MRes Education
For students entering Part 1 in 2011/2

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty
Programme length:	1 years
Date of specification:	23/Aug/2011
Programme Director:	Prof Paul Croll
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Advanced Taught Programme Board
Accreditation:	

Summary of programme aims
The aim of the MRes Education is to prepare people for research careers in both academic and non-academic settings where education research skills and knowledge are required. It also aims to serve as year 1 of a social science 1 + 3 PhD course. More specifically the programme aims to:
- Introduce students to the nature, purposes and main features of research in education and the social sciences more generally.
- Provide students with an appropriate grounding in the main philosophical and epistemological approaches to social science research.
- Prepare students to identify appropriate research questions and to be aware of the range of research designs and their application to different research problems.
- Provide knowledge of approaches to case selection and sampling.
- Introduce a range of data collection procedures including questionnaires, interviewing, observation and documentary analysis.
- Introduce a range of data analysis procedures including both quantitative and qualitative approaches and to provide the skills of working with the SPSS package.
- Consider ethical issues in research and questions of access to research settings.
- Enable students to conduct and report a research-based investigation in the field of education.

Transferable skills
Organisational and self-management skills, bibliographical skills, IT and internet skills, numerical and statistical skills, writing skills.

Programme content
The content of the MRes Education draws upon the Research Methods Programme (RMP) taken by PhD and MPhil students in the social sciences and based in GSSS together with elements from the Modular Masters programme offered within the Institute of Education.

Students take 120 credits consisting of 8 core taught modules (80 credits) and 2 optional taught modules (40 credits) followed by a 15,000 word dissertation (EDM030). For part-time students the taught modules must be completed within 48 months and the dissertation must be submitted within 36 months of completing the taught modules. The dissertation registration period is 12 months (part-time). Full-time students complete the programme in 12 months.

Students will take the seven taught modules of RMP together with the Generic and Transferable Skills Programme (GTSP) offered by GSSS. These eight elements constitute the research training element of the MRes Education and together amount to 80 credits. The web-based Essentials of Research Methods course will be a background resource for the students but is not an assessed part of the course.

Students will also take two modules from the Modular Programme offered in the Institute of Education. These make up the education specific element of the course and together amount to 40 credits.

Students will also complete a 15,000 word dissertation based on an original empirical investigation. Part-time students may register for the dissertation at the beginning of the Autumn, Spring or Summer Terms.

Compulsory modules

Code	Title	Credits	Level
GSM001	Principles of Research Design 1	10	7
GSM002	Principles of Research Design 2	10	7
GSM003	Data collection and analysis 1: Statistics for Educational and Social Research	10	7
GSM004	Data collection and analysis 2: Interviewing and Observation	10	7
GSM005	Data collection and analysis 3: Questionnaires and surveys	10	7
GSM006	Data collection and analysis 4: Analysing language and text based data	10	7
GSM007	Data collection and analysis 5: Using electronic and other source materials	10	7
GSM009	Generic and transferable skills for research	10	7
EDM030	Dissertation	60	7

Optional modules
In consultation with their supervisor and the Programme Director, students will select two modules of 20 credits from the full range of level 7 modular provision within the Institute of Education. This may vary from year to year and students will receive full information at the start of the programme. Certain modules such as 'Investigating Education' and 'Practitioner Research' will not be available as the content may overlap the RMP modules.

Part-time or modular arrangements
The programme can be taken over 12 months full-time or 36-84 months part-time (please see Programme Content section for further details of time-scales).

Progression requirements
N/A

Assessment and classification
The seven RMP modules and the GTSP will be assessed using the generic forms of assessment used on those programmes. This is normally a 2,000-2,500 word assignment relating to the content of the module. The modules from the Modular Masters will be assessed by a 4-5,000 word assignment in line with the Modular Masters requirements. The dissertation will be of 15,000 words and will be assessed in line with the procedures for the Modular Masters.

Mark Interpretation
70 - 100% Distinction
60 - 69% Merit
50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:
40 - 49% Work below threshold standard
0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees (180 credits)
To pass the MRes Education students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

For PG Diplomas (120 credits)
To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For PG Certificate (60 credits)
To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

Admission requirements
Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained an honours degree at 2.1 or equivalent in the social sciences or education. However, students with good degrees in other fields and experience in education will also be considered.

Admissions Tutor: Professor Paul Croll

Support for students and their learning
University support for students and their learning falls into two categories.   Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEECC), In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme.   Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see www.reading.ac.uk/student

Career prospects
The course prepares students for research careers within educational settings including government, higher education and industrial / commercial settings. The recent developments in evidence based policy and ideas about teachers as researchers enhance the likely availability of such careers. Students taking the course on a part-time basis are likely to be in employment and may be looking to enhance career prospects within their work settings.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements
Not normally appropriate. International students may, by negotiation, conduct research for their dissertation in their own country.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. Research methods and skills in the social sciences and education	RMP modules 1 - 7
2. Principles of research design	Modular Masters modules
3. A range of methods for data collection and analysis	*Assessment*
4. Theoretical, policy-related and ethical implications of research approaches	Module assignments and final dissertation
5. Various substantive aspects of the study of education	

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to:*

1. Ability to make links between theory and method in the social sciences
2. Ability to formulate research questions and to design a research project to answer research questions
3. Critical assessment of social science literature
4. Show the relevance of research to substantive educational issues

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

RMP modules 1 - 7
Modular Masters modules

Assessment
Module assignments and final dissertation

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. Plan, organise and conduct a research project
2. Undertake practical fieldwork
3. Form appropriate and ethical relationships with research subjects
4. Use the SPSS analysis package

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Generic and transferable Skills Programme
RMP 3

Assessment
Assignments for GTSP and RPM 3. Final dissertation

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

1. Write an well structured and coherent report
2. Organise and manage a project
3. Show grasp of numerical skills
4. Disseminate work to appropriate audiences
5. Access a range of information sources

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Dissertation preparation
GTSP
RMP 3

Assessment
Dissertation
Presentations in GTSP
Assignment for RMP 3

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.