

Unit 16: Research Skills in the Uniformed Protective Services

Delivery guidance

In this unit learners will learn how to develop a research plan and produce a structured academic research project in a uniformed protective services context. They will plan, design, and carry out research and present their findings. Learners will justify the rationale for the research and decide on the methodology to be used, they will collect primary and secondary data and interpret it for their project and learn how to review the project.

Approaching the unit

This unit will help learners to understand the processes that are involved when conducting research. They will develop an understanding of the need to conduct research and how to formulate a research question with a detailed rationale, plan its design by determining an appropriate research approach and documenting any methods that stem from it. The research plan will be carried out within an agreed time frame, with appropriate targets set. There is an expectation that they will analyse and interpret the primary and secondary research results, and compare them with literature reviews, and discuss any relevant inferences drawn. They will evaluate the project outcomes by prescribing any areas for future improvement and make recommendations for future research. Finally, they will submit the whole project in a structured academic format.

Much of the unit is theory and classroom based, but the unit requires independent, self-directed learning and primary and secondary research.

The purpose of **Learning aim A** is to introduce to the learners how to plan, develop, undertake, and review research based on a project in the uniformed protective services. Learners will decide on objectives for their research and create a research plan, research questions and a rationale. Learners will undertake literature reviews, decide on the research approach they would like to take and the data collection methods to be used, as well as the research ethics that will be adopted. The research project must have a time frame of action and structure and will need to include a comparison of the different research approaches and data collection methods available and justify these. The UK government offer guidance on the style and formatting for research publication which the learners may find interesting and can be found on the following link: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/775209/Research-publication - style and formatting guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/775209/Research-publication_-_style_and_formatting_guide.pdf)

The unit content in the specification also offers guidance on the contents of a research project.

Learning aim B requires learners to carry out data collection and its interpretation for the selected project. Data collection, including primary and secondary research methods will be employed. The learner will need to show an interpretation of the data they have collected, presenting their findings in flow charts and diagrams, graphs, illustrations, or any other form of imagery to support any appropriate section of their evidence. There are online resources on data analysis that may be helpful e.g. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/data-collection/>.

Learning aim C requires learners to produce a completed structured academic research project on a uniformed protective services theme, structuring the research project and citing references within tier text and presenting a referencing page and bibliography. Learners need to show that they have compared and evaluated the project outcomes with the literature review and prescribe areas for further improvement, making recommendations for future research. There are online resources on how to present a research project that may be helpful e.g. <https://research.com/research/how-to-write-a-research-proposal>.

Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
<p>A Develop a research plan for a uniformed protective services project</p>	<p>A1 Objectives of research A2 Developing a research plan A3 Structure of research project</p>	<p>A presentation on:</p> <p>a) identifying the objectives behind carrying out research in the uniformed protective services</p> <p>b) a research plan that identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a research question • its rationale • literature review • the research approach adopted • data collection methods adopted • the research ethics adopted, and a time frame of action. <p>The plan should include a comparison of the different research approaches and data collection methods available, and justify any adopted.</p>
<p>B Carry out data collection and its interpretation for the selected project</p>	<p>B1 Data collection B2 Interpretation of data collected</p>	<p>A reflective research diary noting the day-to-day research carried out, and primary and secondary research methods employed.</p> <p>Completed research project in a structured academic format that interprets the results, compares and evaluates project outcomes with the literature review, prescribes areas for further improvement, and makes recommendations for future research.</p>
<p>C Produce a structured research project on a uniformed protective services theme</p>	<p>C1 Structuring the research project C2 Referencing and bibliography</p>	

Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed through a number of tasks. Learners must produce

individual evidence that can be authenticated. Learners must develop a structured academic research plan related to the uniformed protective services, including the objectives of their research, a research plan and how they plan to structure the research project. An individual presentation could be used for the assessment of learning aim A. Learning aim B could be in the form of a reflective research diary noting the day-to-day research carried out, and primary and secondary research methods employed. For Learning aim C the learner could present the completed research project in a structured academic format that interprets the results, compares and evaluates project outcomes with the literature review, prescribes areas for further improvement, and makes recommendations for future research. Learners will need to ensure referencing is appropriately cited within their text and produce a bibliography.

For **Learning aim A** learners need to describe the purpose of conducting research and produce a detailed account of their research project, reviewing and justifying the approaches and the literature reviews. They will give a detailed account of the research approach, data collection and analysis methods, the ethical considerations and health and safety considerations for the research project and learners will present their research plan using the structure outlined in the unit content. The research plan will include a rationale and research aims for the research project and chosen methodology to be used and progress with the research project.

They must develop a research plan with the set objectives of conducting research, and must include clear and realistic timelines in their evidence. The research could be aimed at a quest for new ideas, the discovery of new facts, to find solutions to day-to-day social problems, or to consider the relationship between research and development and advances in science and technology and its link to operational efficiency, e.g., tasers, automatic number plate recognition (ANPR), body worn cameras, unmanned aircraft systems, drones, water cannons, exoskeletons.

