>

[www.sussex.ac.uk/adge/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adge/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission)

## **Attendance, Absence and Engagement**

You are expected to be 'in attendance' at the University for the full duration of the published term dates for your course of study. That means you should be regularly attending lectures, seminars, labs etc. and committing time to your studies to be in a position to comply with academic and administrative expectations.

**The university has an 80% attendance policy in place, so it's really important that you let us know if you are ill or cannot attend classes so that we can register this as a notified absence.**

**If you are unable to attend your seminars or workshops, you need to send an email to [psychologyabsence@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:psychologyabsence@sussex.ac.uk) setting out the following information:**

- Seminar(s) / workshop(s) that you will be absent from (list all of them)
- Tutor name
- Brief reason for absence

**Please see the following link for further information:**

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/attendance>

## **Student Evaluation**

The module convenor will create opportunities for you to provide feedback (online, on paper, and/or in person) on your experience of the module during the term. In addition, you will be asked to complete an online course evaluation questionnaire at the end of every term, and this will provide an opportunity for you to comment on each module as well as the course overall. We want the module to be as good as it possibly can be so all and any feedback is gratefully received.

## Workshop Overview

<b>Week 1</b>
Introduction to research methods in clinical psychology
<b>Week 2</b>
Quantitative methods in clinical psychology I
<b>Week 3</b>
Quantitative methods in clinical psychology II
<b>Week 4</b>
Quantitative methods in clinical psychology III
<b>Week 5</b>
Research synthesis in clinical psychology.
<b>Week 6</b>
Reading week
<b>Week 7</b>
Qualitative methods in clinical psychology I
<b>Week 8</b>
Developing Research Ideas
<b>Week 9</b>
Qualitative methods in clinical psychology II
<b>Week 10</b>
Qualitative methods in clinical psychology III
<b>Week 11</b>
Research in the real world NHS
<b>Week 12</b>
Reading week