University of Edinburgh:
School of Social and Political Science

SOCIOLOGY 2b (SCIL08013) 2015-2016
Researching Social Life

Mondays & Thursdays: 14:10-15:00
Teviot Lecture Theatre
Doorway 5, Old Medical School
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Welcome to Sociology 2b!

In this course we introduce the various ways that sociologists do their research, looking critically at the various ways sociological evidence can be produced. We do this in the context of in-depth study of some key areas of sociological interest in a context of globalization: higher education, families, migration, health interventions and finance. The course aims to deepen students’ understanding of these substantive fields, while at the same time using them to exemplify how research is carried out, as well as identifying key concepts and debates that relate to the research process. The course will also help you evaluate evidence you encounter in non-academic sources such as politics and the media.

The course builds on some of what has been covered in Sociology 1a, 1b, and/or 2a and acts as a preparation for Sociology Honours, as well as helping students to prepare for doing their own research at Honours level. It also serves as a course complete in itself for those who will not be taking any more Sociology undergraduate courses in Edinburgh.

Please refer to this Handbook regularly—it contains all the essential information about the organization of the course. Before asking the course secretary or your tutors about something, please check whether it is covered in this Handbook. Also please check the course Learn site regularly for information.

1. Course outline

Week 1: Course Introduction (Sophia Woodman)

Unit 1, Weeks 2-3: Qualitative research on globalizing higher education (Sophia Woodman)

Unit 2, Weeks 3-6: Researching families using surveys (Gil Viry and Alex Janus)

Unit 3: Weeks 7-10: Researching the global and transnational (Donald Mackenzie and Roger Jeffery)

2. Course organization

2.1 Lectures

These take place from 14:10-15:00, Mondays and Thursdays in weeks 1-11 of Semester 2. There are no lectures in week 6, Innovative Learning Week (February 15-19). Lectures take place in Teviot Lecture Theatre in the Old Medical School. Please be seated by 14:10 promptly so we can make best use of limited lecture time.

2.2 Tutorials

You are required to attend all tutorials as a matter of University policy, and to let your tutor know whenever you have good reason (e.g. illness) for failing to attend. Tutorial attendance and the prompt submission of coursework are requirements for all students. Please note that pressure due to work and problems of time management are not considered acceptable
reasons for not attending tutorials or not submitting work on time.

Tutorials are an essential part of this course (see section 10 for more details, including specific tutorial activities and readings). Tutorial Sign Up will be done online using Learn. See Appendix 3 for full instructions on how to do this. You must sign up for a tutorial by Friday 15 January (the end of Week 1) or you will be randomly assigned to a group.

Tutorials will be held weekly, in weeks 2-11. There are no tutorials in Innovative Learning Week (February 15-19).

2.2 Discussing sensitive topics

The discipline of Sociology addresses a number of topics that some might find sensitive or, in some cases, distressing. You should read this handbook carefully and if there are any topics that you may feel distressed by you should seek advice from the course organiser and/or your Personal Tutor. We also recommend that you review the lecture outlines (often in the form of PowerPoint slides) that are uploaded to Learn at least 24 hours before each lecture, to check that there are no specific issues or examples that might cause you concern.

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

2.3 Accessing course Information

All important class information will be announced via e-mail, so it is also important that you check your university e-mail account regularly. A range of information and course material, including PowerPoint presentations and readings, will be posted on Learn.

Links to all readings are provided on a course Resource List: http://resourcelists.ed.ac.uk/lists/9577905E-7B1C-6F36-77F2-982DBF3D6D0F.html

2.4 Student representation

Sociology welcomes student input into the management of the course and its assessment and runs a Staff-Student Liaison Committee on which Sociology 2b is entitled to two representatives. A committee made up of one representative from each tutorial group will choose these representatives, and this will be arranged during the first half of the Semester. This committee will also have a chance to discuss issues and problems with the course organiser who will provide feedback on the action that will be taken. Any problems with the course should first be raised with your tutor or with the course organiser, Sophia Woodman. We will also ask you to fill in an overall assessment form at the end of the course.

2.5 Sociology 2b Prize

This year we will be offering a cash prize and certificate to the student who gains the highest mark in Sociology 2b, to celebrate students’ achievements on the course. The Gita Sen Award is named in honour of a leading feminist thinker who was awarded an Honorary Doctorate here in 2014. The award will also appear on the student’s academic record.
3. Course team

Course organizer:

Sophia Woodman
Room 3.09, 18 Buccleuch Place, tel: 0131-651-4745
e-mail: sophia.woodman@ed.ac.uk
Guidance & Feedback hours: Thursdays 11.00-13.00

Lecturers:

Alex Janus
Room 6.20, Chrystal Macmillan Building, tel: 0131-651-3965
e-mail: alex.janus@ed.ac.uk
Guidance & Feedback hours: Fridays 9.00-11.00

Roger Jeffery
22a Buccleuch Place, tel: 0131-650-3976
e-mail: r.jeffery@ed.ac.uk
Guidance & Feedback hours: by appointment

Donald Mackenzie
Room 6.26, Chrystal Macmillan Building, tel: 0131-650-3980
e-mail: DonaldMacKenziePA@ed.ac.uk
Guidance & Feedback hours: Mondays 14.30-16.30 (except on 22 February and 21 March, when these will be on Tuesdays 15:00-17:00)

Gil Viry
Room 3.09, 18 Buccleuch Place, tel: 0131-651-5768
e-mail: gil.viry@ed.ac.uk
Guidance & Feedback hours: Tuesdays 10:30-12:30

Senior tutor:

Martin Booker
e-mail: m.booker@sms.ed.ac.uk

Course secretary:

Shazia Leonard
UTO, Room G04/05, Chrystal Macmillan Building, tel: 0131-650-4457
e-mail: Shazia.Leonard@ed.ac.uk

4. Course aims and objectives

Overall aims of this course are:

- To provide continuity and contrast with the material taught in Sociology 1a, 1b and 2a, and particularly to develop knowledge of the research process;
- To provide a basis for entry to Honours in Sociology, through topics and research approaches that students might encounter in further study, and to prepare students for doing research in their Honours programme;
• To provide a practical and stimulating stand-alone course on research design in a global context for students not intending to pursue Honours Sociology.

**Learning objectives**

By the end of the course students should:

- Understand the purpose and value of sociological research for academic knowledge and public policies, and engage with key debates in sociological research about research design, methods and ethics;
- Be able to identify a range of research approaches and methods that can be applied to an issue or problem, and their strengths and weaknesses;
- Have learned how knowledge and debates about some key sociological topics in local, national and global contexts are informed by various forms of research;
- Be able to find and evaluate research evidence in relation to specific topics or problems, and discuss and design solutions to research problems; and
- Have gained practical experience of implementing some research methods and be able to identify strengths and weaknesses of how they and their peers carried them out.

