## Key Information

| **Course Organiser** | Dr. John Harries  
Email: j.harries@ed.ac.uk  
Room no.5.25  
Chrystal MacMillan Building, 15A George Square  
Guidance & Feedback Hours: Tuesday/Wednesday 4-5pm |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| **Location**         | Semester 2  
Tuesday 15.10 – 16.00  
Lecture Theatre 4, Appleton Tower |
| **Course Tutors**    | Bridget Bradley, Email: Bridget.Bradley@ed.ac.uk  
Alex Gapud, Email: A.Gapud@ed.ac.uk  
Leo Hopkinson, Email: lhopkins@exseed.ed.ac.uk  
Rebekah Thompson, Email: rthomps4@exseed.ed.ac.uk |
| **Course Secretary** | Lauren Ayre  
Email: Lauren.Ayre@ed.ac.uk  
Undergraduate Teaching Office |
| **Assessment Deadlines** | Fieldnotes – 14th February 2017, 12 noon  
Interview Transcript – 7th March 2017, 12 noon  
FINAL PROJECT REPORT – 30th March 2017, 12 noon |
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Introduction

Welcome to *Ethnography: Theory and Practice*. This is a course which combines a number of experiments in teaching and learning. It introduces students to the method of social research known as ethnographic fieldwork or ethnography. Although most often associated with anthropologists working in distant corners of the world, ethnography is a method increasingly employed by researchers across the social sciences, with interests that range from traditional religious practices to the use of modern high-technology products. It builds on one of the most successful and long-running components of our teaching - the Space Project, a group research project which ran for many years as part of Social Anthropology 2. The course is different from other courses in the School in several ways: it makes less use of lectures, with the key work all happening in small groups based in weekly tutorial sessions; it has no final exam, but demands more from students in terms of regular writing and engagement in practical project work; and it involves students in their own assessment, and in the assessment of other students’ work.

This course introduces undergraduate students to the theory and practice of ethnographic fieldwork. At the heart of this course is a collaborative project in which students will learn about qualitative methods by putting them to the test in practical group work. The course is open to all second year undergraduates within the School of Social and Political Science.

**Aims**

This course aims to familiarize students with the history, theory and practice of ethnography as a method of social science research. Through collaborative practical work, students will gain an understanding of ethnographic research methods and working in research teams. The continual assessment of written field notes and research reports will improve the writing competence of undergraduate students and make them aware of different writing styles.

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will have a thorough understanding of ethnography as a qualitative method, both practically and theoretically. They will have engaged in a collaborative research project, learned how to work in research teams, and have gained an understanding of the practice of ethnographic fieldwork and its methodology. Through the writing of field notes, interview transcripts, research reports and an ethnographic essay, students will exercise and improve their writing skills.
## COURSE OVERVIEW

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Tutorials</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Week 1 (wc 16/1/17)</td>
<td>The space project: ethics and ethnography.</td>
<td>Anthropology and fieldwork (John Harries)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Week 2 (wc 23/1/17)</td>
<td>Getting started: entering the field and finding your way.</td>
<td>Fieldwork, relationships and the presentation of self (Grit Wesser)</td>
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<td>Week 3 (wc 30/1/17)</td>
<td>Participating and observing.</td>
<td>Being a PARTICIPANT observer (Rebecca Marsland)</td>
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<td>Week 4 (wc 6/2/17)</td>
<td>Reporting back: observations and field notes</td>
<td>Creating a record (John Harries)</td>
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<td>Week 5 (wc 13/2/17)</td>
<td>Interviews and talking to others.</td>
<td>Asking questions and making conversation (Tom Boylston)</td>
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<td>Week 6 (wc 27/2/17)</td>
<td>Analysing fieldwork data and finding themes</td>
<td>Troubleshooting fieldwork (Alex Gapud)</td>
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<td>Week 7 (wc 6/3/17)</td>
<td>Exploring relevant literature</td>
<td>“Theory” and why it is sometimes useful (John Harries)</td>
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<td>Week 8 (wc 13/3/17)</td>
<td>Writing-up your projects – conversations and queries</td>
<td>Visualising others (John Harries)</td>
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<td>Week 9 (wc 20/3/17)</td>
<td>Project presentations</td>
<td>Writing about others (John Harries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10 (wc 27/3/17)</td>
<td>No Tutorial</td>
<td>No lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11 (wc 3/4/17)</td>
<td>De-brief, course evaluation and celebration</td>
<td>No Lecture</td>
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### Assessment at a glance (see pages 14-16 for more information)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Assessment weight (see pages 14-16 for more information)</th>
<th>Submission Date (all course work is due at 12 noon on the date of submission)</th>
<th>Return of Feedback date (all feedback provided by 17.00 on the date below)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnographic Fieldnotes</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Tuesday, February 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Friday, March 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Transcripts</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Friday, March 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project Report</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Thursday, March 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Thursday, April 20&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review of Project Report</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Thursday, March 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
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Teaching

