

# Unit Outline

## RESEARCH METHODS

<b>Unit Code</b>	RS292	<b>AQF Level</b>	6
<b>Unit weighting</b>	Unit credit points: 3		
<b>Pre-requisite or co-requisite</b>	RS191 Academic and Professional Communication Skills		
<b>Delivery mode</b>	Face to face on site	Full time or part time	
<b>Location</b>	<i>Sheridan</i> 18/7 Aberdeen St, Piccadilly Square West, Perth WA 6000		
<b>Student Workload</b>	<i>Timetabled: 36 hours (3 hours per week over 12 teaching weeks)</i>  <i>Personal Study: 132 hours (9 hours per week over 12 teaching weeks + 12 hours per week over 2 non-teaching weeks)</i>  <i>Total workload: 168 hours (12 hours per week over 14 weeks)</i>  <i>Academic writing support available if needed</i>		
<b>Prescribed Textbook(s)</b>	Gray, D. (2018). Doing research in the real world. (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.		
<b>Other resource requirements</b>	Access to the Learning Management System Canvas <a href="https://canvas.sheridan.edu.au">canvas.sheridan.edu.au</a>		
<b>Work-integrated learning activity</b>	Not applicable		
<b>Timetabled day and time</b>	Friday 9am – 12pm	<b>Room</b>	Room 4 (Jasper)
<b>Unit Coordinator</b>	Maya Krayneva	<b>Phone:</b>	6222-4222
<b>Email</b>	mkrayneva@sheridan.edu.au		

## Unit Description

Welcome to RS292 Research Methods. The aim of the unit is for you to develop research skills that will form a foundation for your future studies. Working under the supervision of academic staff, you will identify a research question and then develop a small-scale research project to address it. You will learn to apply each step of the research process in a step-by-step fashion with support from your lecturer.

The topic for your research project may be of your own choosing, although academic staff will provide guidance to ensure that topics are suitable and achievable within the time and with the resources available.

The research project is an opportunity for you to bring your education to life, uniting the various skills and knowledge you have acquired at Sheridan with real world experiences, and cultivating those vital and appealing attributes which characterise graduates of Sheridan's higher education programs.

## Research Methods Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- A. Conduct a search, analysis and synthesis of research literature related to a chosen research topic.
- B. Select a research method and apply it to a simple research project.
- C. Apply simple data gathering and data analysis techniques.
- D. Model ethical behaviour, personal integrity and respect for others in a research environment.
- E. Deliver an oral presentation with clarity and persuasiveness.
- F. Display the habits, personal initiative, and problem-solving skills required for success in a research environment.

## Sheridan Graduate Attributes

Sheridan graduates will be ...

1. Lovers of truth
2. Seekers of wisdom
3. Innovative thinkers
4. Effective communicators
5. Independent learners
6. Servant leaders

## Assessment Schedule

Assessment Type	Value	Due Date	Learning Outcomes (LOs) Assessed	Graduate Attributes (GAs) Addressed
1. Literature Review	25%	Friday 5pm, Week 5	A, B, D	1, 2
2. Methodology Report	15%	Friday 5pm, Week 9	B, D, F	1, 2

3. Research Presentation	20%	In Class, Week 13	B, C, D, E	3, 4
4. Research Report	40%	Friday 5 pm, Week 14	A, B, C, D, F	1, 2, 4, 5

NB: You must submit all assessments in order to satisfy the unit requirements.

## 1. Literature Review

Format: Literature Review

Length: 2,000 words

Weighting: 25%

You are required to define a topic for further research, and produce a critical review of the literature relevant to your proposed topic.

Your literature review will involve:

- Conducting a preliminary search of literature relating to the content of your research topic, and to the range of available research approaches.
- Critically analysing and evaluating the body of knowledge through reflective thinking.
- Synthesising information and knowledge from the literature with personal insights.
- Clearly defining gaps in the literature, which justifies your decision to conduct research in the area.

A descriptive review of the literature is not acceptable. It must be a critical and evaluative review. Students will be assessed on their capacity to organise the literature, develop arguments and generate critical insights into their chosen topic.