5. Readings and use of the Library

Links to all readings for this course are available at the following link:
http://resourcelists.ed.ac.uk/lists/9577905E-7B1C-6F36-77F2-982DBF3D6D0F.html

You can find additional readings through the Library’s one-stop search engine:
http://discovered.ed.ac.uk

This resource provides links to e-journals and books, as well as some other materials. Please note that for some e-books there are limits on downloading, printing, and/or how many users may view the content simultaneously, so if you have difficulty accessing something, try again later. Let us know if you have tried to access something several times and failed, or check with the Library staff.

6. Assessment

For general guidelines, see
http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/year_1_2/assessment_and_regs/coursework_requirements

The assessment for this course is based on three short assignments and one research proposal.

- **In order to pass** Sociology 2b you must achieve an overall mark of at least **40%** (this mark is based on a weighted combination of grades for all assignments). However, you must receive a pass mark on the research proposal to pass the course overall.

- **In order to proceed automatically to Honours Sociology**, students have to achieve a pass mark of at least **50%** in **BOTH** Sociology 2a and 2b. For more details see:
http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/year_1_2/progression_toHonours
Sociology uses the University's extended common marking scheme (please see Appendix 5).

Your final mark will be made up of the following components:

- Two practical exercises, each worth 20%
- An outline of your research proposal, worth 15%
- A research proposal, worth 40%
- Incorporating feedback in your research proposal, worth 5%

The most common cause of failure is that students do not complete one or both of the assignments. All students who fail the course (an overall grade below 40%) will be given the opportunity to re-sit. Students with an overall grade below 40% who have failed the three short assignments (including non-submission) but passed the research proposal will be required to submit an essay, on a topic to related to the course material. Students with an overall grade below 40% who have passed the short assignments but failed the research proposal (including non-submission) will be required to re-submit a research proposal, normally on a different topic to that submitted for the first attempt. Students who fail (or do not submit) both components of assessment are required only to re-submit a research proposal. Please note that unless there are special circumstances that the exam board judges to merit the re-submission of failed assignments as ‘first sit’, the overall course grade on re-sit will not automatically entitle students to progress to Honours without an appeal. Note also that students who pass the course with a grade below 50 are not entitled to re-sit either assessment to improve their overall grade.

If you think you need further general help with your studies, the Institute of Academic Development provides support for students’ learning and study skills. For further information see Appendix 6.

6.1 Assignments

Topics, recommended readings, further guidance for each assignment and submission dates are provided in section 8 of this Handbook. Please also see the week-by-week list of tutorials and assignments in section 10 that indicates what you need to do and when. Reminders of assignment due dates are also provided in the week by week outline in section 7.

If you are not happy with your writing technique, refresh your memory about the advice in the Sociology 1 Handbooks, or look at one of the following:


In Sociology 2b we use a structured form (a copy is provided in Appendix 4 at the end of this manual) to help us with the assessment of your assignments, and to ensure that you receive feedback on a full range of aspects of your writing.

6.2 Monitoring attendance and engagement

It is the policy of the University as well as good educational practice to monitor the engagement and attendance of all our students on all our programmes. This provides a positive opportunity for us to identify and help those of you who might be having problems of one kind or another, or who might need additional support.
6.3 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 information, help and advice on submitting coursework and accessing feedback, please see the ELMA wiki at https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SPSITWiki/ELMA. Further detailed guidance on the essay deadline and a link to the wiki and submission page will be available on the course Learn page. The wiki is the primary source of information on how to submit your work correctly and provides advice on approved file formats, uploading cover sheets and how to name your files correctly.

When you submit your work electronically, you will be asked to tick a box confirming that your work complies with university regulations on plagiarism. This confirms that the work you have submitted is your own.

To ensure your course work is submitted successfully, students should aim to upload their submissions at least 1 hour before the deadline.

Occasionally, there can be technical problems with a submission. We request that you monitor your university student email account in the 48 hours following the deadline for submitting your work. If there are any problems with your submission the course secretary will email you at this stage. If you do not respond promptly if asked to resubmit your work then you may incur lateness penalties (see 6.4. below).

Students are responsible for ensuring they have sufficient internet access and connection to submit their coursework electronically. Technical difficulties and poor internet connection are not acceptable reasons for submitting work late.

We undertake to return all coursework within 3 weeks of submission. This time is needed for marking, moderation, second marking and input of results. If there are any unanticipated delays, it is the course organiser’s responsibility to inform you of the reasons.

All coursework is assessed anonymously to ensure fairness: to facilitate this process put your Examination number (on your student card), not your name or student number, on your coursework or cover sheet.

6.4 The Operation of Lateness Penalties

Management of deadlines and timely submission of all assessed items (coursework, essays, project reports, etc.) is a vitally important responsibility in your university career. Unexcused lateness will mean your work is subject to penalties and will therefore have an adverse effect on your final grade. 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 five calendar days (25 marks). Work that is submitted more than five days late will not be accepted and will receive a mark of zero. There is no grace period for lateness and penalties begin to apply immediately following the deadline. For example, if the deadline is Tuesday at 12 noon, work submitted on Tuesday at any time after 12 noon will be marked as one day late, work submitted at any time after 12 noon on Wednesday will be marked as two days late, and so on.
6.5 Extension policy

If you have good reason for not meeting a coursework deadline, you may request an extension from either your tutor (for extensions of up to five calendar days) or the course organiser (for extensions of six or more calendar days), normally before the deadline. Any requests submitted after the deadline may still be considered by the course organiser if there have been extenuating circumstances. A good reason is illness, or serious personal circumstances, but not pressure of work, poor time management, or computer problems. Your tutor/course organiser must inform the course secretary in writing about the extension, for which supporting evidence may be requested. Work that is submitted late without your tutor’s or course organiser’s permission (or without a medical certificate or other supporting evidence) will be subject to lateness penalties.