This course will consist of lectures about various aspects of ethnographic research and writing, with the lecturers in particularly drawing from their own experience of doing ethnography, and tutorials in which the practice of ethnographic methods will be prepared and evaluated. Practical ethnographic fieldwork is undertaken by the undergraduate research teams during the second half of the course. The course will be delivered by dedicated lecturers and tutors who will closely accompany the practical work undertaken by the students. The tutors’ engagement with the undergraduate research teams will be the key for the transfer of methodological skills.

Because of the importance of the tutorials it is essential that you attend every tutorial. If you cannot attend (e.g. because of illness) please contact your tutor before the tutorial in question.

Format

This course will run over ten weeks and consist of a one hour lecture and a two hour tutorial per week. The lectures will stress the history and theory of ethnography, with John Harries and a series of glamorous guest lecturers reflecting on their own research experience to share some wisdom, tips and suggestions about doing ethnographic fieldwork and crafting a written account based on that fieldwork. The tutorials will facilitate the practical research work.

PLEASE NOTE: unlike most other course the tutorials for this course start in week one. You will be automatically allocated to a tutorial group in the week before week one. If, for any good reason, you would not be able to attend the group to which you are assigned please inform the course organiser (John Harries) and administrator (Lauren Ayre) by Monday on week one at the very latest.

Lectures

| The lectures take place Tuesdays, 15:10 – 16:00 |
| Appleton Tower, Lecture Theatre Four |

Week 1 – 17 January – Doing fieldwork in anthropology (John Harries)

An introduction to ethnographic fieldwork, the distinctive method of anthropological research providing a brief overview of its history and arguing it to be a peculiar mode of enquiry that emphasizes a naturalistic approach to understanding others and an inductive approach to theory-building.
Readings:


Harries, J. [draft forthcoming in Trace of Ochre: Changing Perspectives on the Beothuk. University of Toronto: University of Toronto Press] A clearing with a view to the lake, the bones of a caribou and the sound of snow falling on dead leaves: sensing the presence of the past in the wilds of Newfoundland.

Week 2 – 24 January – Fieldwork, Relationships, and the Presentation of Self (Grit Wesser)

In this lecture we look at an integral part of the ethnographic method: the relationships between ethnographers and the people we study. In what ways does it matter who we are for our fieldwork? What challenges can arise when we seek to gain information from people who might be suspicious of our motivations? How do we present ourselves and our research project to our interlocutors? We consider how social relations created during fieldwork differ from those outwith the ethnographic project, the potential difficulties arising from these relations, and how best to tackle such challenges.

Readings:


Week 3 – 31 January – Being a PARTICIPANT observer (Rebecca Marsland)

Participant-observation is a research method that is peculiar to anthropology. But what is participant-observation and how do you do it? What can we learn from participant-observation that is different to the data that can be collected from interviews, surveys, or archival research? Participant-observation can be shaped by the anthropologist – whose personality, age, gender, ethnicity etc – will shape exactly what he/she can participate in and observe. It is also shaped by the informants with whom anthropologists work. In this lecture, we will consider the limits and opportunities that this fieldwork method offers. The lecture will include a demonstration of some of the techniques that were used in order to carry out participation-observation with bees and beekeepers.
Week 4 – 7 February – Creating a record (John Harries)

This lecture considers how we make a record of the things we see and do and the conversations we have. The emphasis in anthropology is often on “fieldnotes”, that diary-like record events crafted by ethnographers in the field. Writing is, however, not the only way we create a record of stuff that happens and so we will also discuss the role of visual techniques - film, photography and drawn-line - in representing ethnographic understandings of everyday life and actively participating in forms of place making. By presenting bits of pieces of the mess of stuff he has gathered together while doing research, John will consider the nature and necessary partiality of such records.

Readings:


Week 5 – 14 February – Asking questions (Tom Bolyston)

In this lecture we will do and talk about interviews. Tom, reflecting on his own experience of doing interviews in sometimes difficult circumstances, will provide some handy tips about organizing and doing interviews and also, more conceptually, will consider the sometimes problematic place of interviews in ethnographic research.