The literature review should be approximately 2,000 words. All pages must be numbered and the document has to be prepared with 12 font size and single space format.

ULO's assessed: A, B, D

Assessment Type	Literature Review Rubric*				
Criteria /Grade	High Distinction (80-100%)	Distinction (70-79%)	Credit (60-69%)	Pass (50-59%)	Fail (0-49%)
<b>Search &amp; Selection</b>	Evidence of a broad search and selection of material; consistent use of databases, experts, handbooks and web resources; selection of high quality material, like peer-reviewed articles	Evidence of sound ability in search and selection of material; frequent use of databases, experts, handbooks and web resources; selection of quality material	Evidence of a basic search of some databases and resources; some use of databases, experts, handbooks, and web resources; some use of high-quality materials	Evidence of a limited search; limited use of databases, experts, handbooks and web resources; a few well-selected materials, but mostly non-scholarly resources	No evidence of systematic or sufficient research; no use of databases, experts, handbooks, and web resources; poor selection of materials
<b>Synthesis</b>	The research is situated in broader scholarly literature or in a historical context; effective examination leads to statement of new direction for	Demonstrates ability in evaluating research context; offers new directions in the literature; critical analysis and	Shows promise in engagement with research context; emerging new direction in the literature; analysis and review of key	Evidences engagement with research context; some analysis and review of key terms and ambiguities	No research context given; poor analysis of topic; key ambiguities and definitions missing

	research; ambiguities are acknowledged but perhaps only partially resolved	review of key terms and ambiguities	terms and ambiguities		
<b>Breadth &amp; Scope</b>	Explains why specific topics and materials are used; gives clearly structures criteria for inclusion and exclusion of sources	Demonstrates sound ability in justifying reasons for included and excluded literature	Evidences discussion of the reasons for included and excluded literature	Shows promise in discussing some of the reasons for included and excluded literature	Does not discuss the criteria for inclusion or exclusion
<b>Justification for Research</b>	Clearly identifies specific gaps in the literature; articulate and persuasive justification to conduct research in the area	Clearly identifies gaps in the literature; sound justification to conduct research in the area	Identifies gaps in the literature; provides general justification to conduct research in the area	Identifies vague gaps in the literature; attempts justification to conduct research in the area	Does not identify gaps in the literature; no justification to conduct research in the area
<b>Style &amp; Format</b>	Models language, style, and format of scholarly literature; publishable	Style and format standards consistently applied; accurately documented	Few errors of style and format; most sources documented correctly	Inconsistent style and format; lacks precision in use of quotations and citation of sources	Style/format standards not applied; sources plagiarised; clarity compromised by errors
<b>Language Conventions</b>	Free of mechanical errors; smooth flow and effective transitions	Few mechanical errors; good flow and strong transitions increase comprehensibility	Generally follows mechanical conventions, but with some minor errors; appropriate transitions	Frequent mechanical errors; ineffective transitions and flow from point to point	Numerous mechanical errors, making comprehension almost impossible
<b>Uses APA conventions</b>	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 80% or more of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 70-79% of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 60-69% of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 50-59% of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) less than 50% of the time

\*Adapted from a rubric developed by faculty at Andrews University resources – [www.andrews.edu](http://www.andrews.edu), which was in turn adapted from Boote, D.N. & P. Belle. 2005. Scholars before Researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational Researcher*. 24:6. 3-15.

## 2. Methodology Report

Format: Written Report  
 Length: 1,000 words  
 Weighting: 15%

You are required to produce a written report detailing your methodology employed in your research project thus far. This report must include discussion on: participants, sampling, ethical considerations and data collection instruments. Also discuss any problems encountered in your research thus far and the problem solving strategies employed to overcome these challenges.