The focus of the research must have sub-questions/research aims and the approach adopted must be realistic to allow the completion of the research project in the given time frame. Learners will provide an in-depth rationale for conducting the research and provide justifications regarding the choice of research approach and research methods adopted.

An appropriate ethical approval process for the projects should be adopted by centres to ensure that the research projects are appropriate, and Assessors must provide evidence that they have approved the research project and surveys, interviews, online questionnaires, observations, and interview questions must be approved before being used. Assessors must not use observation records or witness testimony forms as sole forms of evidence, although these may be used as supplementary evidence.

Furthermore, learners will need to provide a detailed explanation of appropriate research considerations of consent, privacy, integrity, validity, and reliability. The learner needs to explore a research question/ hypothesis around a research theme such as the political, economic, sociological, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) aspects of the protective services.

Learning aim B requires learners to undertake literature reviews of recent materials relating to their chosen research topic, with valid inferences drawn critiquing the literature and identifying gaps, considering the validity and research approaches. Quantitative, qualitative, and comparative analysis should be conducted.

Learners will need to carry out data collection, fully justifying the methods they have adopted. The interpretation of the data will compare the above methods of conducting research and convey their advantages and disadvantages. Primary and secondary research methods can be used, such as interviews, online questionnaires, observations. Learners will use literature, data collection methods and research ethics to support their choice, for example The Public Services Journal and the British Education Research Association (BERA) on ethics and participation in research could be included.

Learners will draw on varied information to consider both primary and secondary data that has been collected. To examine the relevance of the data collected, learners will refer to both primary and secondary sources of information, which may include government agency documents, appropriate journal articles, established theories and concepts, and textbooks. The conclusions reached should lead to practical implications for further research consideration for the uniformed protective services. Learners will make some form of recommendation for the research theme. This recommendation will draw on the research findings. Learners will also accurately identify any strengths and limitations of the research project.

Once primary data has been collected, learners will draw relevant outcomes and interpretation of the results should be linked to the type of research approach adopted. For quantitative interpretation, numerical data will be organised in a systematic way, such as in tables and/or graphical displays. For qualitative interpretation, learners will organise the data in a generally appropriate way, for example into appropriate categories or themes. The data will be compared to the literature review, and any similarities and differences noted. Learners will identify an area or areas for further improvement.

A reflective research diary would need to be created by the learner noting the day-to-day research carried out, and primary and secondary research methods employed and documenting the full process of data collection. This may be evidenced in any format, including written, audio, video, blog, or vlog, and must form part of the appendices.

Learning aim C requires learners to produce a structured research project on a uniformed protective services theme. Learners will convey their ideas and information using an appropriate style; they may use flow charts, diagrams, charts, pictures, or any other form of imagery to support any appropriate section of their evidence, including the methodology. The inserts will include some relevant reflections on what went well, what did not, changes made, any patterns or improvements observed, and what overall lessons can be learned. As a result, it is

important that a specific model of reflection is adopted so that learners can participate in a structured process of review regarding their learning and development.

Getting started

This provides you with a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 16: Research Skills in the Uniformed Protective Services

Introduction

Learners will learn how to develop a research plan and produce a structured academic research project in a uniformed protective services context. They will plan, design, and carry out research and present their findings. Learners will justify the rationale for the research and decide on the methodology to be used, they will collect primary and secondary data and interpret it for their project and learn how to review the project.

Learning aim A - Develop a research plan for a uniformed protective services project

For learning aim A, the content concentrates on the learner understanding how to plan, develop, undertake, present and review research based on a project in the uniformed protective services. The following website offers advice on how to write an academic research proposal <https://grammar.yourdictionary.com/grammar-rules-and-tips/how-do-you-write-a-research-proposal-for-academic-writing.html>.

Learners will decide on objectives and a hypothesis for their chosen research topic on the protective services theme and create a timely plan for completion. They will decide which research approach they would like to take and the data collection methods to be used as well as the research ethics to be adopted, and they will create research questions and a rationale and undertake primary and secondary research including literature reviews.

The research project must have a time frame of action, structure and will need to include a comparison of the different research approaches and data collection methods available and justify these. The unit content in the specification also offers guidance on the contents of a research project.

A planned staged delivery on the topics would introduce how to plan, undertake, and present an academic research project. Defining the terminology in a research project would be a good starting point and it would be helpful for the learners to explore existing research projects. The government offer many research documents on various topics that the learners may want to investigate: <https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics>.

You will need to have in place a way to undertake ethic application approvals and to ensure that this can be evidenced for the purpose of assessment.

Working in teams in the classroom the learners could be allocated broad themes that could be researched within the protective services context, e.g. what are the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on individual health and well-being, or a question around police recruitment, increasing levels of knife crime in the UK, what are the effects on recruitment within the NHS due to Brexit, what could be the future challenges of the armed forces. Websites that could be explored are: Joseph Rowntree Foundation <https://www.jrf.org.uk/> - topics such as poverty and inspiring social change are offered. There are many government research documents, for example The Lammy Report:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf. This offers research into the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System.