Readings:

Taylor and Francis. Part II, Chapter 5, Interviewing, 105-128. [e-book]


Boyston, T. [draft; forthcoming in *Africa*] From Sickness to History: Evil Spirits, Memory, And Responsibility In An Ethiopian Market Village

**Week 6 – 28 February – Troubleshooting Fieldwork (Alex Gapud)**

What happens when you design a project, put all that time and effort into it, and it all goes a bit pear-shaped in no time at all? While your instinct might be to panic and deem your project a failure, it's not the end of the world, and it happens a lot more than you might suspect. Based on fieldwork in the exotic locale of Bristol on memory of the city's historical and contemporary links with colonialism and empire (which itself often felt like chasing a ghost!). In this lecture Alex shares some of his experiences and suggestions on coming up with contingencies, facing some of the challenges of fieldwork, and chasing ghosts (though maybe not in the same sense as John). Sometimes, [things] hitting the fan can be a lot more serendipitous than you might initially expect

**Readings:**


Pollard, A. 2009. Field of Screams: Difficulty and Ethnographic Fieldwork. *Anthropology Matters* 11 (2). Accessible online at: http://www.anthropologymatters.com/index.php/anth_matters/article/view/10 (See also responses to Amy Pollard in the same online issue)

Gapud, A. [draft; forthcoming in *Anthropological Quarterly*] Imperial Silences of Circumscription: Memory and Heritage of the British Empire and the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Present-Day Bristol.

**Week 7 – 7 March – Theorising space and why it is sometimes useful (John Harries)**

By now you will beginning to move away from simply doing research about space and place to thinking about how one may understand spaces and places theoretically and how this theoretical understanding may inform and enhance how you may understand what is going on in the spaces and places you have been researching. This lecture will introduce you to some key theoretical
inspirations and encourages you to think about how you may integrate BIG ideas to generate better understandings of the stuff you experience while doing research.

Readings:

Augé, M. Non-place: An Introduction to the Anthropology of Supermodernity. London: Verso. Chapter 3, from places to non-places, pp. 75-120.


Week 8 – 14 March – Visualising others (John Harries)

We don’t only write of other space and places in our ethnographies, we also enfold visions of the ways other people constitute space and place into our accounts. This lecture will focus on the role of visual techniques - film, photography and drawn-line - in representing ethnographic understandings of everyday life and actively participating in forms of place making.

Readings:


Week 9 – 21 March – Writing about others (John Harries)

This final lecture is also the second lecture on writing ethnography, this time concentrating on the ‘finished product’, the ethnographic report you will be submitting at the end of week 10. We will consider how we may write of others “anthropologically” and the kinds of argument that have sprung up since the 1980s on the desirability of experimenting with the literary form of ethnography. In particular, reflecting on John’s own anxieties about ethnographic writing, we will consider how we give “voice” to the lives of others with some degree of authority and integrity.
Readings:


**Tutorials**

*Tutorials start in week one* please check your individual timetable via your MyEd to view which tutorial group you are in. You are expected to come to tutorials having read, and prepared to discuss the readings indicated for the lectures as well as your research projects.

**Tasks for week 1:**

- Read the course guide.
- Begin to think (very provisionally) about spaces in Edinburgh that you think might be ethnographically interesting.

**Week 1 (beginning 16/1/17) – Thinking about projects and spaces**

**Introductions:**

- Explanation of the project.


**Discussion:**

- Brainstorming on possible project sites and topics.
- Choose groups of three, exchange contact details and make arrangements to meet outside the tutorial.

**Tasks for week 2:**

- Find a field site and carry out a preliminary observation.
• Write a very short (no more than 250 word) “proposal” in which you state what “space” you wish to research, and how you are planning to go about doing this research. **There should be only one proposal per research group.** Please make sure that both your specific research group, with each individual named, and tutorial date and time are clearly stated on this proposal. **Please submit a copy of this proposal as a word document via an “assignment” link that will be provided on LEARN BEFORE your tutorial in week 2.** Also bring a paper copy to the tutorial. Please put the day and time of your tutorial group in the title of the document you upload to the assignment link.

**Week 2 (beginning 23/1/17) – Encounters, ethics and ethnography**

**Discussion:**

• Ethical issues (thinking about “Ire in Ireland)
• Entering the field, problems and possibilities.
• Research strategies, or how best to gather information.
• Establishing relationships and rapport.
• Formulating a research plan and timetable.

Also

• **Nominate tutorial representative (who will speak for the members of the tutorial group at a tutor representative meeting to be scheduled sometime in week 6 or 7).**


**Tasks for week 3:**

• Complete the online ethical review form (see page 17). Only one form needs to be completed per project. **Please have this completed by 17.00 Friday 27/1/17 at the latest.**

**Week 3 (beginning 30/1/17) - Reporting back: observation and field notes**

**Discussion:**

• Reporting back on your chosen spaces and topics.
• Are there any practical issues or problems? Do you need to change your space or topic?
• Observing, participating and talking to people.
• Field journals: taking notes and typing up.


