­Delve Even Deeper

Here you will find additional resources to help you design and undertake your projects. This includes both academic and non-academic resources. These resources will prove useful in developing your knowledge and understanding of research methods and undertaking a dissertation. Additionally, these will compliment (and sometimes challenge!) the writing from the book.

It is important to note that these resources are transient and context specific. So, always remember to utilise resources such as these alongside those from your independent reading and resource lists.

# Getting started

As already discussed, getting started with your research is often the hardest part, below are some resources which help you to plan and get going with your research, complementing the resources in the book and our online resources pages:

Hamersley (1993) *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice.* This text has an emphasis upon qualitative research, however has useful tips in planning which are applicable and transferable to all projects.

Smith (2005) *Philosophy and Methodology of the Social Sciences* is a collection of readings helping you to make sense of research and understand different methodologies.

The [London School of Economics and Political Science](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2012/11/28/lupton-30-tips-writing/) runs a blog providing some good advice to get you started with your work and to think about setting or planning tasks throughout the project.

It can also be useful to hear about other students’ experiences of doing projects. Forums including [The Student Room](https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/content.php?r=3590-university) provide spaces to share experiences and ideas.

[*The Student Edge*](https://studentedge.org/forums), based in Australia, also has handy ‘Forum’ areas where you can post questions and share ideas (problems!) with other students.

Also, remember to try to talk to those students who might have already done dissertations within your departments and universities. Using the networks in your department and university can help you to identify these people.

Furthermore, your department will likely have online pages already set up to support your dissertation module, so use this tool to communicate and support your ideas and challenges. Here you might also find examples of previous dissertations, which can help you envisage what your project will look like.

# Webpages with general advice on undertaking the dissertation

The internet can provide a wide variety of resources to help you with your dissertations.   
This might include inspiration on topics, tips on design and conducting the research, data and software to help with your analysis. All of these sources can be useful, but you need to be mindful that anyone can create these types of resources, so ensure that you utilise the advice and tools you find online alongside those outlined by your department and under the guidance of your supervisor. The ones listed below here are all from reputable sites and provide a good place to start in your online search for additional resources.

[*The Social Research Association*](http://the-sra.org.uk/sra_resources/publications/) provides some good resources discussing quality in social research and guidance on topics including ethics.

[*The Social Science Space*](https://www.socialsciencespace.com/about-socialsciencebites/) has a wide variety of resources to get you thinking about social research across different disciplines, as well as the impact or contribution of your work, too. The ‘Social Science Bites’ section is particularly helpful and provides podcasts on up to date topics which might help you to generate ideas for your own research, as well as hearing about how project develop (even professors have to start with the basics when designing projects!)

[*The National Centre for Research Methods*](https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/index.php)provides learning resources and online newsletters that provide detail on innovative research and methods. This is a good place to get some inspiration and to see methods in action. The videos are particularly handy learning tools to help you further your understanding of specific methods. This website also provides information on potential data sets which you could utilise for your research.

[*The Quantitative Methods Initiative*](https://www.quantitativemethods.ac.uk/) produced by the Economic Social Research Council aims to provide support and resources for those who are thinking about implementing quantitative methodologies. This webpage has some helpful learning resources including analysis guidance for quantitative research, as well as providing some ideas for possible data sets you could access for your own research.

# Social Media

Social media sites can also be a great place to find support and extend your knowledge.   
For example, if you search certain hashtags including ‘social research’, ‘qualitative methods’, ‘quantitative methods’, or ‘mixed methods’ on Twitter you will find an array of work and people who are working on similar themes and developing projects, too. Whilst some of this information might be too specific, this is a good space to see innovative research released and discussed. You could be brave and use this as a space to ask a question about your own research and build your own network.

Also, remember that many students around you will also be going through the same process, so you might want to think about using social media to connect to those closer to you in order to build support networks. For example, often there are dedicated Facebook pages (or equivalent) within your own universities for students to talk to each other and share ideas.

Again, just be mindful that this platform is open, so not everything on there is trustworthy. Use information from these platforms alongside other resources, and check with your supervisor if you are unsure about resources or information.

# Blogs, Vlogs and Public Resources

Blogs and vlogs can be a good source of information and guidance whilst designing and writing your project. However, be aware that the quality of blogs and vlogs might vary and they will not be systematically reviewed in the same ways as books and journals. For this reason, perhaps use these to support and inspire your work as a sort of a catalyst for your thinking, but ensure that you use wider literature, too.

[*The British Library*](https://blogs.bl.uk/socialscience/) provides an array of additional resources and training. This includes videos, training and links to other resources to assist in the development of your project. (It is also worth looking at the ‘Archives’ section of these types of sites, as this provides even more resources).

[*TED Talks*](https://www.ted.com/talks) also provide interesting resources for developing ideas and knowledge. If you are still wondering what the value of social sciences is and why the dissertation might be important, you could start with [this video](https://youtu.be/6YrMMicjTeo) which makes a case for why social research is important.

