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| **SSC7001M: Assessment Brief** | | | |
| **Module Name:** | Advanced Research Methods 1 | **Level of Study:** | 7 |
| **Module Leaders:** | Dr. Chris Moreh  (Weeks 1-6)  Dr. Jo Biglin  (Weeks 7-12) | **Credits:** | 30 |
| **Assessment Type:** | Replicable research paper | **Method of submission:** | Turnitin via moodle |
| **Deadline or Assessment Period:** | 20 January 2022, by 12:00 midday | **Feedback date and place:** | 10 February 2022 |
| **Word Limit or Length:** | 3,000 words of main text + annotated code | **Component number and weighting:** | 1 of 1, 100% of grade |
| **Description** | | | |
| The assignment for this module is a 3,000 words long research paper accompanied by annotated code to reproduce your analysis. In the computer labs you will learn how to write reproducible, dynamic research reports/articles in the RStudio software using the Rmarkdown language. Dynamic reports contain all elements of a research article, including the main text, results and outputs from statistical analyses (e.g. tables, graphs), as well as the R code that produced the outputs. RMarkdown documents usually have the extension .Rmd.   * **The research paper** should look like a final publication-quality journal article containing only main text and outputs from the statistical analysis, but not the code that produced the outputs. The research paper should be submitted as a Word (.doc/.docx) document, but its contents should be generated from an .Rmd document.      * **The annotated code** should be submitted as a separate .Rmd document that contains the main text of the research paper intertwined with the R code chunks that produced the outputs (i.e. the .Rmd document from which the research paper was generated).   The research paper will follow the typical structure of a quantitative research article in the social sciences:   1. Introduction (What is the problem?) (~250 words) 2. Literature review (What do others say?) (~750 words) 3. Materials and Methods (How did I solve the problem/answer the question?) (~500 words) 4. Results (What did I find out?) (~750 words) 5. Discussion (What does it mean? ) (~750 words) 6. References   The annotated code will contain the commands that you have performed to produce your results, annotated with text describing the purpose of each command and the reasoning behind it. Producing such replication material will be a focus of the practical exercises performed throughout the semester, and the expectation is that the final replication document you submit for assessment will have been produced and perfected throughout the semester, incorporating the formative feedback received.  For a very good example of what a published replicable research article in social science looks like, check out this publication (which is also on our reading list):  Schwemmer, C. and Wieczorek, O. (2020) ‘The Methodological Divide of Sociology: Evidence from Two Decades of Journal Publications’, *Sociology*, 54(1), pp. 3–21. [https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038519853146](https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0038038519853146)  Check the ‘Replication Material’ section under the Acknowledgements and follow the link to the Harvard Datraverse, the database where the author’s have made their data and code publicly available for replication. | | | |
| **Learning Outcomes** | | | |
| The coursework and assessment for this module is aligned primarily with the following MRes Social Science Programme learning outcomes:  7.1 To demonstrate critical understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods across the  social sciences, including how qualitative and quantitative epistemologies shape research design,  methods, and the analysis and presentation of data  7.2 To critically evaluate and systematically apply qualitative and/or quantitative research methods  through an original and independent piece of advanced social scientific research  7.3 To understand and critically evaluate epistemological and theoretical positions underlying analysis, and to develop original analyses based on relevant disciplinary insight  The programme learning outcomes are drawn from the learning outcomes specified in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2014: 28) and the ESRC Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines (2015:7-8). | | | |
| **Advice and Guidance** | | | |
| * Keep up with the practical tasks and make use of all the materials made available through Moodle * Discuss with your peers during the online breakout sessions, exchange code snippets and ideas. And ask many questions during workshops. * Start developing your data analysis code early on * Learn to appreciate “failure”. Quantitative social science is all about problem solving, and if problems were too easy, they would no longer be problems. When developing analytical skills, the aim is to get stuck as many times as possible and solve the issues that emerge on the spot. The more difficulties you face and overcome, the more you develop your skills. | | | |
| **Further Support** | | | |
| * You will receive continuous formative feedback in the IT workshops * Useful second-hand video and training materials will also aid your learning * Don’t be afraid to ask questions during workshops * For your reference list, learn to use the open-source referencing tool [Zotero](https://www.zotero.org/), which [integrates well with RMarkdown](https://rstudio.github.io/visual-markdown-editing/citations.html) | | | |
| **How is this assessment marked?** | | | |
