Programme Specification

Sociology and Social Research (2019-20)

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Mode of Study	Full-time
Duration in years	1
Accreditation details	None
Final award	Master of Science in the Social Sciences (MSc SocSci)
Name of Award	Sociology and Social Research
Interim Exit awards	Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma
FHEQ level of final award	Level 7
UCAS code	
Programme Code	4662
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	ESRC Postgraduate Training & Development Guidelines 2015
Programme Lead	Traute Meyer (tmeyer)
Pathway Lead	

Programme Overview

Brief outline of the programme

The MSc (SocSci) Sociology and Social Research, which is recognised by the ESRC as a research training course, is designed to equip postgraduate students with advanced knowledge of both issues and applied methods in sociological analysis.

The programme supports students in developing independent social research skills, and applying them in such contemporary subject areas as work, crime, migration, health, the media and the body. It also engages students in the discussion of issues and perspectives from both classical and contemporary sociological theories.

The programme is an excellent grounding if you wish to pursue a PhD in sociology, and it can also be a stepping stone for those who wish to pursue a career in the public, private or voluntary sector.

Your contact hours will vary depending on your module/option choices. Full information about contact hours is provided in individual module profiles.

Learning and teaching
Our MSc programmes are designed to give you the best possible opportunity to develop your skills as independent learners. The majority of our modules are taught in small-group seminars and workshops which provide more opportunities for discussion than is normally possible at undergraduate level. You will be given the opportunity to present papers and to lead discussions or debates, and so develop both your writing and presentation skills. Our staff are active researchers, and this research experience informs their teaching.

Assessment

Most modules are assessed, at least in part, by essays. Some modules are also assessed using oral presentations and group projects.

Special Features of the programme

N/A

Please note: As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration; however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our Disclaimer to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Programmes and major changes to programmes are approved through the University's programme validation process which is described in the University's Quality handbook.

Educational Aims of the Programme

· An in-depth understanding of classical themes and contemporary debates within the discipline of sociology and of their application in the analysis of selected social issues;
· Knowledge of key issues within the philosophy of social sciences and an ability to apply these in the design and practice of social research;
· Knowledge of the principal methods of qualitative research and an understanding of their application in different contexts;
· Knowledge of techniques of data analysis utilised within the social sciences and their application;
· The ability to design and conduct independent research within the field of sociology, utilising appropriate research methodologies, and grounded within an understanding of the process of research management and ethical and legal issues associated with the conduct of social research;
· The capacity to present ideas, arguments and research findings through different means of communication.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

On successful completion of this programme you will have knowledge and understanding of:

A1. A range of sociological theories and their implications for the design and conduct of research;
A2. Patterns of social diversity and division within society, processes of social change, and the relationship between the individual and society;
A3. A range of epistemological and ontological issues relevant to the design and conduct of research;
A4. The role, value and limitations of comparative research in sociology;
A5. Advanced techniques of data analysis and their application in sociological enquiry;
A6. The use of a range of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and data sources in the conduct social research.

Teaching and Learning Methods

You will acquire your core knowledge of Sociology through SOCI6035 Understanding Modernity, SOCI6043 Understanding Social Change and your Dissertation. In the first two of these modules you will receive a full reading list, organized on the basis of 12 individual seminars. You will be expected to undertake individual reading and prepare fully for each session. Learning will occur through analysis and discussion of the readings during weekly seminars. You will also be expected to prepare presentations based on your readings, to summarise and analyse key concepts, theories and/or issues. Tutors will advise you on the planning of your assessments (see below) and provide detailed feedback on assessments.

Your knowledge and understanding of research methods and methodological debates and issues will be acquired in RESM6004 Quantitative Methods I, RESM6003 Qualitative Methods I, RESM6001 Philosophy of Social Science Research and RESM6002 Research, Design and Practice. These modules will use a range of teaching and learning methods, including RESM6004, lectures, workshops and computer workshops, seminars, group projects and oral presentations.

Assessment Methods

Your achievement of these learning outcomes will be assessed using a range of methods: 1000-5000 word essays covering substantive topics, methodological issues; oral presentations; data coding exercises; research proposals; and your 15000 word dissertation based on independent original research.

