



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

PDA084 Qualitative Approaches to Educational Research, 15 credits

Kvalitativa ansatser på utbildningsvetenskaplig forskning, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Education and Special Education on 2018-12-03 and was last revised on 2022-06-13 to be valid from 2022-06-13, autumn semester of 2022.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Education and Special Education

Position in the educational system

The course can be part of the following programme: 1) International Master's Programme in Educational Research (L2EUR)

Main field of studies

Education with Specialization in Educational Research

Specialization

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

7,5 credits of PDA085, Introduction to International Master in Educational Research, or equivalent knowledge.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- Explain what qualitative research methods are, including their defining attributes.
- Describe research ethics as it applies to qualitative research approaches.

Competence and skills

- Identify and summarise qualitative research methods used in research articles and reports in the area of education.
- Contribute to a group tasked with designing a qualitative research approach to an educational issue.
- Develop a qualitative research approach to, research ethical procedures for, and a research ethical stance towards, a given pedagogical issue.

Judgement and approach

- Raise and judge ethical issues pertaining to educational science research with human subjects.
- Critically assess the qualitative research methods of empirical studies and their value as scientific achievement.

The course is sustainability-related, which means that at least one of the learning outcomes clearly shows that the course content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria.

Course content

The course will start by clarifying what is meant by qualitative research, including an outline of the main methods that are used in qualitative research. Central to the opening discussions are qualitative research ethics: students will discuss ethical research procedures, acting ethically, and being accountable for research ethics. The remainder of the course is taken as problem-based learning. Students are asked, in groups, to develop a suitable qualitative research methodology for investigating a pressing issue in education. Practicing group work matters because research often involves team work, so that the ability to collaborate with peers is a crucial part of research skill.

Students will be asked to re-formulate an educational issue into a clear research problem, and outline what research might be undertaken in response to the problem. In the course of working through a suitable methodological design, students will engage with reading on qualitative methods, including exemplars taken from published empirical studies.

Form of teaching

The course is taught in a combination of lectures, workshops, and seminars in support of problem-based learning in groups.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

Learning is assessed through the following assignments:

1. Active participation in group work (students are expected to work effectively in groups and make clear individual contributions within the group - this element is evaluated)
2. An individual commentary on research ethics based on group work.
3. Two group presentations that report group progress with the task of writing a research methodology
4. An individually written essay that reports on a suitable research methodology for tackling a given educational issue while also critically assessing research methods and their value.

If a student, who has failed the same examined element on two occasions, wishes to change examiner before the next examination session, such a request should be submitted to the department in writing and granted unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6, Section 22 of Higher Education Ordinance).

In the event that a course has ceased or undergone major changes, students are to be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the ordinary examination session) over a period of at least one year, though at most two years after the course has ceased/been changed. The same applies to work experience and VFU, although this is restricted to just one additional examination session.

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

To pass the course, all the requirements mentioned above (1, 2, 3 and 4) need to be graded a Pass (G). In order to earn a grade of Pass with Distinction (VG), a student must pass all course work at Pass (G) level, the final written essay with a Pass with Distinction (VG).

Course evaluation

Course evaluation is done in relation to the course learning outcomes and content and is done continuously during the course in the form of an individual network survey at the end of the course. The result and any changes in the course structure will be communicated to both the students who completed the evaluation and to the students who will begin the course.

Additional information

The course uses different forms of digital communication between teacher and student, as well as between students. Therefore, access to a computer and internet is required.