6.6 Plagiarism guidance for students

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. ELMA automatically runs all submissions through ‘Turnitin’, our plagiarism detection software, and 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

6.7 Referencing in coursework

The recommended style for referencing is that used by the journal of the British Sociological Association, Sociology. Please consult with this journal (available online through the university’s e-journal service) to see how footnoting and referencing are done. In the bibliography, you should give enough information so that readers can verify for themselves the accuracy of both the information used and individual(s) referenced. Even if you are using e-Journals or websites, you should give full details. This means the names of all the authors, the date of publication (and which edition, if several have been produced), and the title of the article or book. If you refer to an article, give the journal title, volume number and pages; if you refer to a book, give the publisher and place of publication. If you are not using this system (or an equivalent one) your essay will lose marks. See Appendix 1 for a detailed guide to referencing.
6.8 Avoiding offensive and discriminatory language

The language we use to write about social life can hide some very insidious assumptions: e.g. ‘the working class’ sometimes actually means ‘the white, male, English working class’. The British Sociological Association has published useful guidelines on the way language can easily reflect racist and sexist views of the world (see the relevant documents on language under the Resources heading here: http://www.britsoc.co.uk/about/equality.aspx). The gist of our advice is that you should never use male nouns and pronouns when you are referring to people of both sexes (use a plural ‘they’, ‘their’ or think of a different way to phrase your argument; or use ‘s/he’, ‘his/her’). You should also never use language that suggests that human races exist with distinct biologies, nor language which suggests that people disabled in some way are less than full members of society. You should also check the geographical dimension: for example is your source based on data from Britain, or only from England & Wales? Sensitivity to such issues of context is especially important given the global and transnational focus of this course.

6.9 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
7. Weekly outline of the course

—WEEK 1—

Monday 11 January: Course Introduction (Sophia Woodman)

In this introductory lecture, we will review the main activities and assignments in this course and how they fit together, showing what we hope you will get out of the course as a whole, and what we expect from you. There will be a quiz, ‘What you know about research methods’, to provide us with some baseline information about you and what you bring to the course. We will draw on your answers to identify some of the key learning objectives for the course.

Prior to this session, please set up an account on the University’s electronic voting system, Top Hat. This will enable you to answer the quiz questions using your mobile phone, tablet or computer, and to pose written questions during lectures. For instructions on how to register, see: http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/learning-technology/electronic-voting-system/students/account

For an introduction to some of the key issues and dimensions of sociological research, we suggest you start reading some of the general texts below, especially the early chapters. There are multiple copies of these books in the Main Library, and many are available as e-books. If you can’t access the latest editions, older editions are usually acceptable substitutes. The White book, Developing Research Questions, is short and to the point and will be most helpful in beginning to develop your own question for the final assignment. The Williams book will be particularly helpful, given that it focuses on research in a global context.

Essential introductory reading


Supplementary reading

You may want to consult some of the following books, depending on what research proposal topic you choose, and what methods you plan to deploy in your proposal, but you are certainly not expected to read them all!

Thursday 14 January: Research design, research questions and ethics in research
(Sophia Woodman)

This lecture will focus on two main topics: overall research design and the kind of research questions that can be answered by sociological research; and the principles of ethical research. Different kinds of initial questions require different kinds of evidence in order to be answered, and this means choosing an appropriate overall design for the research, and the use of research methods that can answer the question(s) posed. The lecture will also explore what are the ethical responsibilities of those who carry out research on social life, and why ethics is important in research.

Essential reading
As well as beginning reading among the more general texts listed under Monday’s lecture, please read the following texts for this class:


Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List
Unit 1: Qualitative research on globalizing higher education

This unit examines forms of qualitative research that may be used to study the university as a substantive topic. It begins by looking at how higher education is changing as a result of globalization, and what researchers have been asking about these processes and their effects. It focuses on two main modes for studying the university: qualitative interviews and ethnographic observation, and asks what we can learn about higher education, and particularly the experience of students, using these methods. It also looks at these methods as techniques for exploring aspects of social life, and considers what it takes to become skilful in using them.

Monday 18 January: What questions are being asked about globalizing higher education? (Sophia Woodman)

What kinds of questions are researchers asking about higher education in an age of globalization? We will continue our discussion of research questions and research design with a focus on higher education, considering what have been some of the main concerns of sociological approaches to this topic and what kinds of research methods are often used. We will explore the new questions that are arising as the character of universities and those attending and teaching in them changes as a consequence of global processes.

Essential reading

Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

Thursday 21 January: Selection and selectivity: how can we think about choice in higher education? (Sophia Woodman)

Young people finishing school face all sorts of choices about their future, and also the challenge of being selected for the options they choose. How can we think about these choices and what matters for making them? In this lecture we'll look at the changing context for university choice, in the UK and beyond. We'll also think about interviews and focus groups as methods for exploring the processes of making choices related to higher education.

Essential reading

Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

---WEEK 3---

Monday 25 January: Observing ourselves: higher education as daily life (Sophia Woodman)

Universities are complex institutions, and one approach to finding out how they really work (as opposed to what people say about how they ought to work) is participant observation, also known as ethnography. In this session, we’ll look at what one might learn from ethnographic research on the university, and consider some ways one might go about doing such research. We’ll also discuss potential problems with this method, such as the researcher’s status as insider or outsider, and how this might shape the findings of the research. We’ll conclude by thinking about the value of ethnographic research, given that it depends so significantly on personal observations and connections.

Essential reading
• Ethnography of the University Initiative: http://www.eui.illinois.edu/

Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List
But see in particular Erving Goffman, On Fieldwork, in Paul Atkinson and Sarah Delamont (Eds.), Sage Qualitative Research Methods, Volume One (2011) (e-book). This is based on a lecture Goffman delivered in 1974 on fieldwork methods that was tape-recorded and subsequently published. It’s conversational in style and represents a kind of ‘how to do it’ narrative by a master of sociological research.

Unit 2: Researching families using surveys

This unit is intended to introduce you to survey research design in the field of family sociology. The social survey, whether based upon interviewing or the use of self-completion questionnaires, is one of the major research methods available to sociologists. It is a powerful tool to gather large amounts of data in a standardised way, supporting broad generalisation of results. Survey methods also enable researchers to determine the degree of confidence in the observed findings through reliability and validity measures and statistical significance.
The unit will discuss the first stages of the survey research process using examples of sociological studies in the field of families. You will learn what kind of research questions you can address using survey methods and how to design and collect survey data. In combination with the tutorials, the unit will have a practical focus. Students will be asked to develop their own research question and questionnaire on a survey research topic. Whether the students will use a survey research design or not, this exercise will help them when writing their final research proposal.

**Thursday 28 January: Survey research on families** (Gil Viry)

This session will introduce you to some general aspects of survey research design on families. We will present what are the main stages of survey research and what is specific to family research. We will briefly discuss some major family theories and some examples of how to conceptualise families in a sociological perspective. Researchers studying families have developed well-established survey methods to address particular research questions on families and households. We will use some key survey findings as a way of discussing critically the strengths and weaknesses of standard household surveys in the sociological understanding of families in contemporary societies.

