

COMMUNITY & FAMILY STUDIES

HSC CORE: Research methodology

Task: Independent Research Project

Weighting: 20%

DATE RECEIVED	PART	DATE DUE	WEIGHTING
Week 1 Term 4	Part A – Research Proposal/Plan	Week 5 Term 4 (5 weeks)	5%
	Part B – Research Diary	Week 2 Term 1 (17 weeks)	5%
	Part C – Final Research Project/Product		10%

Outcomes to be assessed

H4.1 Justifies and applies appropriate research methodologies

H4.2 Communicates ideas, debates issues and justifies opinions

Task description

Create an Independent Research Project by conducting your own research on a particular subject/focus and **construct** a report detailing your research.

The focus of the IRP should be related to the course content of one or more of the following Community and Family Studies areas: Resource management, Individuals, Groups, Families, or Communities.

Part A: The project plan (5 marks)

Develop a project plan for the Independent Research Project and **outline** the complete research process.

You need to:

- Recognise** the proposed research topic and related question and hypothesis.
- Explain** why the topic was chosen and how it relates to Community and Family Studies.
- Describe** the research methodologies that will and will not be used to collect data (both primary and secondary methods). You also need to **justify** why each method was/was not selected and explain the sampling method/s that will be utilised.
- Identify** possible secondary sources of data specific to your topic and details of information required to support your research.
- Propose** expected outcomes of the research – what do you hope or expect to find out.
- Provide** a list of terminology related to your research and their definitions (Glossary).
- Develop** a clear and realistic timeline of your proposed research, including actions/goals needed to complete your research.
- Briefly outline** the possible difficulties you may have when conducting your research i.e. bias, validity, reliability, and ethical issues.

Part B: The project diary (5 marks)

On a frequent basis **document** the actions/goals that need to be achieved relevant to the timeline and **provide** reflective comments on the achievement of each action/goal.

You need to:

- Make frequent entries (minimum - once a week)
- Document sources of data - contacts, conversations, readings and sources of secondary data
- Document the actions/goals reflected in the timeline
- Record your thoughts and feelings of your research process
- Provide a critical reflection on problems encountered and suggest recommendations for future research

Part C: The project product (10 marks)

Present a complete picture of the research conducted and *construct* a critical analysis of the findings.

You need to include all of the following sections:

Overview

- Title page** – Name, Subject, Due date, Research Question & Hypothesis.
- Contents page** – clearly identify where each section is throughout the project. All pages should be labelled and correlate with the information on the contents page.
- Acknowledgements** - recognise specific 'sources of data' (refer to syllabus) that assisted in the research process and acknowledge the support given.
- Abstract** – summary of the entire research project. (Overall picture of steps 1-7)

Main Body of Report

- 1. Introduction** – describe the intentions of the project and link to relevant syllabus content. (Include your research hypothesis and question).
- 2. Literature review** – discuss the secondary data related to your research topic. (Show the information that already exists for/against your research topic)
- 3. Research methodologies** – describe the primary research methods used to collect data. (Specify – who, what, when, why and how they were conducted. Include details of the sampling method/s used.)
- 4. Results** – present the data collected using graphs and/or tables and outline the significant points in writing (describe the data presented in the graphs/tables). It is suggested that you show both the data that supports your hypothesis and the data that does not support your hypothesis. Note: do not give reasons for the data in this section.
- 5. Analysis and discussion** – interpret research findings/results. (Suggest reasons for the data; show any relationships between the primary and secondary data, present information both for and against your hypothesis, show links between the data and your hypothesis).
- 6. Conclusion** – provide a summary of analysis and discussion (Determine the final outcome or conclusion to research, make a judgment as to whether your hypothesis was correct or incorrect based on your findings). All conclusions should be supported with data and be based on evidence already discussed. There should be no new information in this section.
- 7. Future recommendations** – outline the problems encountered during research, any issues of concern, and make relevant suggestions for improvement.

