

Unit 18: Research Project

Unit code	A/616/1802
Unit type	Core
Unit level	5
Credit value	15

Introduction

This unit is assessed by a Pearson-set assignment. Students will choose their own project based on a theme provided by Pearson (this will change annually). The project must be related to their specialist pathway of study (unless the student is studying the general business pathway). This will enable students to explore and examine a relevant and current topical aspect of hospitality in the context of the hospitality environment and their chosen specialist pathway.

The aim of this unit is to offer students the opportunity to engage in sustained research in a specific field of study. The unit enables students to demonstrate the capacity and ability to identify a research theme, to develop research aims, objectives and outcomes, and to present the outcomes of such research in both written and verbal formats. The unit also encourages students to reflect on their engagement in the research process during which recommendations for future, personal development are key learning points.

On successful completion of this unit students will have the confidence to engage in problem-solving and research activities which are part of the function of a manager. Students will have the fundamental knowledge and skills to enable them to investigate workplace issues and problems, determine appropriate solutions and present evidence to various stakeholders in an acceptable and understandable format.

***Please refer to the accompanying Pearson-set Assignment Guide and the Theme Release document for further support and guidance on the delivery of the Pearson-set unit.**

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit a student will be able to:

1. Examine appropriate research methodologies and approaches as part of the research process
2. Conduct and analyse research relevant to a service industry research project
3. Communicate the outcomes of a service industry research project to identified stakeholders
4. Reflect on the application of research methodologies and concepts.

Essential Content

LO1 **Examine appropriate research methodologies and approaches as part of the research process**

Developing a research proposition:

The importance of developing methodical and valid propositions as the foundation for a research project

Rationale – the purpose and significance for a research question or hypothesis

The value of the philosophical position of the researcher and the chosen methods

Use of Saunders's research onion as a guide to establishing a methodological approach

Literature review:

Conceptualisation of the research problem or hypothesis

The importance of positioning a research project in context of existing knowledge

Significance and means of providing benchmarks by which data can be judged

Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research:

Key theoretical frameworks for research

Advantages and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research approaches and methods

LO2 **Conduct and analyse research relevant to a service industry research project**

Research as a process:

Research has distinct phases which support a coherent and logical argument
This includes using secondary research to inform a primary, empirical, study

Selecting a sample:

The importance of gathering data and information (qualitative or quantitative) to support research analysis

Selecting sample types and sizes that are relevant to the research

Considering sampling approaches and techniques including probability and nonprobability sampling

Ethics, reliability and validity:

Ethical research

How is this achieved and reported?

Reliable research (similar results would be achieved from a similar sample) and valid (the research measures, what it aimed to measure)

Analysing data:

Using data collection tools such as interviews and questionnaires

Using analytical techniques such as trend analysis, coding or typologies

L03 Communicate the outcomes of a service industry research project to identified stakeholders

Stakeholders:

Who are they?

Why would they be interested in the research outcomes?

What communication method do they expect?

Communicating research outcomes:

Different methods of communicating outcomes e.g. written word, spoken word and the medium e.g. report, online, presentation

Convincing arguments:

No matter what the method/medium, all research should be convincing and presented logically where the assumption is that the audience has little or no knowledge of the research process

The importance of developing evaluative conclusions

L04 Reflect on the application of research methodologies and concepts

Reflection for learning and practice:

Difference between reflecting on performance and evaluating a research project. The former considers the research process; the latter considers the quality of the research argument and use of evidence

Reflection on the merits, limitations and potential pitfalls of the chosen methods

The cycle of reflection:

To include reflection in action and reflection on action

Considering how to use reflection to inform future behaviour and future considerations

Reflective writing:

Avoiding generalisation and focusing on personal development and the research journey in a critical and objective way

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<p>LO1 Examine appropriate research methodologies and approaches as part of the research process</p>		<p>LO1 LO2</p> <p>D1 Critically evaluate research methodologies and processes in application to a hospitality research project to justify chosen research methods and analysis</p>
<p>P1 Produce a research proposal that clearly defines a research question or hypothesis supported by a literature review</p> <p>P2 Examine appropriate research methods and approaches to primary and secondary research</p>	<p>M1 Evaluate different research approaches and methodology and make justifications for the choice of methods selected based on philosophical/theoretical frameworks</p>	
<p>LO2 Conduct and analyse research relevant to a service industry research project</p>		
<p>P3 Conduct primary and secondary research using appropriate methods for a hospitality research project that consider costs, access and ethical issues</p> <p>P4 Apply appropriate analytical tools to analyse research findings and data</p>	<p>M2 Discuss merits, limitations and pitfalls of approaches to data collection and analysis</p>	
<p>LO3 Communicate the outcomes of a service industry research project to identified stakeholders</p>		<p>D2 Communicate critical analysis of the outcomes and make valid, justified recommendations</p>
<p>P5 Communicate research outcomes in an appropriate manner for the intended audience</p>	<p>M3 Coherently and logically communicate outcomes to the intended audience demonstrating how outcomes meet set research objectives</p>	
<p>LO4 Reflect on the application of research methodologies and concepts</p>		<p>D3 Demonstrate reflection and engagement in the resource process leading to recommended actions for future improvement</p>
<p>P6 Reflect on the effectiveness of research methods applied for meeting objectives of the hospitality research project</p> <p>P7 Consider alternative research methodologies and lessons learnt in view of the outcomes</p>	<p>M4 Provide critical reflection and insight that results in recommended actions for improvements and future research considerations</p>	

Recommended Resources

Textbooks

COSTLEY, C., ELLIOT, G. and GIBBS, P. (2010) *Doing Work Based Research: Approaches to Enquiry for Insider-researchers*. London: SAGE.

FLICK, U. (2011) *Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project*. London: SAGE.

GRAY, D. (2009) *Doing Research in the Real World*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE.

SAUNDERS, M., LEWIS, P. and THORNHILL, A. (2012) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 6th ed. Harlow: Pearson.

Links

This unit links to the following related units:

Unit 1: The

Contemporary

Hospitality Industry Unit

3: Professional Identity

and Practice