

# Contents

Acknowledgements	x
Introduction	xii
<b>1 Getting Started</b>	<b>1</b>
What is research?	1
Why research	1
How to approach research (and survive)	2
Let the computer help you research	5
Why use the computer?	7
Buying a computer	8
<b>2 Identifying an Area of Research</b>	<b>13</b>
The allocated research topic	13
Choosing your own research topic	14
An initial literature search	15
How to use the books initially	20
The framework of your topic	20
Talking with others	21
Keeping a record and a bibliography	22
Setting a timetable	22
Using computerised library catalogues	24
CD-ROMs	25
Computerised diaries	26
Keyboard skills	27
<b>3 Methods of Research</b>	<b>29</b>
Qualitative versus quantitative research	29
Qualitative research	30
Quantitative research	31
Glossary of new terms	31
Validity and reliability	32

Sampling	34
Life history research (including interviews)	35
Survey research	37
Action research	39
Observation	40
Case studies	43
Experimental methods	44
Which research method to choose?	46
Using word processing	47
Word-processing functions particularly relevant to research	48
Folders (or directories)	49
Scanning	52
Keeping a record and a bibliography	52
Writing the record	53
<b>4 Collecting the Data</b>	<b>55</b>
Sources of data (primary and secondary)	56
Citing references and writing the bibliography	59
Internet versus books	65
Plagiarism	66
Copyright	67
Internet – understanding information	70
Internet – searching for information	73
Bookmarking useful Internet sites	78
Referencing online work	82
Online databases used in libraries	87
Online databases available on your home computer	88
Data Archive	89
Other relevant Internet sites that might be of interest	89
Library CD-ROMs	92
<b>5 Interviews in Detail</b>	<b>94</b>
What do you want from the interviews?	94
The structured interview	95
Unstructured interviews	96
Semi-structured interviews	98
Who should be interviewed?	101
The skills needed to be a successful interviewer	101
Helpful questioning	103

The ethics involved	105
Using diaries for research	106
Telephone methods of interviewing	107
Access	109
Recording the spoken word	110
Paying respondents	113
Pilot study	114
Which interview technique to choose?	115
Email	115
Finding your interview audience online	116
Computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI)	117
Using email to aid interviews	119
Pros and cons of online interviewing	121
<b>6 Questionnaires</b>	<b>123</b>
Open or closed questions – designing the questionnaire	124
Problem questions	126
The layout of the questionnaire	132
Piloting your questionnaire	136
Distributing the finished questionnaire	136
Using a computer to lay out a questionnaire	141
Creating a questionnaire to be distributed on the Internet	142
HTML and XML – what are they?	143
Converting word-processed documents to HTML documents	144
Designing a Web page questionnaire	146
Creating your own online Web questionnaire	147
A touch of caution before you begin	148
<b>7 Analysing the Data</b>	<b>151</b>
Qualitative observation research	151
Audio/video data	154
Coding data	157
Coding questionnaires using summary sheets	159
Tabulation	160
Cross tabulation	162
Different data measurement scales	165
Other types of variable	168
Averages	169
Data presentation	171

Methods of testing reliability and validity	175
Decide method of analysing data before it is needed	178
Specialist software analysis programs	178
Utilising everyday software	181
Folders (directories) and files	181
Analysis of open-ended interview data using a word processor	182
Analysis of questionnaire data using a database	183
Using spreadsheets	185
Using spreadsheets to produce charts	188
<b>8 Getting Down to Writing</b>	<b>193</b>
Before writing the first draft	194
What to write	195
The practical details	197
Writing clearly	199
Writing the conclusion	200
Dictionaries and thesauruses can help	202
Grammar, correct words and abbreviations	203
Full stops, commas and colons	204
Layout intricacies	206
First, second, third draft?	207
Using the word processor	209
Computer dictionaries (spellcheckers) and grammar checkers	209
Bringing together previously saved files	214
How the computer can assist your writing up	215
Merging files together	215
<b>9 Powerful Presentations</b>	<b>223</b>
How do you listen?	223
Helping your audience to listen	224
Preparing the presentation	225
Pitching the level	226
Building a logical structure	226
Your opening words	228
Keeping their attention	229
Remembering what you're going to say	230
Timing	230
Rehearsing your presentation	231
Visual aids – why use them?	233

Types of visual aids	235
Nerves under control?	241
Presentation software	244
Professional company presentations	245
What does the equipment do?	246
<b>10 Finding a Voice – Sharing your Research Findings</b>	<b>251</b>
Books	251
Journals and magazines	254
Publish it yourself?	256
Competitions, bursaries, fellowships and grants	256
Sharing your research without more writing	258
Further research?	258
Making your research findings and data available online	259
Proving its your work	259
Conclusion Research is always incomplete	262
Glossary of terms	263
Bibliography	265
Index	269