| This assessment is marked against our PG Social Science’s Assessment Descriptors (see next page).  Work that achieves Distinction will demonstrate an exceptional understanding of the methods covered, show original and critical thinking in the choice of materials, research questions and discussion of results, as well as have a clear and well-structured writing style. It will also include a comprehensive and well annotated replication file that makes it easy for any reader to follow the logic of the analysis and the data management/analytical choices that were made.  Work that achieves Merit will still demonstrate a very good understanding of the methods covered, show some originality in the choice of materials, research questions and discussion of results, as well as have a clear and well-structured writing style. It will also include a replication file containing code that reproduces the analysis, or the main parts of it, alongside some annotation detailing the logic of the analysis and the data management/analytical choices made, though perhaps less detailed and effective than expected.  Work that will Pass (50% and above) should demonstrate reasonable understanding of the methods covered, show a good attempt to choose appropriate materials and research questions, and include a discussion of the results. The writing will be readable, albeit less clear and well-structured than expected. It will also include a replication file, but one that is not of sufficient quality to allow a reader to understand the steps of the analysis. | | | |

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|  | Distinction | Merit | 70-60 | 60-50 | Fail (50-40) | Double Fail (40 and below) |  |
| Knowledge & Understanding  Have you understood the topic and ideas you’re drawing on? | You demonstrate a unique viewpoint and interpretation of materials. In addition to connecting your knowledge with supporting evidence, you have demonstrated an advanced understanding by implementing your own interpretation. | You have accurately understood the topic in all its aspects and your knowledge of supporting materials is thorough.Your work exhibits an advanced understanding of the topic and extensively connects your knowledge with supporting evidence. | You have a clear understanding of the topic, with an occasional need for more detail and explanation. Your work demonstrates an understanding of the topic, but lacks a strong connection between your knowledge and supporting evidence. | You have understood some aspects of the topic, but your depth of knowledge and explanation needs to be improved. Your work mostly demonstrates an understanding of the topic, but the connections between your knowledge and supporting evidence are weak. | You have demonstrated a partial depth of knowledge, lacking detailed explanation. Your work often fails to communicate your understanding of the topic, and connections between your knowledge and supporting evidence are mostly absent. | You have not demonstrated sufficient depth of knowledge, nor provided adequate detail. Your work does not evidence your knowledge, understanding or make connections with supporting evidence. |  |
| Critical Analysis  Have you thought carefully about these idea(s) and questioned them? | You have provided a unique contribution to the research area you have engaged with through your interrogation of these theories and concepts. Your work furthers the complexity of the relevant debates and questions which you have addressed. | You have thought about and interrogated these theories and concepts in a way that makes them your own.Your work exhibits the complexity of relevant debates and questions them persuasively and robustly. | You haven’t taken ideas at face value, but haven’t thoroughly interrogated them. Your work engages with relevant debates and acknowledges their complexity, but your questioning is inconsistently applied. | Your discussion of ideas is adequate, but does not go beyond the surface. Your work employs academic debates descriptively, but does not interrogate them. | Your discussion of ideas is vague and inconsistent. Your work has identified some relevant debates but does not attempt to question nor interrogate them. | Ideas and concepts that could be used for analysis are absent. Your work has neither identified relevant debates nor applied them. |  |
| Engagement with Core and Wider Evidence  Have you used and gone beyond module sources? | You extensively engage with the breadth of literature on the subject without any significant omissions. Your work uses ample high-quality sources which are both appropriate for your argument and far reaching. | You extensively engage with the reading list and show strong relevant independent research that furthers the module material. Your work uses ample high-quality sources which are both appropriate for your argument and far reaching beyond module material. | You’ve drawn on relevant module material, as well as appropriate academic sources from your own independent research. Your work uses appropriate high-quality sources which are largely appropriate for your argument and reach beyond module material. | Your research is limited to module material and restricted in scope. Your work does not demonstrate any reading that goes beyond the module material, and any additional sources you have used are of poor quality or inappropriate. | You have rarely drawn on academic sources. Your work seldom engages with relevant reading material either within or beyond module material. | You have not drawn on any academic sources. Your work has not engaged with relevant reading material from the module or beyond. |  |
