

Recommended Reading

The following books are sources of guidance on aspects of conducting a small-scale research project (and critical review of literature). The annotated list is, by no means, comprehensive: there are numerous other books that address specific methodologies and approaches. However, these texts are a useful starting point for doctoral and masters projects.

Anderson, G. (1998) *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. London: Falmer Press. [Link to library](#)

"This text succeeds in cutting through the complexities of research to give the novice researcher a sound basis to define, develop, and conduct a study, while providing fresh insights for even the accomplished researcher."

Bell, J. (2005) *Doing Your Research Project: a guide for first time researchers in education*. (4th ed.) Maidenhead: Open University Press. [Link to e-book](#)

We all learn to do research by actually doing it, but a great deal of time and effort can be wasted and goodwill lost by inadequate preparation. This book provides beginner researchers with the tools to do the job, to help them avoid some of the pitfalls and time-wasting false trails, and to establish good research habits. It takes researchers from the stage of choosing a topic through to the production of a well-planned, methodologically sound, and well-written final report or thesis on time. It is written in plain English and makes no assumptions about previous knowledge. [[5th edition](#) now available]

Black, T. (2001) *Understanding Social Science Research* (2nd ed.) London: Sage. [Link to e-book](#)

The book aims to help students to evaluate research, and is clear and straightforward. It is more strongly focused on measurement than other methodologies and research designs.

Blaxter, L. Hughes, C. & Tight, M. (2006) *How to Research*. (3rd ed.) Buckingham: Open University Press. [Link to E-book](#)

This is a new edition of a book that many masters and doctoral students have found useful. It is primarily about the practice and experience of doing small-scale research in social science. There are sections on using internet sources for literature searches and for other aspects of the research process.

Bryman, A. (2004). *Social Research Methods* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Link to library](#)

Standard account of main theories and techniques in social research methods.

Research Methods in Education

Clough, P. & Nutbrown, C. (2007) *A Student's Guide to Methodology*. (2nd ed.) Sage: London. [Link to library](#)

This book presents clear and straightforward information and advice on the process and functions of methodology. Although methodology is normally reported within a single methodology chapter, the authors show how every element of the account-- from the framing of Research Questions to the drawing of Conclusions -- is a function of methodology.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education*. (6th ed.) London: Routledge. [Link to E-book](#)

This book is now in its [seventh edition](#), and is something of a classic among the research methodology text-books in education. It is comprehensive, covering a wide range of approaches to research in education. It is a useful introductory text for masters and doctoral students.

Coleman, M. & Briggs, A.J. (eds) (2007) *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*. (2nd ed.) London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

A comprehensive and accessible guide to researching educational management and leadership aimed at relatively inexperienced researchers. There are chapters by a range of well-known people in the field that address topics such as designing a project, reliability and validity, ethics, research methods and instruments, analysing data, and presentation.

Creswell, J. W. (2009) *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (3rd ed.) London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

Frequently used text that details a range of research design options, good uses, and their limitations.

Denscombe, M (2007) *The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research projects*. (3rd ed.) Buckingham: Open University Press. [Link to E-book](#)

Aimed at those undertaking small-scale research projects, the book provides a pragmatic approach to the research process. It aims to help readers with limited time to conduct a rigorous small-scale project, highlighting aspects of good research practice and offering check-lists for monitoring research. [[4th edition](#) now available] There is also a companion volume: **Denscombe, M. (2010) [Ground Rules for Good Research: guidelines for good practice](#).(2nded.) Buckingham: Open University Press.**

Fink, A. (2010) *Conducting Research Literature Reviews* (3rd ed.) London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

A guide to the process of searching and reviewing research literature. It examines not only the practicalities of literature review, but also how to become a critical reader of research reports. It addresses issues such as research design and sampling strategy, and also data collection, analysis and presentation.

Research Methods in Education

Foster, P. (1996) *Observing Schools: A Methodological Guide*. London: Paul Chapman. [Link to library](#)

Useful source on basics of observation methods in schools.

Gorard, S. (2001) *Quantitative Methods in Educational Research: The Role of Numbers Made Easy*. London: Continuum. [Link to library](#)

This book provides an excellent introduction to research involving numbers. It is very readable and clear. The author presents examples from his own and other work. There are useful chapters on designing a study, using data from existing sources and on sampling techniques, among other things; and a helpful appendix listing sources of statistical and numerical data. Strongly recommended for anyone considering doing a study involving survey, experimental, or multi-method designs.