**Tasks for week 4:**

• Continue participant observation in/at your chosen space and write field notes.
Work towards organising an interview.

**Week 4 (beginning 6/2/17) - Interviews and talking to others**

*Discussion:*

- Talking to others: interview tactics, questions, style and taking notes.
- What are the politics of interviewing research participants? And of transcribing your interviews
- Reporting back on fieldwork and field sites.
- What have you found? How is it all going?

*Tasks for week 5:*

- Continue with research at your chosen fieldsite/s.
- Make sure you will have your fieldnotes ready to upload onto ELMA 12 noon Tuesday, 14th of Feb.

**Week 5 (beginning 13/2/17) - ‘The plot thickens’: observation and fieldnotes 2**

*Discussion:*

- How have your ideas about your chosen site changed in the past couple of weeks?
- What kind of questions has your research thrown up so far about a) your fieldsite and b) ‘the ethnographic method’?

*Tasks for week 6:*

- Prepare for next week’s tutorial by thinking about which themes you can identify in your data. You will get guidance with this at the tutorial, so don’t worry if you are finding it difficult.

**Week 6 (beginning 27/2/17) - Analysing your fieldwork data and identifying themes**

*Discussion:*

- What have you discovered? How do people use and talk about your chosen space?
- Which theme/s seems most helpful for your project?
- What additional data will you need to develop that theme?
- Making the transition from field notes to full text.
- Allocate outstanding tasks and readings to members of the group.

*Activity:*

- Using the library and online research resources.
Tasks for week 7:

- Make sure you have you’ll have your interview ready to upload onto ELMA by 12 noon, Tuesday 7th of March.

Week 7 (beginning 6/3/17) - Linking your findings to relevant existing literature

Discussion

- How to find points of contrast and comparison between the themes in your own data and those found in existing social science literature.


Tasks for week 8:

- Complete final fieldwork tasks.
- Allocate tasks for completing the final written report.
- Write up the final project report.
- Prepare a short project presentation for the tutorial in week 9.

Week 8 (beginning 13/3/17) - Writing-up your projects – conversations and queries

- This tutorial will be take the form of a drop in session to discuss any final questions, issues and queries relating to the writing-up of the project report and how best to transform your ethnographic research into a written work.

Tasks for week 9:

- Begin writing-up final project report.
- Prepare a short group presentation on your project for the next tutorial.

Week 9 (beginning 20/3/17) - Project presentations

Discussion:

- Short group presentations about each space project and the process of doing fieldwork.
- Criteria and guidance for peer review of final projects.

Tasks for week 10:

- Complete final project report and upload it to ELMA by 12 noon, Thursday 30th of March.
Week 10 (beginning 27/03/17) - No tutorial

Week 11 (beginning 3/4/17) - Project and course review (and discussing the possibility of publishing in the new Social Anthropology online journal of student work)

Discussion:

- Review of the course, thinking about what you have learned about the ethnographic method.
- Discussion: next steps – publication (see page 21), applied anthropology.

Assessment

The course assessment consists of a collaborative ethnographic research project that you will undertake in teams.

The marks for the collaborative research project are calculated from four components:

1. Individual writing assignment A: a sample of fieldnotes with a short reflection on doing participant observation (25% of total course grade)
2. Individual writing assignment B: a section of an interview transcript with a short reflection on doing the interview (25% of total course grade).
3. A collaborative final project report (45% of total course grade).
4. Peer assessment of the final project report (5% of total course grade).

Please refer to the School Website for important information about late coursework, penalties for exceeding the word length etc:
http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations

Fieldnotes

For this assignment you will upload onto the ELMA (see page 27) a 600 - 750 word sample of your fieldnotes from your observations in week 3. You may add an Appendix with the remaining fieldnotes to set the context if you feel this is necessary, but this will not be marked. The sample of fieldnotes will be accompanied by a 600 – 750 word reflection upon your fieldwork in which you describe the circumstances of your participant-observation, your own position and relationship to the situation described and how this may have shaped the quality of your experience and, by extension, the fieldnotes which you present. The fieldnotes and reflective essay should be submitted as ONE document, divided into two appropriately headed sections: “fieldnotes” and “reflections”. The submission should not exceed 1500 words, not including the reference list.