**Essential reading**

**Supplementary reading**
- NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

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**Monday 1 February: Global families as networks** (Gil Viry)

In this session, we will discuss the network approach as a way to explore families in globalised societies. This approach aims to analyse the complex set of family relationships that matter rather than single relationships (e.g. the adult-child bond) or pre-defined forms of families (e.g. the household). The lecture will discuss some survey designs using this family network approach and the kind of research questions they can address.

**Essential reading**
**Supplementary reading**

NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List.

**Thursday 4 February: Designing questionnaires for family research** (Gil Viry)

This session will focus on questionnaire design and how to measure family concepts using survey methods. The different levels of measurement and how to use some existing scales and indices will be presented. The lecture will discuss the limitations of survey methods and the importance of mixed methods to better understand contemporary families.

**Essential reading**


**Supplementary reading**

For readable and comprehensive reviews of the ‘do’s’ and ‘don’ts’ of questionnaire design, see either:


**Supplementary reading**

Other supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List.

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**—WEEK 5—**

**Monday 8 February: Statistical inference from samples to populations** (Alex Janus)

Even though social scientists employing quantitative methods in their research use information on large numbers of individuals, they usually study only part of a larger group of interest because of the costs in time and money involved. During this lecture, we discuss the concepts and procedures that researchers use to make informed guesses about a larger group they want to know something about based on only part of that larger group.

**Essential reading**


Reminder: research exercise 1 due at noon today!
Thursday 11 February: Causality (Alex Janus)

Social scientists are often interested in causal questions, such as: ‘Which factors explain why women, on average, have lower wages than men?’ In this lecture, we discuss different conceptualizations of causality. We also discuss different strategies that investigators use for establishing causality in experiments as well as in observational studies when the investigator has no control over which subjects are assigned to a ‘treatment’. Finally, we discuss some useful ways of diagramming causal relationships among variables.

Essential reading

Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

—WEEK 6—

No class, ILW

—WEEK 7—

Unit 3: Researching the global and transnational

Monday 22 February: Introduction to researching the global and transnational (Donald MacKenzie)

This lecture introduces the section, beginning with a quintessential global phenomenon: global care chains, in which migrants care for children, elderly people, etc in the Global North, while their own children remain in their countries of origin in the Global South, being cared for by other people, sometimes at the cost of anguish for both child and parent. The lecture also discusses what it means to research global and transnational phenomena. This session begins the discussion of the research proposal which in Sociology 2b replaces a conventional exam, so please read that section of the Handbook before the lecture, and come with your questions. There will be an opportunity to ask them at the end of the session.

Essential reading

Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

Thursday 25 February: How to write a research proposal (Donald MacKenzie)

This lecture outlines the standard structure of a research proposal (such as the one you will need to submit), and begins the discussion of the skills involved in constructing an effective proposal. We will also begin our examination of the wide range of factors that can shape the feasibility of research in the real world.

Essential reading

Supplementary reading
• Chapter 8 of Punch’s book (cited above) contains six examples of research proposals. While these are proposals for postgraduate work, and more elaborate than needed in Sociology 2b, they are still worth reading. Unfortunately, copyright restrictions mean we cannot make that chapter available electronically, but there are six copies of the book in the HUB reserve, four in HUB short loan, and two on the open shelves. H62 Pun.
• Other supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

—WEEK 8—

Monday 29 February: Multi-sited, multi-methods research on migration (Roger Jeffery)

A key feature of ‘the global’ is the migration of individuals and social groups from one place to another – or to several ‘others’—and this poses problems for standard research strategies. Many of these dealt with migrants in their new settings: the ‘race relations’ literature, for example. But increasingly these accounts have become inadequate because they ‘frame’ the migrant only in the receiving society, and fail to take seriously the migrants’ life worlds and the structural constraints on their agency – which almost inevitably cut across national boundaries. Ethnography – whether seen as part of anthropological or sociological research – is increasingly aware of these issues, and this lecture will describe some ways in which they can be addressed in research designs.

Essential reading
• Marcus, George E. (1995). Ethnography in/of the world system: the emergence of multi-sited ethnography. Annual review of anthropology, 95-117 (e-journal). This is the classic piece introducing the notion of multi-sited ethnography. Although written for an anthropological audience, it has much wider relevance.
Thursday 3 March 2016: Turning ‘social problems’ into researchable sociological issues: Case study on ‘brain drain’ (Roger Jeffery)

One aspect of global migration patterns is often seen as a social problem – the ‘brain drain’. But, as Mills and others have argued, as sociologists we should not easily accept current understandings of social problems without addressing whose values according to which these are social problems, and the structural basis for behaviours constructed as a ‘problem’. This lecture will use the case of the ‘brain drain’ as a way of addressing a common problem in research proposals – how to move beyond the description of an issue to find a sociological approach to understanding what is happening behind the immediately observable.

Essential reading


Supplementary reading

NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

---WEEK 9---

Monday 7 March 2016: Issues of sampling frames and sample selection: Case study on out-sourced clinical trials (Roger Jeffery)

It is important when writing a research proposal to demonstrate awareness of things that could go wrong with the research process, and to have plans to deal with them. The experience of a recent research project will be used to illuminate what kinds of responses are available when faced with blocks to an original research plan. The project dealt with the sizeable clinical trials ‘industry’ that has emerged in South Asia – and predominantly in India – only since 2005. But there are only incomplete listings of these trials, and of those who run them. What’s more, concerns about the loss of intellectual property limit people’s willingness to open their activities to outside scrutiny. The lecture will discuss how obstacles such as these can be overcome.

Essential reading

  This chapter describes why trials are being out-sourced, and the book’s Conclusion offers an overview of the arguments.

Supplementary reading

NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List
Thursday 10 March: Confronting ethical issues in research proposals: NGO-led AIDS prevention programmes (Roger Jeffery)

Many research projects raise issues of research ethics, and these need to be discussed in research proposals. This lecture will discuss possible solutions to ethical challenges that arise when trying to research with vulnerable people. People living with HIV/AIDS have been particularly prominent in demanding a role in designing and implementing research that affects them. The case study will consider research on ‘peer educators’ who work in AIDS control programmes across the world.

Essential reading

Supplementary readings
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

—WEEK 10—

Monday 14 March 2015: Producing “global citizens” (Sophia Woodman)

Given the increasingly dense global connections of some higher education institutions, reflected in their staff and student bodies, are we seeing convergence in what is taught and how they conceive of the value of education? What kinds of differences are observable, and what do they tell us about the impact of the global and national on universities and what they teach? What can we find out about these questions from documentary sources? In this lecture, we will consider documents as sources of data for global research, and think about strategies for finding and using textual materials. Most research relies to some extent on textual sources—whether as background, or as sources of data. We will briefly review different approaches to using documents, and address issues that you might consider in using documents as a source in your research proposal.

