Home exam, PSY4110, spring 2019

Access to exam: 9th May, at 14:00/ 2 pm

Deadline: 16th of May, at 14:00/ 2 pm

Important:
1500 – 2500 words (excluding references, front page etc.)
Times New Roman, font size 12, line spacing 1.5.
Remember to insert page numbers, put your candidate number on the front page.
References in APA format (see for example:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html)

Remember to use the course literature **actively** throughout your home exam assignments. In addition to the course literature, you are also welcome to draw on other relevant literature as additional material in the home exam.

Home Exam Assignments

Answer assignment 1.
Then choose **one of the two** following assignments (2 **or** 3).
Use the curriculum actively throughout in your answers.

Assignment 1:
Describe in brief a thought or actual research project where you will apply qualitative methods. Specify the research question/s, and briefly describe why this project is important. Describe in brief the methodological approach you recommend for the project. Make active use of the literature.

Guide:
Here it is expected that the candidate in short explains the research topic, formulates a good research question, and describes the method he or she would recommend. Especially regarding the latter, the candidate should draw on the curriculum.

Assignment 2 (choose this OR assignment 3):
Give well-reasoned and documented answers, by actively using literature, to the four following questions:

a) Above, in assignment 1, you have briefly described the methodological approach for the project. Here we want you to explore the planned data collection strategy in further detail. Discuss two different data collection approaches for your project (for example semi-structure interviews; focus group interviews; document analysis etc.). What are the strengths and weaknesses of these two approaches for your project?

Guide: Here it is expected that the candidate is able to elaborate on the data collection approaches he or she would recommend. The research literature should be used actively here, both in detailing the approaches, but also in general reflections on data collection.

b) How would you analyze the material? Discuss why you choose this approach, and what it would contribute to the project.

Guide: The candidate must here demonstrate insights into the chosen method of analysis, so that the choice is well argued for in relation to the focus of the project. Smith is here a rich source to the different analytical approaches, as well as the additional articles.

c) What epistemological stance would you take in this project? Comment on how this choice would make itself relevant at different stages of the research process.

Guide: Many of these methods of analysis are epistemologically grounded already (e.g. IPA, different versions of Grounded Theory). Others are open and must be grounded (e.g. thematic analysis). The candidate must demonstrate insights into the epistemological stance that either belongs to the chosen method of analysis, or do that job of grounding the project in an epistemological stance. Further, the candidate must discuss how epistemological stance will play out in different phases of the study (for example in a social constructivist analysis one can discuss aspects such as the handling of interview data as subjective but valid accounts, that one is not looking for "true" answers in the material under the analysis and so forth.)

d) Discuss ethical considerations for this research project.

Guide: Here it is expected that the candidate accounts for the formal ethical concerns and the ones that occur along the way: ethically important moments. A good answer should not just provide the standard lines regarding informed consent and anonymity, but discuss chosen concerns specific to the project design, and link these to the course literature or other relevant sources.

Assignment 3 (choose this OR assignment 2):

Give well-reasoned and documented answers, by actively using literature, to the four following questions.

a) Who would you invite to participate in your project, and how would you have recruited these? If planning a document/text analysis, comment on what you would use as your sources and how you could get access to this.

Guide: Here the candidate needs to be able to reflect on an appropriate sample, and show knowledge of recruitment strategies, as this needs to be a good fit with the focus of the research project. For the text analysis, the

candidate needs to detail the planned documents in use, and the access process.

b) What would the main challenges for getting these people to participate in your project be? How would you try to overcome these? If planning a document/text analysis, discuss the challenges involved in getting access to the material you want, and comment also on the advantages/disadvantages of a document/text analysis.

Guide: Here the candidate needs to be able to think about what challenges may occur in terms of getting people to participate, and consider how the challenges could be handled. If doing a text analysis, it is here expected that the candidate goes deeper into the challenges that may occur in getting access to the documents/texts in question. In commenting on the advantages/disadvantages of doing a text analysis it is expected that the candidate is able to discuss this using the literature, and envisioning the drawbacks involved in handling "fixed" material compared to material where one can ask follow-up questions along the way.

c) How would you analyze the data? Discuss two different approaches, and explore what these two would add to the project, as well as what challenges these may entail.

Guide: Here the candidate needs to demonstrate insights and knowledge about the different methods of analysis. This knowledge will then have to be connected to the chosen topic in a convincing way, so that the core elements of the study and the methodological approach are a good match. The candidate is also asked to go deeper into the benefits and challenges with the chosen method of analysis, which then allows for a further discussion of the fit of the analysis approaches.

d) Discuss your project in terms of quality criteria for qualitative research. Explore in particular the issues of generalization and trustworthiness.

Guide: The curriculum enables a very good discussion on disagreements within the field as to how quality criteria should be handled, and the candidates should be able to present this debate in their discussion, as well as being able to relate this actively to their own project.