| Creativity and Originality  Have you used these materials to form an argument of your own? | You have demonstrated insightful, independent thought.  You have provided a robust and persuasive argument that offers a novel and original interpretation of the sources and evidence. | You have demonstrated insightful, independent thought.Your work reflects on and imaginatively interprets academic sources to evidence an individual and novel argument. | You have demonstrated some independent thought. Your work imaginatively interprets academic sources, but without sufficiently constructing an individual or novel argument. | You have demonstrated limited independent thought. Your work is often descriptive, with occasional novel arguments. | You have demonstrated minimal independent thought. Your work is largely descriptive and derivative,and you don’t make an argument of your own. | You have demonstrated no independent thought. Your work is entirely descriptive or derivative and you don’t make an argument of your own. |  |
| Citations and Referencing  Have you referenced all necessary materials in the Harvard style? | All necessary ideas are accurately cited and referenced in the Harvard style. | All necessary ideas are accurately cited and referenced in the Harvard style, with only minimal superficial errors. | You have cited everything but there are some errors in formatting. Take a look at the Harvard ‘[quick guide](https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/media/content-assets/ile/documents/Harvard-Referencing-quick-guide-(online).pdf)’ or use ‘[cite them right](https://www-citethemrightonline-com.yorksj.idm.oclc.org/)’ to help next time. | There are some errors in formatting and some missing citations. Take a look at the Harvard ‘[quick guide](https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/media/content-assets/ile/documents/Harvard-Referencing-quick-guide-(online).pdf)’ or use ‘[cite them right](https://www-citethemrightonline-com.yorksj.idm.oclc.org/)’ to help next time. | There are many citations that are missing, and/or there are significant mistakes in referencing style. Take a look at the Harvard ‘[quick guide](https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/media/content-assets/ile/documents/Harvard-Referencing-quick-guide-(online).pdf)’ or use ‘[cite them right](https://www-citethemrightonline-com.yorksj.idm.oclc.org/)’ to help next time. | You have not cited or referenced your work appropriately. Take a look at the Harvard ‘[quick guide](https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/media/content-assets/ile/documents/Harvard-Referencing-quick-guide-(online).pdf)’ or use ‘[cite them right](https://www-citethemrightonline-com.yorksj.idm.oclc.org/)’ to help next time. |  |
| Style and Clarity  Have you communicated academically, clearly, in a grammatically and syntactically correct way? | You have an engaging, academic writing style that remains focused on your argument throughout. Your work effectively communicates your point, is clearly structured, and grammatically and syntactically correct. | You have an engaging, academic writing style. Your work effectively communicates your point, is clearly structured, and grammatically and syntactically correct. | Your writing style isclear and mostly academic. Your work effectively communicates your point, but is in need of a more logical structure and/or grammatical or syntactical improvement. | Your style is somewhat clear, but sometimes colloquial. Your structure, grammar and syntax are in need of improvement and your work implies a lack of proof reading. | Your style often gets in the way of effectively communicating your meaning. Your writing is mostly colloquial, with frequent grammar and syntax errors which would have been prevented with proof reading. | Your style is unclear and prevents understanding of your point. Your writing is colloquial, non-academic and in need of proof reading to correct frequent grammar and syntax errors. |  |
| Applied methodology and practical skills.  Have you understood the research methods in depth, and have you demonstrated your ability to apply them to solve practical problems and address real-life research questions? | You have understood the research methods in all their aspects and in depth, and you have demonstrated this advanced understanding by applying the appropriate methods accurately and confidently. You have clearly demonstrated your ability to apply and transfer the acquired methodological skills to other research and professional tasks, and to communicate research findings to both academic and non-academic audiences. | You have understood the research methods in all their aspects and in depth, and you have demonstrated this advanced understanding by applying the appropriate methods accurately and confidently. You have shown exceptional promise to be able to apply and transfer the acquired methodological skills to other research and professional tasks. | You have understood the research methods in some depth, although your application of the methods may still require more accuracy and confidence.  You have shown good promise to be able to apply and transfer the acquired methodological skills to other research and professional tasks. | You have understood some aspects of the research methods, but your application of the methods requires some improvements in the accuracy of execution and your confidence in their use and discussion of your results.  You have shown some promise to be able to apply and transfer the acquired methodological skills to other research and professional tasks. | You have demonstrated a partial understanding of some aspects of the research methods, but your application of the methods requires significant improvements in the accuracy.  Your knowledge and methodological skills would only allow for a limited ability to apply and transfer them to other research and professional tasks. | You have not demonstrated a sufficient understanding of the research methods, and you have misinterpreted your methodological approach.  Your current knowledge and methodological skills would not be transferable to other research and professional tasks. |  |