

BTEC

HIGHER NATIONALS

Sport and Exercise Science



Higher National
Diploma Lvl 5

Unit 14: Research Project

Unit code	L/616/0962
Unit type	Core
Unit level	5
Credit value	30

Introduction

This unit is assessed by a Pearson-set assignment. Students will choose their own project based on a theme provided by Pearson (this will change annually). The project must be related to their Specialist pathway of study (unless the student is studying the general pathway). This will enable students to explore and examine a relevant and current topical aspect of sport in the context of a sport environment and their chosen Specialist pathway.

The aim of this unit is to offer students the opportunity to engage in sustained research in a specific field of study. The unit enables students to demonstrate the capacity and ability to identify a research theme, to develop research aims, objectives and outcomes, and to present the outcomes of such research in both written and verbal formats. The unit also encourages students to reflect on their engagement in the research process during which recommendations for future, personal development are key learning points.

On successful completion of this unit students will have the confidence to engage in problem-solving and research activities. Students will have the fundamental knowledge and skills to enable them to investigate workplace issues and problems, determine appropriate solutions and present evidence to various stakeholders in an acceptable and understandable format.

As a result, they will develop skills such as communication literacy, critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, reasoning and interpretation which are crucial for gaining employment and developing academic competence.

***Please refer to the accompanying Pearson-set Assignment Guide and the Theme Release document for further support and guidance on the delivery of the Pearson-set unit.**

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

1. Examine appropriate research methodologies and approaches as part of the research process
2. Conduct and analyse research relevant to a Sport research project
3. Communicate the outcomes of a research project to identified stakeholders
4. Reflect on the application of research methodologies and concepts.

Essential content

LO1 Examine appropriate research methodologies and approaches as part of the research process

Developing a research proposition:

The importance of developing methodical and valid propositions as the foundation for a research project.

Rationale: the purpose and significance for research question or hypothesis

The value of the philosophical position of the researcher and the chosen methods

Use of Saunders' research onion as a guide to establishing a methodological approach

Literature review:

Conceptualisation of the research problem or hypothesis

The importance of positioning a research project in context of existing knowledge

Significance and means of providing benchmarks by which data can be judged

Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research:

Key theoretical frameworks for research

Advantages and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research approaches and methods

LO2 Conduct and analyse research relevant to a Sport research project

Research as a process:

Research has distinct phases which support a coherent and logical argument

This includes using secondary research to inform a primary, empirical, study

Selecting a sample:

The importance of gathering data and information (qualitative or quantitative) to support research analysis

Selecting sample types and sizes that are relevant to the research

Considering sampling approaches and techniques, e.g. probability and non-probability sampling

Ethics, reliability and validity:

Research should be conducted ethically. How this is achieved and reported

Research should also be reliable (similar results would be achieved from a similar sample) and valid (the research measures what it aimed to measure)

Analysing data:

Using data collection tools, e.g. interviews and questionnaires

Using analytical techniques, e.g. trend analysis, coding or typology.

LO3 Communicate the outcomes of a research project to identified stakeholders

Stakeholders:

Who are they?

Why would they be interested in the research outcomes?

What communication method do they expect?

Communicating research outcomes:

Consideration of different methods of communicating outcomes (e.g. written word, spoken word) and the medium (e.g. report, online, presentation). The method and medium will be influenced by the research and its intended audience

Convincing arguments

No matter what the method/medium, all research should be convincing and presented logically where the assumption is that the audience has little or no knowledge of the research process

The importance of developing evaluative conclusions

LO4 **Reflect on the application of research methodologies and concepts**

Reflection for learning and practice:

Difference between reflecting on performance and evaluating a research project. The former considers the research process, the latter considers the quality of the research argument and use of evidence

Reflection on the merits, limitations and potential pitfalls of the chosen methods

The cycle of reflection:

To include reflection in action and reflection on action

Considering how to use reflection to inform future behaviour and future considerations

Reflective writing:

Avoiding generalisation and focusing on personal development and the research journey in a critical and objective way

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
LO1 Examine appropriate research methodologies and approaches as part of the research process		LO1 & 2
<p>P1 Produce a research proposal that clearly defines a research question or hypothesis supported by a literature review</p> <p>P2 Examine appropriate research methods and approaches to primary and secondary research</p>	<p>M1 Evaluate different research approaches and methodology and make justifications for the choice of methods selected based on philosophical/theoretical frameworks</p>	
LO2 Conduct and analyse research relevant to a Sport research project		
<p>P3 Conduct primary and secondary research, using appropriate methods for a research project that consider costs, access and ethical issues</p> <p>P4 Apply appropriate analytical tools, analyse research findings and data</p>	<p>M2 Discuss merits, limitations and pitfalls of approaches to data collection and analysis</p>	
LO3 Communicate the outcomes of a research project to identified stakeholders		D2 Communicate critical analysis of the outcomes and make valid, justified recommendations
<p>P5 Communicate research outcomes in an appropriate manner for the intended audience</p>	<p>M3 Coherently and logically communicate outcomes to the intended audience, demonstrating how outcomes meet set research objectives</p>	

Pass	Merit	Distinction
LO4 Reflect on the application of research methodologies and concepts		D3 Demonstrate reflection and engagement in the resource process leading to recommended actions for future improvement
P6 Reflect on the effectiveness of research methods applied for meeting objectives of the research project P7 Consider alternative research methodologies and lessons learned in view of the outcomes	M4 Provide critical reflection and insight that results in recommended actions for improvements and future research considerations	

Recommended resources

Textbooks

CORNFORD, T. (2005) *Project Research in Information Systems: A Student's Guide*. Paperback. Macmillan.

COSTLEY, C., ELLIOTT, G. and GIBBS, P. (London) (2010) *Doing Work Based Research: Approaches to Enquiry for Insider-researchers*. Sage.

FINK, A. (2009) *Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From the Internet to Paper*. 3rd Ed. Sage Inc.

FLICK, U. (London) (2011) *Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project*. Sage.

GRAY, D. (London) (2009) *Doing Research in the Real World*. 2nd Ed. Sage.

SAUNDERS, M., LEWIS, P. and THORNHILL, A. (Harlow) (2012) *Research methods for Business Students*. 6th Ed. Pearson.

WELLINGTON, J. (2000) *Educational Research: Contemporary Issues and Practical Approaches*. Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd.

Journals

International Journal of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Qualitative Research Journal

Links

This unit links to the following related units:

Unit 4: Professional Skills

Unit 10: Technology in Sport.