**KISS004 INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

**LEADER**
Course conveners- Prof. Ben Rampton & Dr Maria O'Reilly  
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**DEPARTMENT**
Education and Professional Studies, External

**ACADEMIC YEAR**
2016-17

**TERM**
Spring

**TYPE OF EVENT**
Short course

**LOCATION**
Various on Waterloo campus, see below

**NUMBER OF SESSIONS**
8

**LENGTH OF SESSION**
2 hours (3-5pm)

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<tr>
<th>TIME &amp; DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Monday, 16 January 2017</td>
<td>FWB 1.17</td>
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<td>2. Monday, 23 January 2017</td>
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<td>3. Monday, 30 January 2017</td>
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<td>4. Monday, 6 February 2017</td>
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<td>5. Monday, 13 February 2017</td>
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<td>6. Monday, 27 February 2017</td>
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<td>7. Monday, 6 March 2017</td>
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**DESCRIPTION**
This course provides PhD students with an introduction to some key principles and procedures in qualitative research methodology. It covers a range of methods, starting with an overview, moving through data collection and analysis, to a consideration of students’ own research, and engages in some canonical qualitative research texts.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

1. **Qualitative research methods: an overview- 16 January** (Maria O'Reilly)
   This session introduces students to qualitative epistemologies in order to identify some of the differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches, and considers briefly how they could be incorporated usefully within one research design. The session will introduce students to the expanding range of research methods available to qualitative researchers and will briefly explain what these are and what types of data they generate. These include ethnographic and case study approaches, interviews, observations, visual methods, online methods, documentary research, and secondary analysis of existing qualitative datasets.

**Texts to read in advance:**
  [http://csde.washington.edu/~scurran/files/readings/590QM/Week%201/Becker%20Article.pdf](http://csde.washington.edu/~scurran/files/readings/590QM/Week%201/Becker%20Article.pdf)
2. **Ethnography and participant observation- 23 January** (Maria O'Reilly)

This session will introduce students to two key contributors to social science research, Clifford Geertz and Howard Becker, (renowned anthropologist and sociologist respectively). This session will focus on what ethnographic and observational approaches can add to the methodological toolkit and will set out how these approaches have served to provide social science knowledge. Both of the readings unpick the process of generating data for ethnographic and observational research studies and point to some of the ways in which we can read and critique (as well as conduct) ethnographic and observational work and assess its quality. These readings will be discussed alongside some excerpts taken from ethnographies, which will be provided in class.

**Texts to read in advance:**
- Geertz, C. (1973) ‘Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture’ In C. Geertz (ed) *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books. This is available as an online resource: [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.01005](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.01005)

3. **Qualitative interviews: What’s useful about interview data?- 30 January** (Maria O'Reilly)

Using Wilmott and Young’s (1962) classic study of Family and Kinship in East London, this session will examine the potential of qualitative research (primarily interviews) to ask questions about, and to document family, community, ethnic and class relations in an urban working-class context. This session will show how qualitative research offers grounds for critiquing social and in this case, housing policy (see the Guardian article). Paul Thompson’s interview of Michael Young not only shows Young, the researcher reflecting on the rigour of his research but also reveals what kinds of questions a narrative interviewer might ask and how this raw piece of data would look.

In the last part of the session, we will also start to note questions and issues arising in the course so far.

**Texts to read in advance:**

4. **Analysing interview data- 6 February** (Maria O’Reilly)

In this session we will undertake small group work in which we examine extracts from interview data. We will identify themes and sub-themes within these extracts relating
to one substantive research area. We will trace the process of ordering, analysing and interpreting data in one small data set.

**Essential reading:**

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5. **Approaches to discourse data- 13 February** (Ben Rampton)
Communication involves much more than the content of the words we use, and interviews, for example, entail much more than the reporting of facts and opinions. Most qualitative data consists of language, but how far do our interpretations usually reckon with the way that language works? This session will introduce you to techniques for analysing the subtle ways in which talk affects and expresses attitudes, identities and social relationships.

**Text to read in advance:**

**Follow-up reading:**

6. **Discourse data analysis- 27 February** (Ben Rampton)
In this session, we will analysis a video of interaction, applying the approaches discussed in the previous week.

**Follow-up reading:**

7. **Constructing an argument in ethnographic research- 6 March** (Ben Rampton)
In this session, we will focus on how to construct an argument in ethnographic research, and we will engage with Michael Burawoy's classic 1998 paper, 'The extended case method' (*Sociological Theory* 16/1: 4-33). This compares the key steps involved in building an empirical argument in 'positive' and 'reflexive science', and we will then trace the path taken in Rampton's paper 'Talk in Class at Central High' (an analysis of (apparently) disorderly talk in urban classrooms in London).

**Texts to read in advance:**
8. Qualitative methods in students’ own project? - 13 March (Maria O’Reilly & Ben Rampton)
   In this session, we will discuss students’ projects.

Reading List
See course outline above for each week’s readings.

Eligibility
This course is largely restricted to students from small departments that do not offer their own in-house qualitative methods training. Please email kissdtc@kcl.ac.uk before signing up if this course has not been recommended to you by your department.

Preparation
See reading requirements for each session above.

Number of Students
25