ULO's assessed: B, D, F

Assessment Type	Methodology Report Rubric				
Criteria /Grade	High Distinction (80-100%)	Distinction (70-79%)	Credit (60-69%)	Pass (50-59%)	Fail (0-49%)
<b>Explanation and justification of chosen methodology</b>	Demonstrates a pronounced ability to clearly explain and justify chosen research methodology	Demonstrates ability to clearly explain and justify chosen research methodology	Demonstrates ability to explain and justify chosen research methodology	Demonstrates ability to explain or justify chosen research methodology	Limited or no evidence of ability to explain and justify chosen research methodology
<b>Understanding of Issues/Problems</b>	Fully grasps all concepts addressed	Exhibits a sound grasp of all concepts addressed	Exhibits a sound grasp of most concepts addressed	Has begun to grasp the concepts addressed	Has not grasped the concepts addressed
<b>Connection to Practice/Personal Experience</b>	Demonstrates a pronounced ability to connect theory to personal research experiences	Demonstrates a ability to connect theory to personal research experiences	Shows promise in task of connecting theory to personal research experiences	Evidences engagement of theory with personal research experiences	Limited or no evidence of ability to connect theory to personal research experiences
<b>Ethical Behaviour</b>	Strong evidence of ability to model ethical behaviour, personal integrity and respect for others in a research environment; demonstrates profound insight into consequences of potential unethical behaviour	Strong evidence of ability to model ethical behaviour, personal integrity and respect for others in a research environment; recognising the consequences of unethical behaviour	Sound evidence of ability to model ethical behaviour, personal integrity and respect for others in a research environment	Some evidence of ability to model ethical behaviour, personal integrity and respect for others in a research environment	Limited evidence of ethical behaviour, personal integrity and respect for others in a research environment
<b>Language Conventions</b>	Excellent vocabulary, free of language errors (spelling, grammar and referencing)	Consistently uses correct spelling, grammar and referencing	Few errors evidenced (spelling, grammar and referencing)	Some errors evidenced (spelling, grammar and referencing)	Many errors evidenced (spelling, grammar and referencing)

### 3. Presentation

Format: Presentation

Length: 15 minutes

Weighting: 20%

You will prepare a 15-minute presentation, summarising your research project. This presentation must include a personal reflection on what you have learnt from undertaking this assignment. Presentations should not be too short or long. Marks will be deducted if the presentation is either under or over the allocated time of 15 minutes by 3 minutes.

The key to achieving this target is to practise, practise, and practise.

The two most common presentation software programs are Powerpoint and Prezi. However, you may consider taking the time allowed in this unit to explore options that may better meet your needs. Alternative presentation software programs include: Haikudeck, Keynote, Knowledge Vision, Projqt, Powtoon, and Preseria.

A printed copy of the entire presentation (all slides) is to be handed to the lecturer prior to the presentation starting.

ULO's assessed: B, C, D, E

Assessment Type	Presentation Rubric				
Criteria /Grade	High Distinction (80-100%)	Distinction (70-79%)	Credit (60-69%)	Pass (50-59%)	Fail (0-49%)
Presentation Content	Demonstrates pronounced ability to cover significant content in a clear, structured way	Demonstrates ability to cover content and present a clear structure	Demonstrates some ability to cover content and present a clear structure	Attempts to cover basic content material. Does not present a clear structure	Does not sufficiently cover proposed material. Does not present a clear structure
Presentation & Graphics	Demonstrates pronounced ability to use of graphics and media in support of presentation	Demonstrates sound use of visual graphics or media to support presentation	Uses visual graphics or media to support presentation	Attempts to use of visual graphics or media in support of presentation	Poor presentation; no visual graphics or media used
Presentation Skills	Demonstrates pronounced speaking and presentation skills	Demonstrates speaking and presentation skills	Demonstrates some speaking and presentation skills	Attempts to demonstrate speaking and presentation skills	Inarticulate. Poor speaking and presentation skills
Reflection Skills	Demonstrates convincing evidence of personal growth and reflection	Demonstrate strong reflective skills	Demonstrates ability to reflect on practice	Attempts a basic reflection on practice	No evidence of reflective practice
Creativity	Superior evidence of original thinking in content and presentation skills	Demonstrates effective creativity in content <b>and</b> presentation skills	Demonstrates effective creativity in content <b>or</b> presentation skills	Limited evidence of creativity in content or presentation skills; not convincingly executed	No evidence of creativity