Hart, C. (2001) *Doing a Literature Search: A Comprehensive Guide for the Social Sciences*. London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

A thorough examination of the process of reviewing literature. The book makes connections between the literature review in a master's or doctoral study and methodology and research design. It addresses the principles underpinning any literature review; and there is a useful chapter on how to analyse ideas and undertake argumentation analysis. In addition it also covers practical aspects of reviewing literature, such as searching bibliographic databases; and a chapter on writing. It provides examples from a range of sources in social science, and it is also clear and readable. There is now also a companion volume specifically addressing literature search: **Hart, C (1998) *Doing a Literature Review: releasing the social science research imagination*. London: Sage.**

Heath, C., Hindmarsh, J., & Luff, P. (2010). *Video in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

This book provides practical guidance for students and academics on how to use video in qualitative research, how to address the problems and issues that arise in undertaking video-based field studies, and how to subject video recordings to detailed scrutiny and analysis. The authors consider the ethical and practical issues that arise in recording and gathering data as well as how video enables new and distinctive ways of presenting insights, observations, and findings to both academic and practitioner audiences.

Permalink to library:

<http://library.bath.ac.uk/uhtbin/bath/UB-LIBS/ckey/1998702>

Hopkins, D. (2006) *A Teacher's Guide to Classroom Research*. (4th ed.) Buckingham: Open University Press. [Link to library](#)

***This practical guide is for teachers who wish to undertake research in their classrooms with a view to improving their practice. It will enable teachers to enhance their own or their colleagues' teaching and to test educational theory."

Research Methods in Education

Knight, P.T. (2002) *Small Scale Research: pragmatic inquiry in social science and the caring professions*, London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

Very much focused on the needs of a graduate student readership, this book is a guide to conducting small-scale research projects for theses or dissertations. It presents systematically the main modes of enquiry and considers the main strengths and limitations of different approaches. Understanding that small-scale researchers are often short on time and resources, it gives pragmatic practical advice.

Miles, M. & Huberman, M (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: an Expanded Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [Link to library](#)

One of the classic texts on qualitative research approaches. The book is practical and comprehensive - going far beyond data analysis. There are excellent sections on research design, sampling, data reduction, coding and display for qualitative studies. Strongly recommended for anyone considering a study with a qualitative element.

Newby, P. (2009) *Research methods for education*. Harlow: Longman. [Link to library](#)

Written with the novice educational researcher in mind, this book is designed to help students produce good quality, valid and valuable research. The text is written in an engaging style and adopts a mixed-methods approach. It also features guidance on analytical procedures that require more advanced tools.

[Also available as Newby, P. (2010). *Research Methods for Education*. Essex, England, Pearson Education.]

Oppenheim, A.N. (1992) *Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude Measurement*, London: Continuum. [Link to library](#)

A classic on all of the above.

Punch, K. F. (2005) *Introduction to research methods in education*, London: Sage Publications. [Link to library](#)

A comprehensive introduction to both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in education. It is good on research design, and is very clearly written and presented with excellent examples of different kinds of research. An excellent all-rounder. There is also a companion volume, [Developing Effective Research Proposals](#) (2006) that addresses all aspects of designing a research proposal, and would be useful for planning masters or doctoral research.

[newer edition: Punch, K. F. (2009). *Introduction to Research Methods in Education*. London, Sage.]

Potter, S. (ed) (2006) *Doing Postgraduate Research*. (2nd ed.) London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

This book aims to help make the research process as explicit and clear as possible. It addresses the increasing importance of formal research training for graduate students. Taking a practical approach, it provides examples and material to help students develop a range of research skills.

Research Methods in Education

Reid, A. & Gough, S. (2000) Guidelines for Reporting and Evaluating Qualitative Research: what are the alternatives?, *Environmental Education Research*, 6(1), 59 - 9. [Link to paper](#)

Discusses a series of quality criteria used in environmental educational research, comparing quantitative and qualitative examples.

Robson, C. (2002) *Real world research: a resource for users of social research methods in applied settings*. (3rd ed.) Blackwell: Oxford. [Link to library](#)

"'Real World Research' furnishes students with the skills necessary in order to conduct research outside the laboratory, in real world situations. The third edition has been thoroughly revised to bring it up-to-date."

Rudestam, K. & Newton, R. (2007) *Surviving your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*. (3rd ed.) London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

This book covers all dimensions of writing a dissertation or thesis: from choosing a topic and defining research questions through to writing up. A useful section deals with the process of moving from a topic to specifying research questions: something that many master's and doctoral students find quite challenging. Students outside the USA might find the terminology associated with the supervision process a little strange, but otherwise a useful guide to the research and writing process.

