

MREL103 Educational Research in the Religion Classroom

ECTS Value: 5 ECTS
Self-Study Hours: 85

Contact Hours: 25
Assessment Hours: 15

Overall Objectives and Outcomes

Education is a very complex field which is in continuous development. It follows that educational material should be thoroughly researched and critically analysed to assess its relevance to future perspectives. Naturally this applies to Religious Education (RE) as well. Through this module, participants are given the opportunity to evaluate and become aware of different research possibilities in RE while developing a respectful attitude towards religious and spiritual diversity. Thus, the basis for this programme is the knowledge that participants need to acquire regarding already existing literature, approaches and methodology where diversity is truly embraced. Following this module, participants will be in a better position to select the kind of research that fits best their targets according to their personal preferences together with their needs in the educational field.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

Competences:

- a. understand systematically the key aspects of educational research and what it entails to carry it out in the context of RE;
- b. comprehend various types of research which can be employed in the RE context and select an appropriate methodology that fits the scope of the research;
- c. appreciate the importance of literature review preceding the selection of an appropriate research methodology to take place in a specific field of RE;
- d. analyse critically the objectives and circumstances leading to a need for qualitative and/or quantitative research;
- e. apply the skills required to embark on a specific research project.

Knowledge:

- a. critique the different ways of carrying out research;
- b. determine the advantages and disadvantages of each research method;
- c. define the different stages of educational research as gathering, organizing and analysing data;
- d. develop ways of using information technology to carry out research in an efficient and effective way;
- e. critically assess different ways of evaluating a research project.

Skills:

- a. recognise specific areas in the educational field that require in-depth analysis and development;
- b. critically assess the characteristics of different kinds of research and how these can be applied in RE;
- c. apply mentoring skills with other course participants;
- d. evaluate the curriculum being used and develop a scheme of work and a series of lesson plans;
- e. acknowledge moral development as aspects of human development, instigating in prospective students a drive to act according to conscience and integrate socially as true Christians;
- f. demonstrate the required skills for self and peer assessment.
- g. develop and cultivate an open social attitude, which goes beyond the classroom.

Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Research Study

Suggested Readings

Core Reading List:

1. Important - Stausberg, M., & Engler, S. (2014). *The Routledge handbook of research methods in the study of religion*. London, Routledge.
2. Barnes, L.P. ed., (2011). *Debates in religious education*. Routledge, pp.168-179, 205-234.
3. Black, P. and Wiliam, D., 2009. Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability (formerly: Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education)*, 21(1), pp.5-31.
4. Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Delhi, PHI Learning Private Limited.
5. Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching 2nd ed.* Alexandria, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Developmen, pp. 109-192.
6. Erricker, C., Lowndes, J. and Bellchambers, E., (2010). *Primary Religious Education—A New Approach: Conceptual Enquiry in Primary RE*. Routledge, 163-208.
7. Etherington, K. (2006). *Becoming a reflexive researcher: using our selves in research*. London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers. pp. 71-159.

8. Fullan, M. and Langworthy, M. (January 2014). *A Rich Sea. How New Pedagogies Find Deep Learning*. London: Pearson.
9. Harlen, W. (2014). *Assessment, standards and quality of Learning in Primary Education*. W. Harlen. York: Cambridge Primary Review Trust.
10. Husbands, C. and Pearce, J. (2012). What makes great pedagogy? Nine claims from research. *National College for School Leadership*, [online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/329746/what-makes-great-pedagogy-nine-claims-from-research.pdf - [Accessed 4 January 2018].
11. Learning Outcomes Framework, (2015). *Religion*. [online] Available at: <http://www.schoolslearningoutcomes.edu.mt/en/dashboard> [Accessed 4 January 2018].
12. Ministry for Education and Employment. The Fronter Platform for Primary schools – Year 1 – Year 6. Available at: <https://ilearn.edu.mt/malta/main.phtml> [Accessed 4 January 2018]
13. Moyles, J. R., Georgeson, J., & Payler, J. (2011). *Beginning teaching - beginning learning in early years and primary education*. Maidenhead, England, McGraw Hill/Open University Press. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=434992>.
14. Siraj, I., Taggart, B., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P. and Sylva, K. (2014). *Exploring Effective pedagogy in Primary Schools: Evidence from Research*. London: Pearson.
15. Stern, J. (2006). *Teaching religious education: researchers in the classroom*. London, Continuum, pp. 113-171.

Supplementary Reading List:

1. Barnes, L. P., & Wright, A. (2008). *Learning to teach religious education in the secondary school: a companion to school experience*. London [etc.], Routledge.
2. Chater, M. and E. Clive. (2013). *Does Religious Education have a Future? Pedagogical and policy prospects*. Routledge.
3. Davies, G. (2004). Religious Education in the Primary School. *School of Education*. [online] Bangor: University of Wales. Available at: <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/addysg/publications/Trafodion4s.pdf>. [Accessed 4 January 2018]
4. Fancourt, N. - *Teaching about Christianity in religious education: a review of research*, [online] University of Oxford. Available at: <http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Teaching-about-Christianity-in-religious-education.pdf>. [Accessed 4 January 2018]

5. Fontana, D. (1995). *Psychology for Teachers*. 3rd ed. New York: Palgrave.

Videos:

1. Archdiocese of Brisbane. (2016). *Religious Education Planning and Assessing in Religious Education*. [video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQFUfRHwVc0> [Accessed 4 January 2018].
2. Center for Research Quality. [2015]. *Overview of Qualitative Research Methods* [video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsAUNs-loSQ> [Accessed 8 September 2018].