Essential reading

Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List
Thursday 17 March 2015: International universities as global meeting places? (Sophia Woodman)

In this lecture we look at unevenness of the globalization of universities, looking at two examples of what this means in practice—in Australia and China. We will look at ways of studying the global from the perspective of the local, and think about how our own biography and concerns shape our perspective on the questions we ask and the choices we make in research. We’ll consider the issue of reflexivity—researchers being aware of how their own experience shapes the research. We’ll also think about the politics of making choices in research about what to look at, what is relevant, and what questions are of interest. We’ll examine how central concepts we use in our research may look very different when seen from another’s perspective.

Essential reading

Supplementary reading
NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

---WEEK 11---

Monday 21 March 2015: Where do you find the global, and how do you trace it? (Donald MacKenzie)

The final week of this course examines exciting new ways in which sociologists are starting to conceptualise and research global and transnational phenomena. This lecture is relevant not just to those who have chosen to do their research proposal on a microstructure or global assemblage, because it examines two particular aspects of many (perhaps all) global/transnational phenomena. The first is that, although they stretch over huge geographic distances, some of the human interactions involve only small numbers of people and are in a sense quite 'intimate'. The second is that (because of the physical distances involved in global/transnational phenomena), those phenomena typically involve technologies. This lecture begins a discussion, continued in the next lecture, of how the traditional toolkit of sociological ideas and research methods needs to be supplemented to be able adequately to understand these aspects of global/transnational phenomena.

Essential reading
This is the article in which Knorr Cetina first developed the idea of 'global microstructure', which is defined on p. 907.


**Supplementary reading**

NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List

Reminder: research proposal outline due at noon today!

**Thursday 24 March 2015: Digital research, web ethnography and the ‘dark web’**

(Donald MacKenzie)

Many of today’s global phenomena are made possible by electronic communication, in particular electronic mail, the worldwide web and social media. This generates huge quantities of potential data, conveniently already digitized, and thus facilitates innovative research methods, while simultaneously challenging traditional techniques such as ethnography (what is the ethnographer to observe?). This lecture will discuss how web-based methods can supplement more traditional research techniques, and will end with an interview with Angus Bancroft on the particular challenges of researching the ‘dark web’ (used, for example, for buying and selling illegal drugs).

**Essential reading**


**Supplementary reading**

NB: All supplementary readings are available on the course Resource List
8. Course assignments

See section 6 above for guidance on submission procedures (6.3), lateness penalties (6.4) and other general issues relating to the submission of these assignments. Deadlines for submission and for return of feedback are outlined in the table below, details of assignments follow.

Overview of deadlines for assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Submission date (12 noon)</th>
<th>Return of feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research exercise 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>08/02/2016</td>
<td>29/02/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research exercise 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29/02/2016</td>
<td>21/03/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research proposal outline</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21/03/2016</td>
<td>11/04/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporating feedback exercise</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21/04/2016</td>
<td>12/05/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research proposal</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>21/04/2016</td>
<td>12/05/2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The components of assessment for this course are as follows:

a. Two practical research exercises, each worth 20%

Research exercise 1: Interview and reflection

Due 8 February at 12 noon

Based on an interview guide (list of questions/themes) developed following a tutorial discussion, you will will conduct a short interview of approximately 30 minutes with a family member, friend or another student. You may choose one of the following as the subject for your interview:

a. An aspect of experience of higher education in a global context (based on questions on the sociology of global higher education discussed in lectures); or

b. An issue relevant to the question you have chosen to address in your research proposal.

You can record the interview, or take detailed notes while conducting the interview (preferably the former). You should transcribe the interview and analyse your transcript, and then write up a few paragraphs (not more than one page) on the main findings from your
interview and on what you learned about interviewing from conducting it. You may also reflect on how you might revise the interview questions based on this experience. You will bring 2 copies of your written findings and original and revised interview questions to the tutorial for discussion and get feedback from your peers. (Guidelines will be provided in the tutorial group to elicit peer feedback on specific areas.)

For the written portion of the assignment, you will submit your revised interview guide, your findings and reflections on the interview exercise, including what you learned from the peer feedback (500-750 words – questions, references and title not included). You should identify one specific point on which you’d most like feedback from the tutor. Feedback will focus primarily on that point.

Research exercise 2: Survey questions
Due 29 February at 12 noon

For this assignment, you will design 10 questions for a self-administered questionnaire (sent out by post or web-based) on a research topic among those suggested for the final research proposal. We encourage you to choose the same topic as for the previous assignment on interview methods and the one you are going to choose for the final research proposal. Please specify which topic your questionnaire relates to.

Questions should be specified as open- or closed-ended, with response categories included for the latter type of questions. The levels of measurement (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio) should also be indicated. You should bring 2 copies of your survey questions to your tutorial group in week 7 and try them out on each other, and you will receive peer feedback on your questions. (Guidelines will be provided in the tutorial group to elicit peer feedback on specific areas.)

You will then submit your final 10 questions, along with a few written paragraphs (500-750 words – questions, references and title not included) on (1) what research question the questionnaire aims to address (this is the question you designed for the exercise assigned in the lecture in the previous week); (2) what concepts the questionnaire measures and what indicators it uses, (3) how you revised the questions in the light of the trial and feedback from your peers and what you learned about good survey questions. You should identify one specific point on which you’d most like feedback from the tutor. Feedback will focus primarily on that point.

b. Research proposal outline, worth 15%
Due 21 March at noon

You will write a one-page outline of your research proposal based on answers to the following questions: What is this research about? What is the research question or problem the research addresses? What method(s) will you use to do this research? Why is this the best method for researching your question? What elements of the context for this research will be most challenging, and how will you address them? In addition to the one page outline, you should include a preliminary list of references on the topic you have chosen. See tutorial readings for links to useful readings on how to create an effective outline for your proposal.

You should bring 2 copies of the draft of your outline to your tutorial in week 10, and you will
receive peer feedback on your outline from fellow students in your tutorial group. (Guidelines will be provided to elicit peer feedback on specific areas.) You will then revise your outline and submit it. Outlines should be no longer than two pages (approximately 750-1000 words) excluding bibliography. You should identify one or two specific points that you think are weak in your proposal, and on which you’d most like feedback from the tutor. Feedback from tutors will focus primarily on the areas you’ve identified.

c. **Incorporating feedback exercise**, worth 5%

Due 21 April at noon

You should append the feedback you received on your research proposal outline to your research proposal (see below), and write a few sentences or a series of bullet points on how you addressed this feedback in your final proposal. This reflection is not counted in the word count for the research proposal. Your reflection could be to say that you changed your original idea based on the feedback you received, but please explain why.

d. **Research proposal**, worth 40%

Due 21 April at noon

You will write a 2,000 word sociological research proposal to investigate one of the following:

a. A global ‘care chain’;
b. A transnational migrant group;
c. A global social movement or a global NGO (non-governmental organisation) linked to such a movement;
d. A global new religious movement;
e. A global intervention on health or education;
f. A global microstructure or global assemblage; or
g. A transnational network related to family or education.