Deadline 12 noon, Tuesday, 14th of February
Marking descriptors for fieldnotes and the reflective essay on doing participant observation:

A (70-100%) A sharply-focused sample which maintains a high level of detail, depth of observation and reflexivity throughout. Events and experiences should be described in detail. It might also include other materials such as diagrams or photographs. The reflective essay should display an acute awareness of how the ethnographer’s position and presentation of self may shape the fieldwork experience and by extension the fieldnotes which describe that experience. This reflection should be specific to the circumstances of the fieldwork, but should also draw on the broader literature concerning ethnographic methods.

B (60-69%) A very good sample that shows qualities beyond the merely routine or acceptable. What the writer did, observations, events and experiences should be described fully. The sample should show some attempt to be reflexive – reflecting on the writer’s own positioning and experience in the field. Writing should be coherent and well presented.

C (50-59%) A satisfactory sample with elements of the routine and predictable. There should be evidence of a basic understanding of the task in question. It should provide some more detailed description, observation and reflexivity beyond basic/vital information - if rather shallow or under-developed. The quality of expression and writing should be acceptable.

D (40-49%) A passable sample which shows an understanding of the task and contains the basic/vital information and observations (who, what, where, when etc.). The general impression may be of a rather poor effort, with weaknesses in conception or execution. It might also be the right mark for a short piece of work that at least contains basic information.

E (0-39%) A sample with evident weaknesses in understanding. It might not contain basic or adequate information and observations. It might also be a very short and fragmentary sample with merit in what is presented but containing serious gaps.

Interview Transcript

For this assignment you will upload onto ELMA (see page 24) a 600 - 750 word sample of your interview transcript from week 5. This should be accompanied by a 600 - 750 word reflection on the interview process (see marking descriptors). You may add an Appendix with the entire transcript to set the context if you feel this is necessary, but this will not be marked. The transcript and the reflective essay should be submitted as ONE document, divided into two appropriately headed sections: “fieldnotes” and “reflections”. The submission should not exceed 1500 words, not including the reference list.

Deadline 12 noon, Tuesday, 7th of March

Marking Descriptors for Interview Transcripts:

A (70-100%) A sharply-focused transcript which maintains a high level of detail and direct quotes or paraphrasing throughout. The transcript should also show some attempt to be reflexive – reflecting on the interviewer’s own positioning during the interview. Do they reflect on context, rapport and
experience? It might also include a reflection on how the style of interview (structured/unstructured) affected the interview process and success.

**B (60-69%)** A very good sample that shows qualities beyond the merely routine or acceptable. Conversation, topics, questions should be described more fully. The transcript should discuss the choice of interview style and show some attempt to be descriptive – describing the interview context. It should also contain a good attempt to quote directly or paraphrase from the interview. Writing should be coherent and well presented.

**C (50-59%)** A satisfactory transcript with elements of the routine and predictable. There should be evidence of a basic understanding of the task in question. It should provide some more detailed information, discuss the choice of interview style and show the ability to converse and draw information from the interviewee beyond the basic/vital information - if rather shallow or under-developed. The quality of expression and writing should be acceptable.

**D (40-49%)** A passable transcript which shows an understanding of the task and contains the basic/vital information (who, where, when, topic, questions etc). The general impression may be of a rather poor effort, with weaknesses in conception or execution. It might also be the right mark for a short transcript that at least contains the basic information.

**E (0-39%)** A transcript with evident weaknesses in understanding. It might not contain basic or adequate information and dialogue. It might also be a very short and fragmentary sample with merit in what is presented but containing serious gaps.

**Final Project Report**

You will write a joint final project report with your group, and upload onto **ELMA** (see page 24). It should be between 4000 and 5000 words.

| Deadline, 12 noon, Thursday, 30th of March |

In assessing the final research report you submit, we will be looking for evidence of:

**TOPIC:**
- An original and practical research space and topic.

**CONTENT:**
- Quality field research and data – observation, participation, interviews, rapport etc.
- Recording and writing up of field notes.

**ANALYSIS:**
- The extent to which you analyse your data and pick out themes in order to go beyond plain description.

**COMPARISON:**
• Successful comparison with the literature including course readings and texts collected by yourself to do with your particular space and topic.

**PRESENTATION:**

• Clarity and organisation of writing and argument; use of diagrams and plans; references and bibliography.

**Peer Assessment**

A considerable emphasis is placed on peer assessment in this course. We shall mark the final report out of 100, and return copies of our comments to each student involved. However, we wish a component of this mark to reflect individual contributions to the overall effort.

