

Pilot assessments: Component 2

Component 2: Research Practices and Processes

The purpose of this component is to encourage the student to engage fully in research practices and processes appropriate to the project and to provide evidence of their participation. Project supervisors should select three Research Practice and Process Artefacts that will act as evidence. They should ensure that these artefacts are as authentic as possible and reflect the disciplinary or interdisciplinary practices of the particular research project. In some instances, these artefacts are simultaneously a record – e.g. making lab book entries or field notes; in others the student may need to create a record – e.g. use audio visual media to document an event or practice and provide a brief written explanation of it. In addition to the three artefacts, students should keep a Weekly Activity Log of their research activity throughout the project/module.

Relation to the QMUL Model Learning Outcomes:

This component links best to the Beyond or Strengthening Disciplinary Knowledge strand and (though not perfectly) to the level 5 LO:

- Demonstrate how discipline-specific problem-solving techniques or approaches may be generalised or applied in a broader context (*where the broader context is the research project*).

Assessment weighting: 40%

Weekly Activity Log:

- A simple record, with brief details, of research activities undertaken each week and the approximate time spent. (Supervisors may use this to help with authorising time sheets for payments.)
- The student should make sure that the log cross-references with the other evidence.
- In week 7 or around half way through the research process, the student should briefly revisit their appraisal objectives to check that everything is on track.
- The OU Blog tool in QMPlus is a suitable platform for recording the log and also allows the supervisor to interact with the student. However, other platforms might be used or the log could be paper-based, depending on what is most suitable.

Research Practice and Process Artefacts - the student should submit three artefacts, possibly from a range of options decided by the research supervisor as suitable ways of showing successful engagement in the practices and processes of the research (See assessment criteria below for suggestions about the types of knowledge that might be looked for through these artefacts: representational, cognitive, physical). Examples of artefacts are:

- Field notes
- (Annotated) transcripts or other data
- Code
- Meta-data
- Photographic records
- Synopsis of a journal article related to the data/research project
- Records of research meetings, decisions
- Public/participant engagement material (draft leaflet, workshop plan, podcast)

The project supervisor should provide guidelines for the student on how to present these artefacts successfully.

Assessment Criteria:

In this assessment component, we are looking for clear evidence that the student has:

- engaged throughout with the research process
- effectively used discipline- and/or project-specific practices
- contributed substantively to the work of the research team

and that the student:

- can represent material in ways that are authentic to the research field or community
- has sufficient content knowledge required to understand and interpret material and representations
- can employ any necessary physical procedures needed for the research

*The project supervisor should modify or add criteria that relate to project-specific artefacts.

Grading System

For this component of the module assessment we are using a simple grade-based approach: A, B, C, D (where for translation into a 0-100% scale the numerical value is taken as A= 75%, B= 65%, C= 55% and D= 45%)

A – shows established ability in the majority of areas covered by the assessment criteria

B – shows developing ability in the majority of areas covered by the assessment criteria; some further consolidation needed

C – shows emerging ability in the majority of areas set out in the assessment criteria; a number of areas still need further development and consolidation.

D - shows emerging ability in some areas of the assessment criteria; the majority of areas need considerable further development and consolidation.

Sources used for the development of this component:

David Hanuaer et al (2009) Active Assessment: Assessing Scientific Inquiry

Craig Agnor, QMUL – Physics Projects – Record of Engagement

SEDA discussion on categorical assessment