#### 4. Research Report

Format: Research Report

Length: 6,000 words

Weighting: 40%

Each student will undertake a small-scale, original research project. The topic may be of the student's own choosing, although academic staff will provide guidance to ensure that topics are suitable and achievable within the time and with the resources available. You will have to agree to follow Sheridan's undergraduate research ethics protocols in all stages of the research process and demonstrate ethical behaviour, personal integrity and respect for others in a research environment. Students can undertake the research project individually or in small teams. Each student must submit their own written report covering the following points:

- Assignment Cover Page (having the title of the research project, your name, your student number and submission date)
- Contents Page
- Abstract

- Introduction (including the research question(s), aim, objectives and justification of the study)
- Literature review
- Methodology (including participants, sampling methods, ethical considerations data collection instruments and data analysis method)
- Research findings
- Summary and conclusion (including key findings, recommendations, implications that could be drawn from your findings, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research)
- Personal Reflection (what you have learnt through undertaking this assignment)
- References

All pages must be numbered and the document has to be prepared with 12 font size and single space format.

ULO's assessed: A, B, C, D, F

Assessment Type	Research Report Rubric				
Criteria /Grade	High Distinction (80-100%)	Distinction (70-79%)	Credit (60-69%)	Pass (50-59%)	Fail (0-49%)
<b>Research Literacy</b>	Evidences a pronounced grasp of research methods and demonstrates pronounced ability to justify selection	Evidences a strong grasp of research methods and demonstrates ability to justify selection	Evidences a sound grasp of the main research methods and demonstrates some ability to justify selection	Evidences basic grasp of the main research methods and attempts to justify selection	Has not grasped or justified the main research methods
<b>Engagement with a Range of Scholarly Viewpoints</b>	Shows very strong evidence of engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints	Shows strong evidence of engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints	Shows evidence of engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints	Shows awareness of relevant scholarly viewpoints	No evidence of awareness and or engagement with scholarly viewpoints
<b>Methodology</b>	Topic is thoroughly investigated; highly appropriate method employed with high level of research ethics evidenced	Topic is very well investigated; appropriate method employed with a very well-developed level of research ethics evidenced	Topic is well investigated; appropriate method employed with a well-developed level of research ethics evidenced	Topic is investigated; adequate method employed with an acceptable level of research ethics evidenced	Investigation incomplete; method inappropriate and research ethics lacking
<b>Data Collection</b>	Shows sound ability to make use of quantitative and/or qualitative data collection instruments	Shows ability to make use of quantitative and/or qualitative data collection instruments	Evidences engagement with of quantitative and/or qualitative data collection instruments	Attempts to make use of quantitative and/or qualitative data collection instruments	Has not made use of either quantitative or qualitative data collection instruments
<b>Data Analysis &amp; Findings</b>	Shows promise in task of analysing and interpreting a wide range of data	Shows promise in task of analysing and interpreting data	Evidences analysis and interpretation of data	Demonstrates awareness of data analysis and/or interpretation	Has made no attempt to analyse or interpret data
<b>Organisation and Coherence</b>	Demonstrates excellent ability to organise very logical arguments and structure	Demonstrates sound ability to organise very logical arguments and structure	Demonstrates ability to organise logical arguments and structure but some paragraphs lack internal coherence.	Attempts to organise logical arguments and structure	No defined organisation structure and lacks transitions and coherence.

