



Refining Training & Building Capacity in Questionnaire Design Workshop

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About me and my research

The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter profile for Debbie Collins (@TechSocialSci). The profile picture is a photo of red tulips. The bio reads: "I'm a PhD student @NCRMUK @unsothampton looking at the role of digital technology in the teaching and learning of social research methods". Below the bio is a tweet with a link to a website. The website snippet is titled "THE PEDAGOGY OF METHODOLOGICAL LEARNING" and includes a navigation menu with links for "news", "about us", "people", "research", "publications", and "training and events". The URL <http://pedagogy.ncrm.ac.uk/> is displayed below the menu. The website snippet also features a decorative green and white geometric pattern of triangles.



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Aims of this workshop

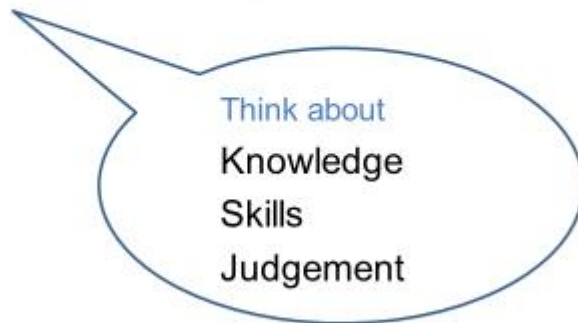
- Encourage** • debate and discussion about the teaching & learning of questionnaire design
- Develop** • your knowledge and understanding of your own teaching practice
- Build** • the beginnings of a community of practice, sharing resources

Structure of the workshop

- Task-based activities designed to encourage
 - Thinking
 - Reflection
 - Talking
- Develop your knowledge and understanding of your pedagogical content knowledge:
 - your approach to teaching questionnaire design
 - the strategies and tactics you (can) use

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Task 1 - what are the challenges in teaching and learning questionnaire design?



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Task 2 – group the challenges to create a typology

- Are there any challenges that are distinct?
- Are there any missing that you want to add?

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Task 3 – How do you tackle this challenge?

- What strategies did you/ could you use to tackle this challenge?
 - Think about the knowledge, skills, judgements students need to apply

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Task 4 – Why did you tackle this challenge in that way?

- Reflect on why you tackled it in this way?
- What could you have done differently?

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Pedagogy

“what people do in teaching and learning situations
...what they perceive to be meaningful, important
and relevant”

Nind, Kilburn, Luff (2016) The teaching and learning of social research methods: developments in pedagogical knowledge. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 18 (5): p456

- Pedagogy can be hard to know: it can be implicit
- In this workshop we have been making it explicit

Resources

THE PEDAGOGY OF METHODOLOGICAL LEARNING

How are advanced social science research methods taught and learned?

<http://pedagogy.ncrm.ac.uk/>

[news](#) / [about us](#) / [people](#) / [research](#) / [publications](#) / [training and events](#)



SPECIAL ISSUE: TEACHING
AND LEARNING SOCIAL
RESEARCH METHODS

International Journal of Social Research
Methodology (2015), volume 18, issue 5



NEW PAPER: TEACHING
RESEARCH METHODS IN THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES: EXPERT
PERSPECTIVES ON
PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE

Lewthwaite, S. & Nind, M. (2016)
[Teaching Research Methods in the
Social Sciences: Expert
Perspectives on Pedagogy and
Practice](#), British Journal of
Educational Studies

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QDET2 Conference workshop: Teaching questionnaire design: Feedback for participants

To add value to the workshop, the convenors have worked to identify the pedagogic content knowledge you demonstrated during the session. Here we make explicit that which you know implicitly, by considering the thinking available to us through your conversations about how to respond to the challenges of teaching questionnaire design. This should help you to reflect on and further develop your working concepts and practices, and offer an extended vocabulary for discussing it with others. We also link to a range of resources linked to our Pedagogy of Methodological Learning study.