On the front page of your final report, please put the exam numbers of all the students involved, your tutor’s name and your marks out of five for each student based on their contribution to the group effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution to Group Effort</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example:**

H. Potter 3
R. Weasley 1
H. Granger 5

**Suggested Criteria for Your Allocation of Marks**

Think about these categories of activity:

• **Responsibility:** attending meetings on time, or at all, keeping to agreements

• **Doing:** putting in time, “legwork”, conducting interviews, reading article suggested and/or researching other sources, note taking and keeping, checking and editing

• **Attitude:** listening and responding to others in the group, cooperating with and supporting others, doing your fair share of the work, not too much messing around…

• **Communication:** interpreting the reading and your fieldwork, contributing ideas, clarifying and articulating group impressions, care with language…

• **Planning:** initiating things, strategic thinking, organization, raising ethical or practical issues

Also, you might wish to consider contributions to different aspects of the work, for example:

• Preparing for group meetings and tutorials, pulling weight in meetings, contributing in tutorials, participating in fieldwork sessions, responsibility for writing up.
Ethics

You are undertaking a social research projects and these projects must be guided by and mindful of ethical considerations. To this end your group will be requested to complete the (new) online ethics review form prior to your tutorial in week 3 (wc 30/1/17). You will find a link to a copy of this form and some advice about the School of Social and Political Science ethics procedures here: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/research/ethics

You will note that the form consists of a number of YES/NO questions. Think about your answer and answer honestly. The main thing is to be reasonable and proportional. In theory any activity and research process has the potential to cause harm and distress (to yourself and/or others). The reality is that with most potential research projects and processes (for example visiting the zoo) the risk of causing harm and distress is very slight, and so you would answer NO to all questions. In some cases, however, the risk of causing harm and distress is considerably greater (for example observing people taking exams, where you may actually cause upset and distraction and effect exam performance). In these cases you should answer YES as appropriate. If you answer YES, however, this would require a level 2 ethics application. Given that this is not possible in the context of this course, a YES answer would require that your group rethink their proposed research idea and strategy.

Your group’s level 1 ethics application will be reviewed by your tutor in collaboration with the senior tutor and/or course convener. NOTE: your research CANNOT proceed unless your group have completed and submitted this form.

When in doubt ask your tutor and/or the course convener, but as a rough guideline be mindful of the following mostly negative prescriptions:

- Do not propose research that will involve peculiarly vulnerable people who may not be in situation to give free and informed consent.
- Try not propose research that relies overmuch on covert study. Certainly make sure the people you “interview” formally or informally understand that you are a student engaged in a research project. Informed consent can be trickier when it comes to (participant-) observation, but try your best to make people aware of your status as a researcher and the nature of your project. Certainly, any audio-recording or filming should NOT be done covertly.
- If you are engaged in “covert” observation these observations should be confined to people in public, doing things that they would be comfortable being visible and knowable in the public domain. So people waiting for buses is fine. The goings-on in your friend’s flat is, however, something that your group would need permission to research and write about (and you would need this permission from all the residents of the flat).
- Do not propose research that is about children. So the playground in the Meadows is impossible as a “space” for your proposed research. It is possible that children will be part of the social scene your group is studying (like the zoo for example). This is ok, so long as, again, this is a public space and you are not intruding into more private domains without explicit permission. But, on the whole, your research should not “focus” on children.
- Be careful in proposing research in organizational and institutional settings. Again, if these settings are clearly, openly and unambiguously public then it may be ok for your research to
proceed without the knowledge or permission of the institution (so the zoo could be ok, so long as you confine yourself to normal public activities – walking around looking at people looking at animals who are looking back etc.). In many situations, however, it may be inappropriate to proceed without the institution being aware of your presence as a researcher and your group’s research plans and having given permission for you to undertake your research on that basis. This may well be possible, especially if the place is small and the people are easy going (e.g. the local fish and chip shop, Lothian Cat Rescue), so don’t be shy to ask (nicely). Indeed, the “buy in” of the organization often greatly facilitates research. Of course, institutions which deal with more sensitive and potentially private matters both need to be asked and will likely say no. Certainly any research in NHS or social care sites is not possible. Banks will not be keen on you hanging out either.

- Do not put yourself into an unusually perilous situation, or in a situation where your presence as a researcher is potentially highly contentious and obnoxious (and remember you need to, as much as is possible, make explicit your presence as a researcher). So no (heroin) shooting galleries in Glasgow.