Additional information

- Bibliography** – list all secondary sources of data (refer to the information given in class on referencing secondary sources)
 - Appendix** – File all relevant materials utilised for the research but not needed in the main body of the report – e.g. copies of questionnaires, interviews or other research methodologies records, secondary information materials, articles etc.
-

Marking Guidelines

Part A: The project plan	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and hypothesis. • Justifies the reasons for selecting the research topic. • Provides a thorough explanation of how the research topic relates to Community and Family Studies concepts. • Demonstrates an extensive knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (describes each method in detail and provides justifiable reasons for why certain methods were selected over others). • Demonstrates a sound understanding of the sampling methods used in research (explains the sampling methods that will be used to conduct the research, providing specific reasons for their selection). • Predicts specific and relevant outcomes/conclusions expected from the research (recognises their hypothesis and thoroughly outlines the expected results). • Develops an extensive and realistic timeline for the management of the project (identifies specific actions/goals needed to complete the research and suggests appropriate time frames/deadlines for each action/goal) • Demonstrates a thorough understanding of bias and ethics in research (outlines various problems that may be encountered during the research process that are realistic and relevant to the research topic AND process) 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and hypothesis. • Gives reasons for selecting the research topic. • Provides a basic explanation of how the research topic relates to Community and Family Studies concepts. • Demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (briefly describes those methods that have been chosen and provides some reasons for why they were selected). • Demonstrates a basic understanding of the sampling methods used in research (identifies the sampling methods that will be used to conduct the research, providing generalised reasons for their selection). • Predicts outcomes/conclusions expected from the research (recognises their hypothesis and gives a brief outline of the expected results). • Develops a timeline for the management of the project (Lists specific actions/goals needed to complete the research, but the time frames/deadlines for each action/goal are not specific or over estimated) • Demonstrates a sound understanding of bias and ethics in research (identifies various problems that may be encountered during the research process that are relevant to the research topic OR process) 	3-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a basic understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and/or hypothesis. • Gives simple reasons for selecting the research topic. • Identifies the related Community and Family Studies concepts, makes limited links to the topic. • Demonstrates a limited knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (Lists those methods that have been chosen and provides some reasons for why they were selected). • Demonstrates a limited understanding of the sampling methods used in research (identifies the sampling methods used to conduct research and lists those they have selected). • Predicts outcomes/conclusions expected from the research (Lists the expected results) • Develops a timeline for the management of the project (Lists actions needed to complete any research, time frames are generalised or over estimated) • Demonstrates a limited understanding of bias and ethics in research (Lists 1-2 problems that may be encountered during the research process) 	1-2

Marking Guidelines

Part B: The project diary	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough documentation of the research process (entries are comprehensive and entered regularly – at least once a week) • Thorough documentation of sources - contacts, conversations, readings and secondary sources (Outlines who/what, when, why, and how the source relates to the research and demonstrates referencing skills) • Entries correspond with suggested time line • Clearly outlines the problems encountered, if any. • Explains specific thoughts and feelings related to the problems encountered and/or the research process i.e. did not give enough time in my timeline to complete the questionnaires and this was frustrating because I had to rush and did not complete the amount I had hoped to. • Demonstrates a sound ability to solve problems by resolving any issues that arise or suggesting improvements for the future • Diary entries are detailed, clear and organised 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate documentation of the research process (entries are brief but entered regularly – at least once a week) • Satisfactory documentation of sources - contacts, conversations, readings and secondary sources (Identifies who/what, when, and why the source was used) • Entries correspond with suggested time line • Identifies the problems encountered, if any. • Describes general thoughts and feelings related to the problems encountered and/or the research process i.e. no time it is making me stressed, too much to do had to give up social life, hate this IRP, computer broke down so I cried. • Demonstrates a basic ability to solve problems by suggesting improvements for the future • Diary entries are clear and organised 	3-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic documentation of the research process (entries are brief and irregular) • Limited to no documentation of sources - contacts, conversations, readings and secondary sources (Identifies who/what, when, and why the source was used) • Entries lack relevance to suggested time line • Identifies the problems encountered, if any. • Identifies simple thoughts and feelings related to the research process i.e. no time, too much to do, hate this IRP, computer broke down. • Little evidence of problem solving to resolve any issues arising • Diary entries are lack organisation and clarity 	1-2