<b>Language conventions</b>	Uses appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction, paragraph construction, and presentation (80% or more of the time)	Uses appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction, paragraph construction, and presentation (70-79% of the time)	Uses appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction, paragraph construction, and presentation (60-69% of the time)	Uses appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction, paragraph construction, and presentation (50-59% of the time)	Uses appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction, paragraph construction, and presentation (less than 50% of the time)
<b>APA conventions</b>	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 80% or more of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 70-79% of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 60-69% of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) 50-59% of the time	Uses correct APA headings and referencing (in-text & final page) less than 50% of the time

## Learning Resources

### Prescribed Textbook(s)

Gray, D. (2018). *Doing research in the real world*. (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

### Prescribed Reading

Babbie, E. (2016). *The practice of social research* (14th ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning. (Chapter 3)

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2015). *Research methods for business students*. (7th ed.). Pearson. (Chapter 7)

### Recommended Supplementary Reading

Eunson, B. (2015). *C21: Communicating in the 21st century*. (4th ed.) Milton: John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd, ch.2,5,13.

Grellier, J. & Goerke, V. (2018). *Communications toolkit*. (4th ed). Cengage Learning.

Heen, S., & D. Stone. (2014). "Find the coaching in criticism". *Harvard Business Review*. Jan 2014 at <https://hbr.org/2014/01/find-the-coaching-in-criticism>

Kossen, C., Kiernan, E. & Lawrence, J. (2017). *Communicating for success*. (2nd ed.) Pearson.

Kuiper, S. & Clippinger, D. (2013). *Contemporary business reports*. (5th ed). Southwestern, Cengage Learning.

Martin, R. L. (2011). The innovation catalysts. *Harvard Business Review*, 89(6) 82 – 87.

Quinlan, C., Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. (2019). *Business research methods*. (2nd ed.). Cengage Learning.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2015). *Research methods for business students*. (7th ed.). Pearson.

Stone, S., & Heen, S. (2014). *Thanks for the feedback: The science and art of receiving feedback well*. New York: Viking/Penguin.

Van Wee, B., & Banister, D. (2016). How to write a literature review paper? *Transport Reviews* (36)2, 278-288.

### Academic Journals

You may find relevant articles in the following journals:

- *College Quarterly* <http://collegequarterly.ca/>
- *International Journal of Research Training* <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ritr20>
- *Issues in Educational Research* <http://www.iier.org.au/iier-inf.html>
- *Journal of Educational Research* <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/vjer20>
- *Journal of Literacy Research* <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/jlr>
- *Journal of Student Research* <https://www.jofsr.org/index.php/path>
- *Journal of Undergraduate Research* <http://www.jurpress.org/>
- *Technical Communication Quarterly* <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/htcq20>
- *Undergraduate Research Journal* <https://undergraduateresearch.org/>

## Weekly Schedule of Topics

### RS292 and Research Methods

**Prescribed text(s):** Gray, D. (2018). Doing research in the real world. (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

WEEK	TOPICS	PRESCRIBED READINGS	ASSESSMENTS
1	<b>Introduction to Research</b> Theoretical Perspectives Unit Introduction	Gray, Chapter 1 & 2	
2	<b>Topic Selection</b> Selecting and Planning Research Proposals Library Resources	Gray, Chapter 3	
3	<b>Literature Reviews</b> Searching, Critically Reviewing and Using the Literature	Gray, Chapter 5	
4	<b>Research Ethics</b> Ethical Conduct and Principles	Gray, Chapter 4 Babbie, Chapter 3	
5	In-trimester Study Week		Literature Review Due Friday 5pm
6	<b>Choosing Participants</b> Sampling	Saunders et al, Chapter 7	
7	<b>Data Collection</b> Questionnaires and Surveys	Gray, Chapter 14	
8	<b>Data Collection</b> Interviewing	Gray, Chapter 15	
9	<b>Quantitative Data Analysis</b> Analysing and Presenting Quantitative Data	Gray, Chapter 24	Methodology Report Due Friday 5pm
10	<b>Qualitative Data Analysis</b> Analysing and Presenting Qualitative Data	Gray, Chapter 26	
11	<b>Research Reports</b> Writing Up the Research	Gray, Chapter 27	
12	<b>Preparing for Presentations</b> Presenting Research Findings and Recommendations	Gray, Chapter 28	
13	<b>Research Presentations</b> Research Project Reviews Facilitated Feedback and Q&A Discussion		Presentation (in class)
14	Pre-exam Study Week		Written Report Due Friday 5pm
15	Exam week		