That’s it. For more information about ethics and anthropology please refer to ethical guidelines of that Association of Social Anthropologists: [http://www.theasa.org/ethics.shtml](http://www.theasa.org/ethics.shtml)

**Readings**

**Key readings** have been assigned to individual lectures and tutorials but you will also need to organize **further reading** around your projects and the tasks you will need to complete in order to pass the course. The readings in section (a) (About “Ethnography”) give you background on ethnography as a methods and mode of writing, fieldnotes, transcripts etc. The books listed in section (b) (On Space) will get you started with theoretical ideas for analysing your field material. We especially recommend the volume edited by Low & Lawrence-Zuñiga for this.

**(a) About “Ethnography”**


(b) On Space and How to Analyse Spaces


**Referencing and bibliography**

References and bibliography in your essay should follow the author-date system. For example, in the body of an essay:

- Single author’s quotation or idea referred to: (Smith 1989: 213)
- Two authors, more than one page: (Johnson & Margolin 1990: 245 - 247)
- Several authors: (Kennedy *et al* 1994: 156)
- Citation of another author’s work in a secondary text: (Baxter 1982 cited in Comaroff 1988: 16)

In your bibliography follow these guidelines:

For a book by one author:


For two authors, a chapter in a book:


For a journal article

Simpson, B. 1994. 'Bringing the "unclear" family into focus: divorce and re-marriage in contemporary Britain.' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 29: 831-851.

Long quotations (more than 4 lines) should be indented with no quotation marks; shorter quotations should be incorporated in the main text with single quotation marks.

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The Possibility of Publishing Your Study!

Last year, for the first time, some of the work undertaking by the students on this course was published as a special issue, entitled “Unfamiliar Edinburgh”, of the online journal the Unfamiliar. To read and enjoy this journal please see: http://journals.ed.ac.uk/unfamiliar

This year, thanks to a grant from the Principle’s Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS) we have decided to create our own online journal featuring the ethnographic research and writings of undergraduate students at the University of Edinburgh, including (and especially) the work being created for this course.

Not only will this journal feature student work, but it will also be student lead, in that all processes involved in the creation of this journal – from the solicitation of original work, to the reviewing of this work, through to the design and eventual dissemination of the journal – will be undertaken by an “editorial board” composed of undergraduate students, with input and support from teaching and information services staff at the School of Social and Political Science.

More news throughout the semester (this project is just starting), but keep this in mind and if you would like to see your research and writing into publication and/or if you would like to be more closely involved with the creation of the journal itself the opportunity to do so will present itself.
Appendix 1 – General Information

Students with Disabilities

The School welcomes disabled students with disabilities (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia) and is working to make all its courses as accessible as possible. If you have a disability special needs which means that you may require adjustments to be made to ensure access to lectures, tutorials or exams, or any other aspect of your studies, you can discuss these with your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor who will advise on the appropriate procedures.

You can also contact the Student Disability Service, based on the University of Edinburgh, Third Floor, Main Library, You can find their details as well as information on all of the support they can offer at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service

Learning Resources for Undergraduates

The Study Development Team at the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) provides resources and workshops aimed at helping all students to enhance their learning skills and develop effective study techniques. Resources and workshops cover a range of topics, such as managing your own learning, reading, note-making, essay and report writing, exam preparation and exam techniques.

The study development resources are housed on ‘LearnBetter’ (undergraduate), part of Learn, the University’s virtual learning environment. Follow the link from the IAD Study Development web page to enrol: www.ed.ac.uk/iad/undergraduates

Workshops are interactive: they will give you the chance to take part in activities, have discussions, exchange strategies, share ideas and ask questions. They are 90 minutes long and held on Wednesday afternoons at 1.30pm or 3.30pm. The schedule is available from the IAD Undergraduate web page (see above).

Workshops are open to all undergraduates but you need to book in advance, using the MyEd booking system. Each workshop opens for booking two weeks before the date of the workshop itself. If you book and then cannot attend, please cancel in advance through MyEd so that another student can have your place. (To be fair to all students, anyone who persistently books on workshops and fails to attend may be barred from signing up for future events).

Study Development Advisors are also available for an individual consultation if you have specific questions about your own approach to studying, working more effectively, strategies for improving your learning and your academic work. Please note, however, that Study Development Advisors are not subject specialists so they cannot comment on the content of your work. They also do not check or proof read students' work.

To make an appointment with a Study Development Advisor, email iad.study@ed.ac.uk

(For support with English Language, you should contact the English Language Teaching Centre).
**Tutorial Sign-Up**

You will be automatically assigned to a Tutorial group in semester 2. This allocation is done using Student Allocator a tool which will randomly assign you to a suitable tutorial group based on your timetable. The benefits of this system are that students will be able to instantly view their tutorial group on their personal timetable and timetable clashes will be more easily avoided.