The essays set as part of SOCI6035 Understanding Modernity and SOCI6043 Understanding Social Change will test your grasp of the key sociological concepts and theories, and their applicability to particular empirical contexts and questions. The essays and exercises set as part of RESM6004 Quantitative Methods I, RESM6003 Qualitative Research Methods I and RESM6001 Philosophy of Social Science Research and RESM6002 Research, Design and Practice will test your understanding of all aspect of the research process. The dissertation will test your skill in relation to all of the learning outcomes

Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

B1. Demonstrate and assess the relationship between concepts, theories and empirical research within sociology;
B2. Evaluate the application of topics raised in debates on epistemological and ethical issues within the social sciences to the design and conduct of research;
B3. Evaluate the applicability of a range of research methodologies to the conduct of sociological research;
B4. Formulate research questions and translate these into appropriate research designs.

Teaching and Learning Methods

These learning outcomes will be enabled using the methods described above. In particular, individual reading, group projects, seminar discussions and presentations, and the preparation of formal assessments will enable you to develop and demonstrate an advanced understanding of the relationship between Sociological concepts, theories and empirical research and to evaluate epistemological and ethical issues within the design and conduct of research. In addition, preparing research proposals and working with your supervisor on your dissertation will enable you to evaluate research methodologies and to formulate research questions and appropriate research designs.

Assessment Methods

Essays, oral presentations, research proposals, dissertation.

Transferable and Generic Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

C1. Express complex theoretical and methodological arguments in both written and oral form;
C2. Access and utilise library and electronic resources in an effective manner.

Teaching and Learning Methods

A writing workshop will be run for all students at the beginning of the first semester. The aim of the workshop will be to explore the demands of writing at level 7 and to provide you with a range of strategies for developing your own writing skills. A Library Workshop will also be run by the Social Science Librarian at the University Library at the beginning of Semester 1.

Assessment Methods

Essays, oral presentations, original research for the Dissertation.

Subject Specific Practical Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

D1. Utilise software packages to record, analyse and present quantitative data;
D2. Utilise software packages to record, analyse and present qualitative data;
D3. Plan the dissemination of research findings;
D4. Plan the dissemination of research findings;

Teaching and Learning Methods

You will acquire these skills through RESM6004 Quantitative Methods I, RESM6003 Qualitative Research Methods I and RESM6001 Philosophy of Social Science Research and RESM6002 Research, Design and Practice. These modules will use a combination of teaching and learning methods including lectures, seminars, workshops and individual dissertation supervision to support the development of these skills.

Assessment Methods

Essays, data coding/analysis exercises, research dissemination plan (RESM6001/2/3/4).

Programme Structure

The programme structure table is below:

Information about pre and co-requisites is included in individual module profiles.

Where optional modules have been specified, the following is an indicative list of available optional modules, which are subject to change each academic year. Please note in some instances modules have limited spaces available.

Pathway

Part I
Typical programme content
You will carry out a piece of independent research to be written up as a 15,000-word dissertation.

Programme details
The structure of the programme and the modules currently offered are set out below. Of the modules shown against each year of your programme some are compulsory, ie enrolment is automatic and others are optional. Against each year you are directed to which modules are compulsory and which are optional. The option modules shown below constitute an indicative list - there will always be choice but the options might vary between years. A full list of modules and rules will be available to your via the Student Record Self Service system once you enrol at the University.

The programme is normally studied over 12 months full time. The taught component of the programme consists of 30 study weeks divided into two semesters during which time students study six modules (60 ECTS/120 CATS). Students will also undertake a three month period of supervised research for a Master's dissertation at a value of 30 ECTS/60 CATS.

Part I Compulsory

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
RESM6001	Philosophy of Social Science Research	5	Compulsory
RESM6003	Qualitative Methods 1	5	Compulsory
RESM6006	Qualitative Methods 2	5	Compulsory
RESM6004	Quantitative Methods 1	5	Compulsory
RESM6002	Research Design and Practice	5	Compulsory
RESM6005	Survey Design	5	Compulsory
SOCI6035	Understanding Modernity	10	Compulsory
SOCI6043	Understanding Social Change	10	Compulsory

Part I Optional
Select 20 credits from the following list of optional modules.