Try to make your proposed research not merely descriptive: it should seek to investigate the social processes at work and the consequences of those processes. (In the case of a transnational migrant group, for example, the social processes could include its members’ continuing links to their place of origin, and the consequences of those links might include their effects on its members’ political involvement in their place of origin and in their current place of residence.) We are open to you writing a proposal on a global phenomenon not on the above list, but you **must** get the permission of the course organiser (Sophia Woodman, sophia.woodman@ed.ac.uk) first. Four sample proposals written for last year’s course are available on Learn.

Your research proposal should include references to literature both on the substantive topic you choose and on research methods. It should have an appropriate title and a brief (200-300 word) summary/abstract (not included in the 2,000 word limit), and must include:

1. The research questions to be addressed or hypotheses to be tested, and a discussion of why they are of sociological interest;
2. A discussion of the relevant literature on the substantive topic;
3. A discussion of the data collection methods to be employed, and why you have chosen to use them. Please include relevant practical details such as – in the case, for example, of interviewing – how you would generate the sample of people to be interviewed and what sort of questions you would ask them;

4. A discussion of the data collection methods you have chosen not to employ, and why you have chosen not to employ them (please take particular note of this requirement, because this is not typically part of the sample research proposals to which we have pointed you);

5. A discussion of any ethical issues in the research and how you propose to handle them.

6. In justifying your research design in your research proposal, you should reflect on your own experience of trying out different methods in the research exercises for this course (as well as in any other courses or relevant experience).

You should bear in mind practical matters such as research access, your own safety etc., and the available resources. These are as follows: a three-year research project, in which your full-time salary will be provided, along with:

1. Three full-time person-years of research assistance (e.g. one research assistant for three years; three research assistants for one year each; etc.)
2. Enough funding for travel and subsistence for you and/or the research assistants to spend the necessary time ‘in the field’ internationally
3. If you decide a survey or surveys are desirable, enough funding for the equivalent of three national sample surveys, each with a sample size of 1,500, or of one national sample survey with a sample size of 5,000.

If your research project requires language skills that you do not possess, you would be able in the first year of the project to be trained in one foreign language. You can also choose research assistants who have the necessary language skills.

Topics b, c and d will be familiar to those who have taken Sociology 1a, 1b and 2a (the relevant lecture slides are on Learn for those who have not taken those courses). You are welcome to work on those topics even if you have done an essay or take-home-exam on the topic, but please ensure that what you hand in doesn’t contain text from that essay or exam.

**Word Count Penalties**

Your Research Proposal should be no more than 2000 words including footnotes/endnotes but excluding the bibliography, abstract and incorporating feedback assignment. Research Proposals above 2000 words will be penalised using the ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 2001 and 2020 words will lose one mark, between 2021 and 2040 two marks, and so on. You will not be penalised for submitting work below the word limit. However, you should note that shorter proposals are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

**Research proposal readings** (see also readings for 25 February above)

A useful overall guide to writing a research proposal is Punch, Keith F. (2006) *Developing Effective Research Proposals*. London: Sage; chapter 8 of the book contains five examples of proposals. Note, however, that neither they, nor the other examples of proposals in Learn, are designed as answers to the question we have set you (e.g. they typically don’t discuss
the methods the author has chosen not to use, which is something we are asking you to do). You will find relevant methodological readings in the other parts of this handbook. Part of the exercise is to identify relevant readings on the substantive topic you have chosen, using the databases that will be presented and discussed in tutorials. However, the following list will be helpful in getting you started.

a. A global ‘care chain’


b. A transnational migrant group

Your ‘migrant group’ may include groups involved in temporary, cyclical or permanent migration, such as immigrants, students, seasonal workers, families where some members move and others stay, etc.


c. **A global social movement or a global NGO (non-governmental organisation) linked to such a movement**


If you decide to focus on a specific NGO organisation, you may for example wish to study it by observation or participant observation. Sources that may be helpful for this include:


- Mosse, David (2006) Anti-Social Anthropology? Objectivity, Objection, and the Ethnography of Public Policy and Professional Communities. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 12(4), pp. 935-956 (e-journal). An interesting example of the complexities of researching a project or organisation some members of which will be very sensitive to how it is portrayed in publications.

d. **A global new religious movement**

Tom McGlew’s lecture on this to Sociology 1b is on Learn. Two other useful sources on new religious movements, albeit not specifically focussed on their global aspects are:


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e. A global intervention on health or education

The World Health Organization was the major player in global health interventions until relatively recently, but others – such as the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/) PEPFAR and the Clinton Foundation – as well as donors such as the UK, EU and US – have become more significant recently. On education, following the World Forum on Education in 2000 and the inclusion of education targets in the UN Millenium Development Goals, expanding education to reach all children, especially girls, has become a principal component of anti-poverty programmes and development projects in many countries. Institutions such as the World Bank are involved in formulating plans to achieve ‘education for all’, and many international NGOs both campaign on and implement education-related projects in the ‘developing world’.


Two accessible examples of global campaigns in the past are those to eradicate smallpox and polio.


**f. A global microstructure or global assemblage**

If you wish to do your research proposal on this topic, you need to think about a global phenomenon that has microstructural elements (i.e. ‘microsocial in character’ but global in span: Knorr Cetina and Bruegger 2002, p. 907), and then to come up with a plausible, practical way of empirically researching those elements of it.


**g. A transnational network related to family or education**


**9. Getting feedback on your work**

We will provide feedback on your assignments by the dates below, with appropriate comments and a provisional grade. Feedback will be returned online via ELMA. Please note that your final grade is not confirmed until the external examiner has considered the marks given by the internal examiners.

Research exercise 1: feedback returned by 29/02/2016

Research exercise 2: feedback returned by 21/03/2016
Research proposal outline: feedback returned by 11/04/2016

Research proposal and incorporating feedback exercise: feedback returned by 12/05/2016

The board of examiners includes all course lecturers and one of Sociology’s external examiners (Prof Bernadette Hayes, University of Aberdeen).

