

MMS9300 Qualitative Research Methods

Extended syllabus Spring 2026

Course aims/objectives:	The aim of the course is to give the participants an in-depth introduction to qualitative research, its design and execution.
Learning outcomes:	After completing this course, the student should: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• recognize the uniqueness and distinctiveness of qualitative research, particularly in contrast to positivist and postpositivist research cultures;• distinguish qualitative methodological approaches and types of qualitative inquiry and appreciate their advantages and limitations;• understand when a research topic requires qualitative research methods;• can argue for different methodological choices related to the qualitative research process.• demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects in conjunction with qualitative research.• demonstrate skills in managing selected design, data collection, analysis, and writing strategies of qualitative research, via exercises.
Brief description of the course and topics to be covered:	The course is divided into several parts. The first part addresses qualitative research paradigms and ethical aspects. The second part is about sampling, types of qualitative data collection as well as common mistakes during data collection. The third part refers to transcription methods and approaches to data analysis. Finally, the fourth part addresses quality aspects of qualitative research and publishing qualitative research.
Language of the course:	English
ECTS credits:	6 ECTS
Coverage of SDGs and ERS (sustainable development goals, ethics, responsibility and sustainability):	The course covers ethics in (qualitative) research/ SDGs 4, 5, 10 are addressed in the context of qualitative research.
Students:	This is an elective course for doctoral students studying on MAXD22 VERSION MAXD22/22 programme.
Special needs:	Persons with disabilities can participate in this course. Please inform the professor(s) in the beginning of the course of any special instruction, or assessments of this course that may be necessary to enable you to fully participate in this course.
Registration:	Students who would like to take the course should declare the course in the ÕIS (Student Information System) by deadlines set in the academic calendar.
Prerequisite courses and/or knowledge:	Sound basic understanding of (business) research at the doctoral level
Prerequisite resources:	MS Office programmes. For free student download see the instructions https://confluence.ttu.ee/it-info/it-arvuti-ja-oppetoeoekoht/tarkvara/microsoft-office-kodukasutus
Professor(s):	Susanne Durst, PhD, Adjunct Professor, susanne.durst@taltech.ee

Contacting Professor(s): Preferred means of contact email, responses provided within 1-2 workdays.

Schedule for classes: March 19
March 24
March 27
April 8
April 10
All distance and between 9:00 -12:15

Study process description: Lectures, discussions and exercises will take place in the online classes. All information about the course as well as the (additional) material will be provided on the course's Moodle site. The organization of the course is flexible and student-centered and requires self-study.

Course's e-support: Course materials can be accessed via the e-learning environment Moodle under the course title MMS9300 - Qualitative Research Methods.

Study literature:

- Creswell, J.W. (2013) *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design. Choosing Among Five Approaches.* Sage, Thousand Oaks
- Tracy, S. J. (2010) *Qualitative Quality: Eight "Big-Tent" Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research.* *Qualitative Inquiry* Vol. 16 No. 10, pp. 837–851
- Saunders, M.N.K. and Townsend, K. (2016) *Reporting and Justifying the Number of Interview Participants in Organization and Workplace Research.* *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 27, pp. 836–852. DOI: 10.1111/1467-8551.12182
- Saunders, B. Sim, J., Kingstone, T. *et al.* (2018). *Saturation in qualitative research: exploring its conceptualization and operationalization.* *Qual Quant*, Vol. 52, pp. 1893–1907. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8>
- Symon, G. and Cassell, C. (2012) *Qualitative Organizational Research. Core Methods and Current Challenges.* Sage, London.
- Further scientific articles based on qualitative research.

ASSESSMENT Pass/fail

The course is examined based on three assignments. The assignments will be examined based on the essay submitted. Assignment 1 asks the students to write about the legitimacy of qualitative research for their particular study. Assignment 2 allows students to critique the qualitative data collection of a selected scientific article, and assignment 3 consists of the development of an introduction section for a qualitative paper. **The use of artificial intelligence is not allowed in the assignments.**

Assessment methods	Assessment criteria
Home assignments 1 (evaluates learning outcomes 1, 2, 3 & 5) asks the students to write about the legitimacy of qualitative research for their particular study.	Non-differentiated assessment: The assessment criteria will be presented in the sessions.
Home assignment 2 (evaluates learning outcomes 2, 3 & 6) allows students to critique the	Non-differentiated assessment: The assessment criteria will be presented in the sessions

Assessment methods	Assessment criteria
qualitative data collection of a selected scientific article	
Home assignment 3 (evaluates learning outcomes 3, 4 & 6) consists of the development of an introduction section for a qualitative paper.	Non-differentiated assessment: The assessment criteria will be presented in the sessions

Eligibility for assessment:

To be eligible for the exam, the student has to submit home assignment 1 in time.

Final grade formation:

Pass or fail. For the course grade of Pass, the student must be awarded a passing grade on all assignments.

Academic integrity:

As a student at TalTech School of Business and Governance, you have an obligation to conduct your academic work with honesty and integrity according to University standards. It is expected that all work that you submit will be your own, and that you have actually done the work that you are submitting. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Should you be found to be guilty of such activities, it will be followed with grade "0" for the assignment or the whole course and a notice will be filed to the School's Committee for Handling Violations of Academic Practice and Contemptible Behaviour. Depending on the Committee's proposal, it may lead to Dean issuing a letter of reprimand or in case of repeated or very severe misconduct, exmatriculation from the University.

Detailed schedule and topics

The semester plan is preliminary and might be changed in case of cancellations, changes in available reading material, etc.

Lecture and date	Content	Literature/other material
Session 1 19 March	Introduction to course & Qualitative research paradigms, Ethical aspects	Slides will be provided; Creswell (2013)
Session 2 24 March	Sampling, Types of qualitative data collection & Common mistakes during data collection I	Slides will be provided; Symon and Cassel (2012); Saunders and Townsend (2016)
Session 3 27 March	Sampling, Types of qualitative data collection & Common mistakes during data collection II	Slides will be provided; Symon and Cassel (2012); Saunders and Townsend (2016)
Session 4 8 April	Transcription methods & Data analysis	Slides will be provided; Creswell (2013); Symon and Cassell (2012)
Session 5 10 April	Quality aspects of qualitative research & Publishing qualitative research	Slides will be provided; exemplary articles will be provided; Tracy (2010); Saunders et al. (2018)