Marking Guidelines

Part C: The Project Product	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an outstanding understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and hypothesis. • Justifies the reasons for selecting the research topic. • Provides a detailed explanation of how the research topic relates to Community and Family Studies concepts. • Clearly acknowledges the relevant sources of support for the completion of the project • Provides a comprehensive overview of the entire research, including findings and conclusions. • Presents an outstanding discussion of the secondary data related to the research topic (gathers data, from a broad range of secondary sources, that is specific and relevant to the research hypothesis, data for and against the hypothesis is presented) • Demonstrates an extensive knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (describes each method in detail and provides justifiable reasons for why certain methods were selected over others). • Demonstrates an excellent understanding of the sampling methods used in research (explains the sampling methods that were used to conduct the research, providing specific reasons for their selection). • Data collection methods are valid and reliable (methods are suitable to the research topic and they measure what they are suppose to measure) • Demonstrates an outstanding understanding of presenting data (uses appropriate graphs and tables to present data, descriptions of data are accurate and clear, both for and against information is presented) • Critically analyses the research findings (Explains logical reasons for the data, identifies relationships between the primary and secondary data, discusses information both for and against the hypothesis, makes explicit links between the data and hypothesis, makes judgements with regards to the data supporting/not supporting the hypothesis). • Provides a comprehensive judgement of the research results. (Determines the conclusion of the research - whether the hypothesis was correct/incorrect or inconclusive and supports judgements with specific evidence). • Recognises specific problems encountered during the research and suggests relevant and realistic improvements for future researchers. • Provides a comprehensive bibliography (lists a broad range of relevant secondary sources used throughout research) • Demonstrates a excellent understanding of ethics in research (referencing of secondary sources is evident and accurate throughout the entire project) • Appendix contains relevant and specific materials used within the research (contains primary and secondary research samples) • Appendix is easy to decipher (directly links to references within the main body of the project) • The entire IRP is well organised and meticulously presented 	<p>9-10</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and hypothesis. • Justifies the reasons for selecting the research topic. • Provides a thorough explanation of how the research topic relates to Community and Family Studies concepts. • Clearly acknowledges the relevant sources of support for the completion of the project • Provides a detailed overview of the entire research, including findings and conclusions. • Presents a thorough discussion of the secondary data related to the research topic (gathers data, from various secondary sources, that is relevant to the research hypothesis, data for and/or against the hypothesis is presented) • Demonstrates a high degree of knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (describes each method and provides reasons for why certain methods were selected). • Demonstrates a sound understanding of the sampling methods used in research (explains the sampling methods that were used to conduct the research, providing reasons for their selection). • Data collection methods are valid and/or reliable (methods are suitable to the research topic and/or they measure what they are suppose to measure) • Demonstrates a sound understanding of presenting data (most graphs and tables are appropriate, descriptions of data are clear, both for and against information is presented) • Thoroughly analyses the research findings (Explains logical reasons for the data, identifies relationships between the primary and secondary data, discusses information both for and against the hypothesis, makes clear links between the data and hypothesis). • Provides a sound judgement of the research results. (Determines the conclusion of the research - whether the hypothesis was correct/incorrect or inconclusive and attempts to support judgements with factual evidence). • Recognises common problems encountered during the research and suggests relevant and realistic improvements for future researchers. • Provides a detailed bibliography (lists a broad range of secondary sources used throughout research) • Demonstrates a sound understanding of ethics in research (referencing of secondary sources is evident throughout the entire project) • Appendix contains a wide range of materials, some of which are not relevant (contains primary and secondary research samples) • Appendix is easy to decipher (directly links to references within the main body of the project) • The entire IRP is organised and neatly presented 	<p>7-8</p>