10. Tutorials

As mentioned above in section 6, tutorials are an essential component of this course. You will need to attend the tutorials to complete the short assignments and to develop your research proposal. A key element of this is getting feedback from your peers, and a number of tutorial activities are aimed at doing this. Giving and receiving feedback is a skill that you need to develop to become a better judge of your own work. This blog by an experienced academic researcher on ‘reviewer feedback’ speaks of such feedback as a ‘gift’: http://patthomson.net/2014/03/24/learning-to-accept-reviewer-feedback-as-a-gift/

Unless otherwise indicated, the readings for the tutorials will be those assigned for the lectures during that week. A few additional readings and links are listed below for the specific weeks to which they are applicable.

On the weeks when you will receive peer review of your draft assignments, please remember to bring two printed copies of your work so that two of your classmates can read it and give you feedback. For each of these sessions, guiding questions to address in giving feedback will be provided to structure your classmates’ responses. Remember this is not just about giving feedback, but also an opportunity for you to learn from others’ work and to develop skills in assessment that you will be able to apply to your own work, as discussed above.
### Weekly schedule of tutorials and assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates &amp; weeks</th>
<th>Tutorial topics</th>
<th>Assignment or task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: 11-15 January</td>
<td>No tutorials</td>
<td>Start considering research proposal topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2: 18-22 January</td>
<td>What is a good research question? What could you learn from an interview on your topic?</td>
<td>Draft interview guide; start drafting your research question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3: 25-29 January</td>
<td>How do you conduct a literature review? How do you design effective interview questions?</td>
<td>Conduct your interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4: 1-5 February</td>
<td>Peer review of interviews What kind of research questions can surveys answer?</td>
<td>Bring 2 copies of your findings from the interview to tutorial session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5: 8-12 February</td>
<td>Designing survey questions</td>
<td>Interview assignment due: 8 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6: 15-19 February</td>
<td>Innovative Learning Week: no tutorials</td>
<td>Draft your survey questions; revise your research question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7: 22-26 February</td>
<td>Peer review of survey questions</td>
<td>Bring 2 copies of your survey questions to tutorial session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8: 29 February-4 March</td>
<td>Writing a research proposal; sampling issues</td>
<td>Survey questions assignment due: 29 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9: 7-11 March</td>
<td>Thinking through your research proposal, writing an effective outline</td>
<td>Prepare your outline; revise your research question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10: 14-18 March</td>
<td>Peer review of outlines</td>
<td>Bring 2 copies of your outline to tutorial session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11: 21-25 March</td>
<td>Texts as sources of data; ethical dilemmas</td>
<td>Outline assignment due: 21 March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Research proposal due

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>21 April, 12 noon</th>
<th>Research proposal due</th>
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</table>

### Additional tutorial readings

Full text of, or links to, all these readings is provided on the course Resource List:  
[http://resourcelists.ed.ac.uk/lists/9577905E-7B1C-6F36-77F2-982DBF3D6D0F.html](http://resourcelists.ed.ac.uk/lists/9577905E-7B1C-6F36-77F2-982DBF3D6D0F.html)

### Week 2:

### Week 3:

### Week 4:
- Bennett, Liz. Learning to accept reviewer feedback as a gift.  

### Week 9:
- Outlining:  
  [http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/outlining](http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/outlining)  
- Planning and structuring your essay:  
  [https://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/studyadvice/StudyResources/Essays/staplanningessay.aspx](https://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/studyadvice/StudyResources/Essays/staplanningessay.aspx)

### Week 11:
- Will all the ethical social scientists please stand up?  
  [http://theconversation.com/will-all-the-ethical-social-scientists-please-stand-up-33508](http://theconversation.com/will-all-the-ethical-social-scientists-please-stand-up-33508)
Appendix 1: A guide to referencing

The fundamental purpose of proper referencing is to provide the reader with a clear idea of where you obtained your information, quotes, ideas, etc. In Sociology we prefer the Harvard system of referencing. The following instructions explain how it works but if you need more details a good source is: http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm

1. After you have quoted from or referred to a particular text, add in parentheses the author's name, the publication date and page numbers (if relevant). Place the full reference in your bibliography. Here is an example of a quoted passage and its proper citation:

Quotation in essay:
‘Marx and Freud are the two great heroes of the radicalized Enlightenment’ (Callinicos, 1989: 172).

Book entry in bibliography:
Note the sequence: author, year of publication, title, edition or translation information if needed, place of publication, publisher.

2. If you are employing someone else’s arguments, ideas or categorizations, you will need to cite them even if you are not using a direct quote. One simple way to do so is as follows:

Callinicos (1989: 162-5) argues that postmodernism is more a symptom of ‘Good Times’ than of ‘New Times.’

3. Your sources may well include journal or newspaper articles, book chapters, and internet sites. Below we show you how to cite these various sources.

(i) Chapters in book:
In your essay, cite the author, e.g. (Jameson, 1999).
In your bibliography details should be arranged in this sequence: author of chapter, year of publication, chapter title, editor(s) of book, title of book, place of publication, publisher, article or chapter pages.
For example:

(ii) Journal article:
In your essay, cite the author, e.g. (Gruffydd-Jones, 2001).
In your bibliography, details should be arranged in this sequence: author of journal article, year of publication, article title, journal title, journal volume, journal issue or number, article pages.
For example:

(iii) Newspaper or magazine article:
If the article has an author, cite as normal in the text (Giddens, 1998).

In bibliography cite as follows:


If the article has no author, cite name of newspaper in text (*The Herald*) and list the source in the bibliography by magazine or newspaper title.

For example:


(iv) Internet sites:

If the text has an author specified:

- Cite in the text as normal, e.g. (Weiss and Wesley, 2001). The date should be that which the text was published on. If this is not supplied, put ‘n.d.’ e.g. (Weiss and Wesley, n.d.)

- In the bibliography, provide a full reference which should include author, date, title of website, URL address as well as date accessed. For example:


- If there is no date for the material on the website, enter ‘n.d.’ in its place, e.g.

If the text has no author specified:

- In the text cite the organization/publisher behind the website if this is apparent e.g. (Centre for Europe’s Children, 2000). If this is not apparent cite the web address, e.g. (http://Eurochild.gla.ac.uk/, 2000). The date should be that which the text was published on. If this is not supplied, put ‘n.d.’, e.g. (http://Eurochild.gla.ac.uk/, n.d.).

- In the bibliography, if the organization/publisher is apparent provide a full reference including the title of the website, URL address, publisher or owner of the site.


- If there is no organization/publisher apparent start the bibliographic citation with the website: For example:


- If there is no date for the material on the website, enter ‘n.d.’ in its place, for example:

Appendix 2: Information for students with disabilities

The School welcomes students with disabilities (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia) and is working to make all its courses accessible. If you have special needs which may require adjustments to be made to ensure access to such settings as lectures, tutorials or exams, you should discuss these with your Personal Tutor who will advise on the appropriate procedures.