Please check your timetable regularly well before week 1 to see which group you have been assigned. If you have any issues, please contact the Course Sectary.

If there is a timetable clash, either with other courses or extracircular commitments (work, childcare etc.)

Please note that there are limited spaces in tutorial groups and there will be little room for movement. Any student requesting to be moved tutorial groups must have a valid reason for doing so.

**Discussing Sensitive Topics**

The discipline of Social Anthropology addresses a number of topics that some might find sensitive or, in some cases, distressing. You should read this Course Guide carefully and if there are any topics that you may feel distressed by you should seek advice from the course convenor and/or your Personal Tutor.

For more general issues you may consider seeking the advice of the Student Counselling Service, http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling

**External Examiner**

The External Examiner for Years 1 and 2 of the Social Anthropology programme is: Dr Adam Reed, University of St Andrews.

**Appendix 2 - Course Work Submission and Penalties**

**Penalties that can be applied to your work and how to avoid them.**

There are three types of penalties that can be applied to your course work and these are listed below. Students **must** read the full description on each of these at: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/coursework_penalties

Make sure you are aware of each of these penalties and know how to avoid them. Students are responsible for taking the time to read guidance and for ensuring their coursework submissions comply with guidance.

- Incorrect submission Penalty
When a piece of coursework is submitted to our Electronic Submission System (ELMA) that does not comply with our submission guidance (wrong format, incorrect document, no cover sheet etc.) a penalty of 5 marks will be applied to students’ work.

- **Lateness Penalty**

  If you miss the submission deadline for any piece of assessed work 5 marks will be deducted for each calendar day that work is late, up to a maximum of seven calendar days (35 marks). Thereafter, a mark of zero will be recorded. There is no grace period for lateness and penalties begin to apply immediately following the deadline.

- **Word Count Penalty**

  The penalty for excessive word length in coursework is one mark deducted for each additional 20 words over the limit.

  Word limits vary across subject areas and submissions, so check your course handbook. Make sure you know what is and what is not included in the word count. Again, check the course handbook for this information.

  You will not be penalised for submitting work below the word limit. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

**ELMA: Submission and Return of Coursework**

Coursework is submitted online using our electronic submission system, ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy of your work.

Marked coursework, grades and feedback will be returned to you via ELMA. You will not receive a paper copy of your marked coursework or feedback.

For details of how to submit your coursework to ELMA, please see our webpages here. Remember, there is a 5 mark incorrect submission penalty, so read the guidance carefully and follow it to avoid receiving this.

**Extensions: New policy-applicable for years 1 -4**

From September 2016, there will be a new extensions policy that applies to all courses in the school from years one to four.

If you have a good reason for not meeting a coursework deadline, you may request an extension. Before you request an extension, make sure you have read all the guidance on our webpages and take note of the key points below. You will also be able to access the online extension request form through our webpages.

- Extensions are granted for 7 calendar days.
- Extension requests must be submitted no later than 24 hours before the coursework deadline.
• If you miss the deadline for requesting an extension for a valid reason, you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties for late submission. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.

• If you have a valid reason and require an extension of more than 7 calendar days, you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties for late submission. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.

• If you have a Learning Profile from the Disability Service allowing you potential for flexibility over deadlines, you must still make an extension request for this to be taken into account.

Plagiarism Guidance for Students: Avoiding Plagiarism

Material you submit for assessment, such as your essays, must be your own work. You can, and should, draw upon published work, ideas from lectures and class discussions, and (if appropriate) even upon discussions with other students, but you must always make clear that you are doing so. **Passing off anyone else’s work** (including another student’s work or material from the Web or a published author) **as your own is plagiarism** and will be punished severely.

When you upload your work to ELMA you will be asked to check a box to confirm the work is your own. All submissions will be run through ‘Turnitin’, our plagiarism detection software. Turnitin compares every essay against a constantly-updated database, which highlights all plagiarised work. Assessed work that contains plagiarised material will be awarded a mark of zero, and serious cases of plagiarism will also be reported to the College Academic Misconduct officer. In either case, the actions taken will be noted permanently on the student's record. **For further details on plagiarism see the Academic Services’ website:**

http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/students/undergraduate/discipline/plagiarism

Data Protection Guidance for Students

In most circumstances, students are responsible for ensuring that their work with information about living, identifiable individuals complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The document, **Personal Data Processed by Students**, provides an explanation of why this is the case. It can be found, with advice on data protection compliance and ethical best practice in the handling of information about living, identifiable individuals, on the Records Management section of the University website at:

http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/records-management-section/data-protection/guidance-policies/dpforstudents