

## Course Description

### MEDD8908 Foundations of qualitative education research: Concepts, strategies and methods

#### Course description

The purpose of this course is to provide students with foundational understandings of qualitative research and necessary knowledge for conducting qualitative education research. The course is divided into three broad parts:

- Part I (Sessions 1 and 2) looks at certain foundational philosophical and methodological discussions in qualitative education research. Specifically, it examines in-depth philosophical perspectives of education research and five important qualitative research approaches (i.e. ethnography, grounded theory, action research, phenomenological research, and narrative research).
- Part 2 (Sessions 3 and 4) asks the question of how to carry out ‘good’ qualitative research. It discusses important aspects in making a qualitative study “good”, including ethics, rigour and positionality, and explores how to propose good research questions.
- Part 3 (Sessions 5 to 7) introduces a few qualitative research methods that are commonly employed in education research. They are interviews, observations, and participatory methods.

The students will also need to present their research proposal in the final session of the course. The class will be a combination of lectures, workshops, discussions, group activities, and sharing of guest speakers. The course particularly highlights discussion and interaction in class.

**Coursework / Examination ratio:** 100 % Coursework, 0 % Examination

#### Course learning outcomes

1. Understand the key concepts and basic principles of qualitative research design and methodology in educational research and other social sciences;
2. Critically assess research literature;
3. Be aware of the range of qualitative research methods and techniques for data collection and analysis;
4. Be in a position to apply this knowledge and skills to your own research ideas.

#### Course assessment methods

Assessment method	Weighting (%)	Aligned course learning outcome(s)
Individual essay	50	
Group project proposal	40	
Class participation and group discussion	10	

#### Course content and topics

Introduction of the course & The nature, aims and diversity of educational research: philosophical perspectives  
 Five qualitative research approaches  
 What makes a qualitative study ‘good’?: Rigour, ethics and positionality  
 The importance of research questions  
 Introduction to interview  
 Introduction to observations  
 Introduction to participatory methods

#### Required / recommended readings and online materials

- Back, L. & Puwar, N. (2012). *Live methods*. Malden, MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. *MEDD8908 Qualitative Methods*
- Becker, H.S. (1998). *Tricks of the trade: How to think about your research while you're doing it*, Chicago University Press.
- Jeffrey, C. & Dyson, J. (2008) *Telling young lives: Portraits in global youth*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. [An accessible account of doing research with young people.]

Lury, C. & Wakeford, N. (2014). *Inventive methods: The happening of the social*. Abingdon, England: Routledge.

**Other additional course information**

Advanced Research Method course