You can also contact the Disability Office, Third Floor Main Library Building, (telephone 650 6828) and an Advisor will be happy to meet with you. The Advisor can discuss possible adjustments and specific examination arrangements with you, assist you with an application for Disabled Students' Allowance, give you information about available technology and personal assistance such as note takers, proof readers or dyslexia tutors, and prepare a Learning Profile for your School which outlines recommended adjustments. You will be expected to provide the Disability Office with evidence of disability - either a letter from your GP or specialist, or evidence of specific learning difficulty. For dyslexia or dyspraxia this evidence must be a recent Chartered Educational Psychologist's assessment. If you do not have this, the Disability Office can put you in touch with an independent Educational Psychologist.

For more information see: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-disability-service/home
Appendix 3: Using Learn for signing up for tutorials

The following is a guide to using LEARN to sign up for your tutorial. If you have any problems using the LEARN sign up, please contact the course secretary by email (Shazia.leonard@ed.ac.uk).

Tutorial sign up will open on 11 Jan 2016 at 4pm, after the first lecture has taken place, and will close at 12 noon on the Friday of Week 1, 15 January 2016.

Step 1 – Accessing LEARN course pages

Access to LEARN is through the MyEd Portal. You will be given a log-in and password during Freshers’ Week. Once you are logged into MyEd, you should see a tab called ‘Courses’ which will list the active LEARN pages for your courses under ‘myLEARN’.

Step 2 – Welcome to LEARN

Once you have clicked on the relevant course from the list, you will see the Course Content page. There will be icons for the different resources available, including one called ‘Tutorial Sign Up’. Please take note of any instructions there.

Step 3 – Signing up for your tutorial

Clicking on Tutorial Sign Up will take you to the sign up page where all the available tutorial groups are listed along with the running time and location.

Once you have selected the group you would like to attend, click on the ‘Sign up’ button. A confirmation screen will display.

IMPORTANT: If you change your mind after having chosen a tutorial you cannot go back and change it and you will need to email the course secretary. Reassignments once tutorials are full or after the sign-up period has closed will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

Tutorials have restricted numbers and it is important to sign up as soon as possible. The tutorial sign up will only be available until 12 noon on the Friday of Week 1 (15 January 2016) so that everyone is registered to a group ahead of tutorials commencing in Week 2. If you have not yet signed up for a tutorial by this time you will be automatically assigned to a group which you will be expected to attend.
## Appendix 4: SPS Essay Marking Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marker’s name</td>
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</table>

| Initial Mark |  |
| Penalties    |  |
| Adjusted Mark |  |

### Overview

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<th>Aspect of performance</th>
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<th>Avg</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Thinking skills</em> (criticism, analysis, interpretation, logic, argumentation, evaluation, use of comparison, anticipating counter-arguments, etc.)</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td><em>Comprehension</em> (accuracy in facts, details and representation of author’s views, breadth of reading, grasp of major issues, etc.)</td>
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<td><em>Writing skills</em> (structure and organisation, clarity, precision, grammar/spelling, referencing, use of illustration, style, etc.)</td>
<td>x</td>
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### Major advice to student

| Main strength(s) of the essay |  |
| Main weakness(es) of the essay |  |
| This and future essays could be improved by… |  |
Appendix 5: SPS common essay marking descriptors

A1 (90-100%) An answer that fulfils all of the criteria for ‘A2’ (see below) and in addition shows an exceptional degree of insight and independent thought, together with flair in tackling issues, yielding a product that is deemed to be of potentially publishable quality, in terms of scholarship and originality.

A2 (80-89%) An authoritative answer that provides a fully effective response to the question. It should show a command of the literature and an ability to integrate that literature and go beyond it. The analysis should achieve a high level of quality early on and sustain it through to the conclusion. Sources should be used accurately and concisely to inform the answer but not dominate it. There should be a sense of a critical and committed argument, mindful of other interpretations but not afraid to question them. Presentation and the use of English should be commensurate with the quality of the content.

A3 (70-79%) A sharply-focused answer of high intellectual quality, which adopts a comprehensive approach to the question and maintains a sophisticated level of analysis throughout. It should show a willingness to engage critically with the literature and move beyond it, using the sources creatively to arrive at its own independent conclusions.

B B- (60-63%) B (64-66%) B+ (67-69%)  
A very good answer that shows qualities beyond the merely routine or acceptable. The question and the sources should be addressed directly and fully. The work of other authors should be presented critically. Effective use should be made of the whole range of the literature. There should be no significant errors of fact or interpretation. The answer should proceed coherently to a convincing conclusion. The quality of the writing and presentation (especially referencing) should be without major blemish.
Within this range a particularly strong answer will be graded B+; a more limited answer will be graded B-.

C C- (50-53%) C (54-56%) C+ (57-59%)  
A satisfactory answer with elements of the routine and predictable. It should be generally accurate and firmly based in the reading. It may draw upon a restricted range of sources but should not just re-state one particular source. Other authors should be presented accurately, if rather descriptively. The materials included should be relevant, and there should be evidence of basic understanding of the topic in question. Factual errors and misunderstandings of concepts and authors may occasionally be present but should not be a dominant impression. The quality of writing, referencing and presentation should be acceptable. Within this range a stronger answer will be graded C+; a weaker answer will be graded C-.

D D- (40-43%) D (44-46%) D+ (47-49%)
A passable answer which understands the question, displays some academic learning and refers to relevant literature. The answer should be intelligible and in general factually accurate, but may well have deficiencies such as restricted use of sources or academic argument, over-reliance on lecture notes, poor expression, and irrelevancies to the question asked. 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 answer that at least referred to the main points of the issue. Within this range a stronger answer will be graded D+; a bare pass will be graded D-.

E (30-39%) An answer with evident weaknesses of understanding but conveying the sense that with a fuller argument or factual basis it might have achieved a pass. It might also be a short and fragmentary answer with merit in what is presented but containing serious gaps.

F (20-29%) An answer showing seriously inadequate knowledge of the subject, with little awareness of the relevant issues or literature, major omissions or inaccuracies, and pedestrian use of inadequate sources.

G (10-19%) An answer that falls far short of a passable level by some combination of short length, irrelevance, lack of intelligibility, factual inaccuracy and lack of acquaintance with reading or academic concepts.

H (0-9%) An answer without any academic merit which usually conveys little sense that the course has been followed or of the basic skills of essay-writing.
Appendix 6: IAD and ELTC resources for undergraduate students

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. 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 2 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: http://www.ed.ac.uk/english-language-teaching

The ELTC runs non-credit English language courses on a variety of skills that are free to Edinburgh students. Many courses are specifically aimed at international students whose first language is not English. Some courses also have online versions that you can do in your own time.