

Module	Research Methods
Course code	BAMPH-RM
Credits	5
Allocation of marks	80% proposal 20% presentation

Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- i. Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the wide variety of information sources available to communication researchers.
- ii. Carry out the necessary preliminary investigations to support and underpin a proposal for research by practice and gather authoritative evidence to support findings.
- iii. Recognise and apply ethical considerations to their research activities
- iv. Understand, apply, interpret and assess different quantitative and qualitative methods of research.
- v. Assess the feasibility of a practical research project in terms of time, resources, cost, access to software and other resources.
- vi. Competently undertake, complete, and defend a detailed research proposal.

Module Objectives

This module aims to develop learners' research skills, both in relation to their module related assignments and later in the completion of their final dissertation by research or practice. The module provides learners with the opportunity to learn specific research skills such as developing a research idea, investigating prior work in the area, writing a literature review and evaluating previous studies. The module aims to familiarise learners with the main research theories and concepts and enable learners to acquire skills in the research process including selecting and planning an appropriate research project, feasibility, execution, logging and tracking the practical process, data collection and analysis. The ultimate aim of the module is that learners will be able to conduct research effectively and to grasp the impact research can have.

Module Curriculum

- Introduction to Research Methods

This section of the module will introduce key words in research methods such as 'quantitative', 'qualitative' and 'sample' and explain what research involves. An important part of this introductory unit is a description of common ethical principles and a discussion of how they can be applied to research projects.

- Sourcing Information and Writing a Literature Review

This section looks at how to source information effectively. It also details what a literature review is and how to begin writing one. It also includes information on how to reference work correctly and covers: planning effective searches on the internet, evaluating documents and examining issues such as authenticity and credibility, using search engines effectively and producing a bibliography. Key to this module will be familiarising learners with the college databases available and the valuable information sources accessible to learners.

- Developing a Research Idea

This section will look at different possibilities for developing a research idea for research by practice, whether this involves technical, musical, production or socio-cultural research. The learner will be expected to start considering possible areas for their own research; interrogate the aims, objectives and goals of the research and develop research questions. They will be expected to consider the research deliverables, in terms of feasibility with respect to resources, time constraints, costs, access to technology, and the learner's own level of experience in the field.

- Research Tools

Learners will be introduced to various research tools used in field-work, such as interviewing, focus groups, survey research, logs, or research diaries, each of which will be evaluated for appropriate use in different research settings. This topic will also deal with methods and means of analysis of data.

- Writing a Research Proposal

This topic aims to help learners develop a writing style that is suitable for a research proposal. It outlines the reasons why good research proposals are imperative when undertaking research and describes the essential elements of a proposal. In this topic effective proposals are analysed and common mistakes, which should be avoided, are detailed.