Ryan G. W. and Bernard, H. R. (2003) Techniques to Identify Themes. *Field Methods*, 15(1), 85-109. [Link to paper](#)

"Theme identification is one of the most fundamental tasks in qualitative research. It also is one of the most mysterious. Explicit descriptions of theme discovery are rarely found in articles and reports, and when they are, they are often relegated to appendices or footnotes. Techniques are shared among small groups of social scientists, but sharing is impeded by disciplinary or epistemological boundaries. The techniques described here are drawn from across epistemological and disciplinary boundaries. They include both observational and manipulative techniques and range from quick word counts to laborious, in-depth, line-by-line scrutiny. Techniques are compared on six dimensions: (1) appropriateness for data types, (2) required labor, (3) required expertise, (4) stage of analysis, (5) number and types of themes to be generated, and (6) issues of reliability and validity."

Sarantakos, S. (2005) *Social Research*. (3rd ed.) Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. [Link to library](#)

Useful account of social theory and social research paradigms, traditions and methods.

Scott, D. & Morrison, M. (2006) *Key Ideas in Educational Research*. London: Continuum. [Link to library](#)

A comprehensive guide to 120 key terms in educational research with entries on: schools of thought, philosophical concepts, educational research strategies and infrastructural issues.

Research Methods in Education

Scott, D. & Usher, R. (1996) *Understanding Educational Research*. London: Routledge. [Link to e-book](#)

Focuses on the links between philosophy and practice of research, and the need for reflexivity in making research design decisions.

Thomas, G. (2009). *How to Do Your Research Project: A Guide for Students in Education and Applied Social Sciences*. London, Sage.

"Reflecting the trials and tribulations and the problems and promises of conducting research, this guide reveals the research process as a much more complex process than is usually recognised, often messy and disorganised."

Wallace, M. & Poulson, L. (2004) *Learning to Read Critically in Teaching and Learning*. London: Paul Chapman/Sage. [Link to e-book](#)

Focuses on critical reading skills, with examples from educational studies.

Walliman, N. (2005) *Your Research Project: A Step-by-Step Guide for the First-time Researcher*. (2nd ed.) London: Sage. [Link to library](#)

A helpful guide to planning, designing and structuring a research enquiry from the very first stages onwards. It also aims to develop the necessary research skills to conduct a project and considers what makes a successful research project. Another purpose of the book is to help develop skills in critical analysis.

Wellington, J. (2000) *Educational Research: Contemporary Issues and Practical Approaches*. London: Continuum. [Link to library](#)

Introductory text for a masters course, from one of the Department's former external examiners.

Walford, G. (2001) *Doing Qualitative Educational Research. A Personal Guide to the Research Process*. London: Continuum. [Link to library](#)

NB: There are numerous books on educational research in the Education section of the library at 370.017. You should also scan [journals](#) such as *British Educational Research Journal*, *Research Papers in Education*, *Educational Research*, *Cambridge Journal of Education* and others.

Empirical studies using qualitative methods of data collection

The following are a list of selected articles from the *Journal for Research in International Education* that use qualitative research methods of data collection.

Interviews

McLachlan D (2007) Global nomads in an international school, 6, 2, 233-249 [includes interviews with children]

Robertson J E (2003) Teachers' perceptions of accountability at an international school, 277-300

Lee I and Koro-Ljungberg M (2007) A phenomenological study of Korean students' acculturation in middle schools in the USA, 6, 1, 95-117

Jokikokko K (2009) The role of significant others in the intercultural learning of teachers, 8, 2, 142-163

Interviews and Facebook:

Brooks R and Waters J (2009) International higher education and the mobility of UK students, 8, 2, 191-209

Focus groups and online forum:

Zilber E (2005) International school educators and their children, 4, 1, 5-22

Questionnaires and Interviews together:

James K (2007) Factors influencing students' choice(s) of experimental science subjects within the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme, 6, 1, 9-39

Duckworth R L, Walker Levy L and Levy J (2005) Present and future teachers of the world's children: how internationally-minded are they? 4, 3, 279-311

Ezra R (2007) Caught between cultures: a study of factors influencing Israeli parents' decisions to enrol their children at an international school, 6, 3, 259-286

Case study, including interviews:

Fryer T (2009) Stakeholder experiences of a dual-language international school: a qualitative case study of a private international school, 8, 2, 210-222

Case study, including observation, interviews and focus groups:

Zhang Y and McGrath I (2009) Teacher-student relationships in an International Baccalaureate school in China, 8, 2, 164-190

Ethnography, including participant observation and in-depth interviews:

Brown L and Holloway I (2008) The adjustment journey of international postgraduate students at an English university: an ethnographic study, 7, 2, 232-249