Many universities within the UK provide resources that are open to the public and other students. These can be helpful to help you to understand the process and to think creatively about your research. As noted above, keep in mind that you need to align with the requirements of your own university/department and use these as resources to supplement reading and learning.

The London School of Economics and Politics Science has good resources, including [this blog](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2012/11/28/lupton-30-tips-writing/).

The University of Manchester provides some good resources on methods that are open to the public, including videos and slides on how to use [specific methods and methodologies](https://www.methods.manchester.ac.uk/themes/) and [data collection](https://www.methods.manchester.ac.uk/themes/data-collection/).

The University of Bathhas a variety of public resources that are helpful when deciding on which methods and methodologies to use, as well as [tips on analysis](https://library.bath.ac.uk/research-services).

# Methods specific resources

We have provided guidance on a variety of methods throughout the book and within the online resources pages. However, below you will find a few extra resources for specific methods.

### Interviews, Focus Groups and Ethnography

[The University of Leeds](http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/) has some good resources on qualitative data collection and analysis.

Dexter, L. A. (2006) Elite and Specialized Interviewing. Colchester, UK: ECPR Classics Press. This book is useful for tips on interviewing different groups of people, especially those in positions of power or prestige

[‘Social Research Update’](http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU19.html) is published quarterly by the Department of Sociology at The University of Surrey. This provides methods specific guidance, including the one on focus groups (again explore the archives of these sites for other examples).

Sim, J. and Waterfield, J. (2019) Focus group methodology: some ethical challenges, Quality and Quantity p. 1-20. This book has some further insights into conducting focus groups within research.

Lavrakas, P. (1993) Telephone Survey Methods: Sampling selection and Supervision. Beverly Hills: Sage. This book is particularly useful if you are planning to conduct research over the phone. There are tips and hints here that will also be helpful if you are undertaking research using other communication tools, such as Skype.

### Secondary Data analysis

[The University of Leeds](https://timescapes-archive.leeds.ac.uk/using-the-archive/secondary-analysis/) provides some useful guides for secondary data analysis. This might help to give you some ideas for the types or forms of data you could use in your own research.

Dilman, D. A., Smyth, J. And Christian, L. M. (2009) Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method. London: John Wiley and Sons.

Klassen, T. P., Jahad, A. R. and Moher, D. (1998) Guides for reading and interpreting systematic reviews. Archives of Paediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 152 (7). This articlethough slightly dated, is helpful in demonstrating through examples, how to study and analyse reviews.

Hodson, L. (1999) Analysing Documentary Accounts, Thousand Oaks California: Sage This book provides some helpful details on analysing documentaries which could be applied to diverse forms of media documents and sources.

### Data sets

[The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](https://www.ahrq.gov/data/index.html) is particularly helpful if you   
would like to do research on health related topics, as it provides access to data sets   
as well as good advice on the ethics of conducting research on the topic of health.

[Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics?content_store_document_type=published_statistics)provides accessible data that could be useful for your dissertation. Using the search engines on this site, you can explore the data available which matches your research interest.

[The Office for National Statistics](https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics?content_store_document_type=published_statistics) is the UK’s largest producer of official statistics. It also provides some accessible data that could be utilised within a dissertation project.

[The British Social Attitudes Survey](http://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/): each year NatCen’s British Social Attitudes survey   
asks around 3,000 people what it is like to live in Britain and what they think about how   
Britain is run. This site provides some interesting data which can be utilised in a dissertation   
project, with the themes offering some inspiration for your research, too.

[The UK Data Service](https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/#!?Search=&Page=1&Rows=10&Sort=0&DateFrom=440&DateTo=2019) funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to meet the data needs of researchers, students, and teachers from all sectors. The UK Data Service collection includes major UK government-sponsored surveys, cross-national surveys, longitudinal studies, UK census data, international aggregate, business data, and qualitative data.

### Analysis tools and help

Below are some websites that are useful if you are struggling with analysis and some specific software packages:

[QSR International (NVivo)](http://www.qsrinternational.com)

[Online QDA (NVivo)](http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/index.php)

[Dissertation Genius: SPSS Help](https://dissertationgenius.com/spss-help-brief-tutorial/)

[Data Analysis in SPSS Made Easy (YouTube video)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0G_GAdo268)

[Oxbridge Essays blog for getting started with analysis and writing-up](https://www.oxbridgeessays.com/blog/dissertation-findings-discussion-sections/)

[Student blog on getting started with analysis and writing up](https://mattcooling.wordpress.com/2015/07/17/data-analysis-writing-the-dissertation/)

As well as some books to help you out:

Sarantakos, S. (2000) Basic Stats without Maths, Sydney: Harvard Press.

Richards, L. (2009) Handling Qualitative Data, 2nd Edition. London: Sage. This book provides some further advice on how to manage and organise your qualitative data.