

# **STAFF DEVELOPMENT – SOLSTICE RTS (Research Training Seminar Series)**

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## **Introduction to Research/ Ethnographic Research**

### **Seminar 1: Introduction to doing research: quantitative & qualitative methods**

This introductory session is aimed at staff from all subject backgrounds at Edge Hill wishing to gain a basic insight into research methods and designs. Through interaction and sharing of ideas, this session will explore the applicability of certain research approaches to participants' different subject areas and research goal. Firstly, the session aims broadly to introduce staff to the process of research while considering its importance and problems, grasping the steps taken and skills necessary by researchers in the process of research, and identifying ethical issues. Secondly, participants will be introduced to the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative research together with the procedures for implementing the two approaches at each step of the research process. Participants will also gain insights into the types of research designs typically associated with quantitative and qualitative research.

### **Seminar 2: What is ethnographic research? How to design and conduct ethnographic research?**

This first seminar will introduce participants to what ethnographic research is, and why it is suitable to understand people's attitudes and experience within the context of their life experiences. Participants will gain a general overview of research methods and design, including how to develop research questions, to set up a research project, and to devise a sampling plan. Finally, participants will also get an insight into ways of collecting an analysing data, and the ethical considerations for which ethnographers must account. Due to its introductory, overall focus, it is recommended that participants attend the first research training seminar should they wish to attend any (or all) of the subsequent seminars.

### **Seminar 3: Researcher roles and Research partnerships**

This seminar discusses the special requirements which doing ethnographic research imposes on its practitioners. First, participants will discuss how the work of ethnographers is essentially shaped by the ethnographer's own personality within the particular social and cultural context, and the tasks and responsibilities that ethnographers assume in the formal education institution. Second, participants will explore how ethnographers assemble research teams, establish partnerships with individuals and institutions, and work collaboratively with a range of people. Finally, participants will develop an awareness of ethical and procedural considerations. This seminar is not compulsory.

#### **Seminar 4:** Essential ethnographic methods: observations, interviews and questionnaires

This seminar provides detailed insights into essential, or fundamental ethnographic methods, including participant and non-participant observation, interviewing, and survey research (structured interviews and questionnaires). Participants will examine how to use these tools to come to an understanding about students' experiences of teaching and learning, and the meaning students give to social and cultural patterns. Participants will also gain knowledge of the insider—outsider perspective of the ethnographer and its implications for research. This seminar is not compulsory.

#### **Seminar 5:** Enhanced ethnographic methods: audiovisual techniques, focused group interviews, elicitation techniques

This seminar will focus on three additional, complementary means of collecting data. Audiovisual techniques involve recording behaviour and speech using electronic equipment, enabling a more permanent record of researched events. Focus group interviews allow the ethnographer to talk to more than one person at a time. Elicitation techniques are useful if ethnographers wish to quantify qualitative data on students' perceptions and experiences. These methods must not be used as alone, but rather in combination with the essential methods discussed in seminar three. This seminar is not compulsory.

#### **Seminar 6:** Analysing and interpreting ethnographic data

This final seminar provides participants with a variety of methods for making sense of data collected in order to understand students' experiences of teaching and learning. Participants will gain insights into organising (coding) and interpreting the data, for instance fieldnotes, observations, audio- and videotapes, questionnaires, surveys, documents, maps, or other formats. This seminar is not compulsory.

#### **Recommended core literature**

Creswell, John W. (2005). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

LeCompte, Margaret D. and Jean J. Schensul eds. (1999). *Ethnographer's Toolkit*, 7 volumes. Oxford: Altamira Press.