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
SOCI6046	International Social Policy	10	Optional
PAIR6036	Advanced Policy Analysis	10	Optional
GERO6020	Ageing, Health and Well-being	10	Optional
GERO6019	Demographic Change, Ageing & Globalisation	10	Optional

Part II

Part II Core

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
SOCI6010	Dissertation	30	Core

Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for ***Progression, Determination and Classification of Results : Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes*** and ***Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Postgraduate Master's Programmes*** as set out in the University Calendar: http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/sectIV-index.html

Support for student learning

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Hartley Library.
- Enabling Services offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling. Support includes daily Drop In at Highfield campus at 13.00 – 15.00 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday out of term-time) or via on-line chat on weekdays from 14.00 – 16.00. Arrangements can also be made for meetings via Skype.
- assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, long term health problem or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia)
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career and Employability services, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV.
- Other support that includes health services (GPs), chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls and in the local community (18.00-08.00).
- A Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- an academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

Associated with your programme you will be able to access:

· Module co-ordinators support. Module co-ordinators will be available at designated times during the week to discuss issues related to the particular modules you are studying at the time. This will be in addition to class contact time.

· Academic/personal tutor. As soon as you register on this programme, you will be allocated a personal tutor. S/he is a member of the academic team and will be available to discuss general academic issues related to the programme as well as offer advice and support on any personal issues which may affect your studies.

· Module handbooks/outlines. These will be available at the start of each module (often in online format). The Handbook includes the aims and learning outcomes of the module, the methods of assessment, relevant background material to the module and a session-by-session breakdown of the module together with appropriate reading lists.
· Within the Faculty, administrative support is provided by your Student Office which deals with student records and related issues and with queries related to your specific degree programme.

Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

· Completing student surveys for each module of the programme.
· Acting as a student representative on various committees, e.g. Staff-Student Liaison Committees, Faculty Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feed back on your behalf.
· Serving as a student representative on Faculty Scrutiny Groups for programme validation.
· Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group.

The quality of your programme is checked from inside and outside the University, through_
· Regular module and programme reports which are monitored by the Faculty.
· Programme validation, normally every five years.
· External examiners, who produce an annual report.
· A national Research Excellence Framework (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience).
· Institutional Review by the Quality Assurance Agency.

Further details on the University's quality assurance processes are given in the *Quality handbook*.

Career Opportunities

Career planning is supported through:
· Tailor-made postgraduate employability workshop
· Workshops for Social Sciences students on writing effective CVs and application forms. (These take place throughout the academic year and information about dates will be sent to you by email).
· Interview Skills workshops for Social Sciences students. (These take place throughout the academic year and information about dates will be sent to you by email).
· Career Panels and Talks. (Information about dates will be sent to you by email).
· One-to-one appointments with a Careers Adviser (bookable throughout the year, on a first-come-first-served basis. Information about dates will be sent to you by email).

External Examiner(s) for the programme

Name: Tom Hall - University of Cardiff

Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their Personal Academic Tutor in the first

instance.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the programme handbook.

Appendix 1:

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments, laboratory reports and dissertations as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. In addition to this, students registered for this programme also have to pay for:

Additional Costs

Type	Details
Stationery	You will be expected to provide your own day-to-day stationery items, e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.). Any specialist stationery items will be specified under the Additional Costs tab of the relevant module profile.
Textbooks	Where a module specifies core texts these should generally be available on the reserve list in the library. However due to demand, students may prefer to buy their own copies. These can be purchased from any source. Some modules suggest reading texts as optional background reading. The library may hold copies of such texts, or alternatively you may wish to purchase your own copies. Although not essential reading, you may benefit from the additional reading materials for the module.
Approved Calculators	Candidates may use calculators in the examination room only as specified by the University and as permitted by the rubric of individual examination papers. The University approved model is Casio FX-570 This may be purchased from any source and no longer needs to carry the University logo.
Printing and Photocopying Costs	In the majority of cases, coursework such as essays; projects; dissertations is likely to be submitted on line. However, there are some items where it is not possible to submit on line and students will be asked to provide a printed copy. A list of the University printing costs can be found here: http://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/students/printing-for-students.page

In some cases you'll be able to choose modules (which may have different costs associated with that module) which will change the overall cost of a programme to you. Details of such costs will be listed in the Module Profile. Please also ensure you read the section on additional costs in the University's Fees, Charges and Expenses Regulations in the University Calendar available at www.calendar.soton.ac.uk.