The Prison Service have also produced research documents and there are several journals about the rehabilitation of prisoners, for example Sage journals (2018) 'The prison don't talk to you about getting out of prison': On why prisons in England and Wales fail to rehabilitate prisoners':

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1748895818800743>

An individual presentation could be used for the assessment of learning aim A as it will enable the learners to present and discuss in detail what their chosen research topic is and how they plan to go about their research.

Learning aim B – Carry out data collection and its interpretation for the selected project

For learning aim B, the content is concerned with carrying out data collection and interpreting it for their selected research project.

Primary and secondary research and data can be used, such as interviews, online questionnaires, observations. Learners will use literature, data collection methods and research to interpret the findings and enable them to analyse and compare the information and data.

A reflective research diary should be created by the learner noting the day-to-day research carried out and the primary and secondary research methods employed, and documenting the full process of data collection. This may be evidenced in any format, including written, audio, video, blog, or vlog, and must form part of the appendices.

You could provide a template for a reflective diary and would need to deliver lessons on how best to collect, interpret and analyse data and information.

The learners could explore how to analyse data using websites and You Tube videos, for example <https://monkeylearn.com/blog/data-analysis-examples/>.

This could be observed by the Assessor along with the learners' supporting evidence. Various forms and supporting documentation that can be used to support a practical assessment can be found here:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/delivering-our-qualifications/delivering-btec-qualifications/btec-forms-and-guides.html>

Learning aim C - Produce a structured research project on a uniformed protective services theme

Learning aim C requires the learners to produce a structured research project on a uniformed protective services theme. Learners will convey their ideas and information using an appropriate style; they may use flow charts, diagrams, charts, pictures, or any other form of imagery to support any appropriate section of their evidence, including the methodology.

You could provide guidance on how to present flow charts, diagrams, charts, pictures, or any other form of imagery to support any appropriate section of their evidence. There are websites and guidance that could be explored by the learners such as:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/Pages/interpreting-graphs.aspx> and
<https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-to-interpret-information-from-graphs.html>.

Learners could be placed in pairs and asked to watch or read chosen data analysis information and feedback to other teams to encourage discussion and consider different techniques about the way that data can be presented and analysed.

Learners will include some relevant reflections on what went well, what did not go well, changes made, any patterns or improvements observed, and what overall lessons can be learned. As a result, it is important that a specific model of reflection is adopted so that learners can participate in a structured process of review regarding their learning and development. The following website offers basic research paper format examples, and there are many others that could also be used:

<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/basic-research-paper-format-examples.html>.

Learners will need to cite references within their text and present a reference and bibliography as part of their research project. There are many referencing types and guides, for example the Harvard referencing guide:

<https://www.open.ac.uk/library/referencing-and-plagiarism/quick-guide-to-harvard-referencing-cite-them-right>

You should provide guidance on how to cite references within text and how to present a reference and bibliography page. Centres could also offer support services to help learners continue to develop their referencing and academic writing skills.

Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

Unit 3: Global Affairs, the Media and the Uniformed Protective Services

Unit 9: Sociological Perspectives

Unit 13: Introduction to Criminology

Unit 17: Understanding the Third Sector

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC Nationals. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Journals

The journals used should be based around the learners chosen research topic.

Videos

YouTube is a great resource for this unit. There are many videos, media reports and online presentations produced that will help add some variety to delivery and support learners with academic writing and referencing skills.

Books

Berry, R (2004) *The Research Project: How to Write It (Study Guides)*, 5th edition. London: Routledge. ISBN 978-0415334457

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2015) *Business Research Methods*, 4th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN 0199668647

Cohen, L, Manion, L, Morrison, K (2017) *Research Methods in Education* Paperback 8th edition, Routledge. 978-1138209886

Cottrell, S (2013) *The Study Skills Handbook*. 4th Edition, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 1137289252

Denscombe, M. (2014) *The Good Research Guide*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Field, A. (2013) *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS for Windows*. SAGE.

Patton, M.Q. (2002) Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods 3rd Edition. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P.R. (2011) Management Research. 4th Edition, London: Sage. ISBN: 0857021176

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012). Research Methods for Business Students. 6th Edition. London. Pearson Education. ISBN 0273750755

White, B. (2003) Dissertation Skills for Business and Management Students, London: Continuum.

Websites

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/775209/Research-publication_-_style_and_formatting_guide.pdf
- <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/basic-research-paper-format-examples.html>
- <https://www.open.ac.uk/library/referencing-and-plagiarism/quick-guide-to-harvard-referencing-cite-them-right>
- <https://monkeylearn.com/blog/data-analysis-examples/>
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/Pages/interpreting-graphs.aspx>
- <https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-to-interpret-information-from-graphs.html>
- <https://www.jrf.org.uk/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics>
- <https://grammar.yourdictionary.com/grammar-rules-and-tips/how-do-you-write-a-research-proposal-for-academic-writing.html>
- <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1748895818800743>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf
- <https://research.com/research/how-to-write-a-research-proposal>
- <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/data-collection/>