Marking Guidelines

Part C: The Project Product cont'd	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and hypothesis. • Explains reasons for selecting the research topic. • Provides a satisfactory explanation of how the research topic relates to Community and Family Studies concepts. • Clearly acknowledges the relevant sources of support for the completion of the project • Provides a satisfactory overview of the entire research, including findings and conclusions. • Presents an adequate discussion of the secondary data related to the research topic (gathers data, from various secondary sources, that has some relevance to the research hypothesis, data for or against the hypothesis is presented) • Demonstrates a general knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (briefly describes those methods that were selected and provides some reasons for why they were selected). • Demonstrates a general understanding of the sampling methods used in research (identifies the sampling methods that will be used to conduct the research, providing generalised reasons for their selection). • Data collection methods lack validity and/or reliability (some methods are not suitable to the research topic and/or they don't measure what they are suppose to measure) • Demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of presenting data (most graphs and tables are appropriate, descriptions of data are clear, for and/or against information is presented) • Satisfactorily analyses the research findings (Gives reasons for the data, discusses information both for and/or against the hypothesis, makes basic links between the data and hypothesis). • Provides a basic judgement of the research results. (Suggests a conclusion for the research - whether the hypothesis was correct/incorrect or inconclusive and explains reasons for the conclusion using some data to support). • Recognises common problems encountered during the research and suggests simple improvements for future researchers. • Provides a bibliography (lists secondary sources used throughout research) • Demonstrates a basic understanding of ethics in research (referencing of secondary sources is evident throughout some of the project) • Appendix contains a wide range of materials, some of which are not relevant (contains primary and secondary research samples) • Appendix is difficult to decipher (links to references within the main body of the project are unclear) • The entire IRP is organised and neatly presented 	5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a basic understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and hypothesis. • Identifies reasons for selecting the research topic. • Provides a basic explanation of how the research topic relates to Community and Family Studies concepts. • Briefly acknowledges the relevant sources of support for the completion of the project • Provides a brief overview of the entire research, including some findings and conclusions. • Presents a basic discussion of the secondary data related to the research topic (gathers data from a limited number of secondary sources that has some relevance to the research hypothesis, data for or against the hypothesis is presented) • Demonstrates a basic knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (Identifies those methods that were used and provides simple reasons for why they were selected). • Demonstrates a limited understanding of the sampling methods used in research (identifies the sampling methods used to conduct their research, with little to no explanation). • Data collection methods lack validity and/or reliability (some methods are not suitable to the research topic and/or they don't measure what they are suppose to measure) OR are very limited (one method conducted) • Demonstrates a basic understanding of presenting data (most graphs and tables are appropriate, descriptions of data are unclear or not evident) • Explains the research findings (Gives some reasons for the data, reiterates information from the results section, makes simple links between the data and hypothesis). • Suggests a conclusion for the research - whether the hypothesis was correct/incorrect or inconclusive) • Recognises common problems encountered during the research OR suggests simple improvements for future researchers. • Provides a scarce bibliography (secondary sources used throughout research are limited) • Demonstrates a little understanding of ethics in research (referencing of secondary sources throughout the project is inadequate) • Appendix contains a wide range of materials, some of which are not relevant (contains primary and secondary research samples) OR only contains primary samples • Appendix is difficult to decipher (links to references within the main body of the project are unclear) OR appendix is not labelled. • The IRP lacks organisation but is neatly presented 	3-4

Part C: The Project Product cont'd	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the entire research process. • Identifies the research topic and related question and hypothesis. • Identifies limited reasons for selecting the research topic OR provides no reason. • Lists the Community and Family Studies concepts that relate to the research topic. • Briefly acknowledges the relevant sources of support for the completion of the project • Provides a limited overview of the entire research, including some findings and/or conclusions. • Recognises some secondary data related to the research topic (gathers data from a limited number of secondary sources, some of which have little relevance to the research hypothesis) OR secondary data is presented with little correlation to the hypothesis • Demonstrates a limited knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (Identifies research methods and states the methods they selected to use). • Demonstrates a limited understanding of the sampling methods used in research (identifies the sampling methods used to conduct their research, with little to no explanation) OR makes no reference to sampling in the project. • Data collection methods lack validity and/or reliability (some methods are not suitable to the research topic and/or they don't measure what they are suppose to measure) OR are very limited (one method conducted) • Demonstrates a limited understanding of presenting data (graphs and tables are inappropriate or not used, data is unclear) • Gives some reasons for the data, reiterates information from the results section • States whether the hypothesis was correct/incorrect or inconclusive – with little evidence to support statement. • Fails to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognise common problems in any research OR - suggest simple improvements for future researchers. • Provides a scarce or no bibliography (secondary sources used throughout research are limited or not evident) • Provides no referencing of secondary sources throughout the project • Appendix contains some materials, some of which are may not be relevant OR only contains primary samples OR appendix is not supplied • Appendix is not clear or labelled. • The entire IRP lacks content and organisation 	1-2