The talk about the challenges in teaching questionnaire design can be distilled into an identification of not just the challenges but the teaching goals too. Thus you spoke of the need to:

- a) get the information and skills required in questionnaire design across in the time and resource available; this is about becoming efficient teachers and learners
- b) get more novice questionnaire designers to connect their design work to the research problem; this is about developing their competence to critically reflect and to apply their learning/knowledge to new research problems
- c) enable more novice questionnaire designers to adapt to different research contexts; this is about developing their competence to think for themselves (the 'it works here but not there' idea) and also recognise that their positionality and standpoints within the research are not neutral
- d) support questionnaire designers to develop their capacity to anticipate how the questionnaire and data will be used by others; this is about sharing your insights into the complex, holistic, multi-disciplinary aspects of questionnaire design – passing on the tacit knowledge, the subtle, nuanced things you know and how you came to know them
- e) support questionnaire designers to connect theory and practice in a fast-changing field; this is not just about knowing the theory but applying it

Your work on the tasks indicated a range of ways in which you respond to the challenges and teaching goals. We might organise these conceptually as follows:

Experiential learning approaches	Having given theoretical input, shadowing learners to see how they apply it live (in on the job training, presumably giving feedback along the way). Providing mock experiences so they can safely learn about what might go wrong, allowing learning from errors.
Active learning approaches	Supporting learners to develop their own, evolving checklists for effective questionnaire design. Sensitising learners to bad practice from exercises involving engagement with improving poor questionnaire design.
Mentoring approach	Involving mentor and mentee in constant talking, telling stories, sharing different scenarios, intentions and realities.

Iterative learning	Finding out and working from learners' knowledge and skills, building from that, showing how the learning at later stages of the process can inform learning about the earlier stages.
Fostering critical thinking	Putting emphasis on learning <i>why</i> not just <i>what</i> in your exposition; making your decision-making explicit and making the path to that decision-making explicit. Creating spaces for posing and dealing with challenges and considering evolving theory and landscape. Encouraging learners to question and explore <i>why</i>
Peer learning	Working in teams on new challenges. Enabling reflection with the peer group, peer supervision, moving to context-based solutions through dialogue Enabling process of making sense of the necessary and growing knowledge together
Optimising learning resources	Connecting learners to the resources they can use (physical and human) Helping learners identify / locate good materials e.g. textbooks, web resources Investing in developing topic briefs/'two-pager' distillations of cutting edge research/key examples Using wikis where learners can co-produce guidance bringing more ownership and currency to resources.

Our work can help you in the following ways:

Two papers/Quick Guides:

- [Teaching advanced research methods – NCRM quick start guide.](#)
This discusses research-informed ways to teach advanced methods
- [Principles for effective pedagogy – NCRM quick start guide.](#)
This synthesizes what is known about effective pedagogy for teachers of research methods

Research Papers:

- Kilburn, D., Nind, M. and Wiles, R. (2014) [Learning as researchers and teachers: the development of a pedagogical culture for social science research methods?](#) *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 62 (2), 191–207. doi:10.1080/00071005.2014.918576. (Open access)
- Lewthwaite, S. and Nind, M. (2016) [Teaching Research Methods in the Social Sciences: Expert Perspectives on Pedagogy and Practice.](#) *British Journal of Educational Studies*. DOI: 10.1080/00071005.2016.1197882. (Open access)

These papers dig deeply into the pedagogies of social science research methods teaching including many of the pedagogic approaches you alluded to. Kilburn *et al.* (2014) offer a thematic analysis of a

decade of research literature on methods teaching. The paper identifies and discusses what is known about experiential approaches, learning by doing, reflexivity and critical thinking amongst other relevant pedagogies. Lewthwaite & Nind (2016) follow up on this work to examine the practices and values of expert methods teachers and trainers in qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods.

Project website:

- <http://pedagogy.ncrm.ac.uk> includes all our project outputs. You can subscribe to receive updates on new resources, publications and events. Forthcoming resources include our next Quick Start Guide (due Spring 2017), which offers a glossary of key pedagogic terms for methods training and teaching.

Finally, one participant asked the insightful question: 'is it only experience that makes a questionnaire designer – or can they get there from formal training?' Our answer would be that good teaching/training both provides experience - vicarious experiences, mock experiences to support real world experience - and adds value to experience - by creating space for dialogue about, and reflection on, experience.

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