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## Template for course reports at the Faculty of Education and Society at Malmö University

Revised 2020-05-24

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The course report is an important instrument for the development of courses and programmes, as well as for guaranteeing student influence in this work. The *Decision on the model for systematic education-related quality work at the Faculty of Education and Society* (UTB 3.1-2017/410) indicates that course reports constitute the basis for the programme boards' efforts to systematically monitor the quality of the programme as a whole.

The *Course evaluation process at the Faculty of Education and Society* (UTB 3..2.2-2018/479) specifies what applies for the course report, including feedback to students.

The course report should include background information/key figures and a summary of the students' course evaluations, as well as analysis and an action plan together with any suggestions for revision of the course syllabus.

The course report is to be published in connection with other information about the course.

### Background information

Course name: Research methods in sport science

Semester: Spring 2022

Ladok code: IV606G

Course coordinator: Marie Larneby

Number of registered students: 14

Number of students who responded to the summative course evaluation: 5

Implementation	Mark with an X
The previous course report is communicated in connection with the start of the course	X
Early dialogue on expectations for the course	X
Formative course evaluation	X
Summative course evaluation	X
Feedback to students	

## **Forms of evaluation**

Describe the method(s) and implementation for both the formative and the summative course evaluation.

Formative course evaluation was held throughout the course within the concept “open office” and in relation to course activities. Questions of what students thought about the course were asked continuously. The course provided one summative evaluations: one digital with 5 students responding.

## **Summary of the students' course evaluations**

The students' views are objectively summarised here based on the various course evaluations for the course (see above). Individuals may not be named in the course report.

The online summative evaluation provides an uneven result, and with only 5 respondents it is difficult to draw conclusions. However, oral evaluations and discussions regarding the course (summarized below) provide a more nuanced overarching perception of the course. 2 online respondents reply that they to a very low and low extent has reached the learning outcomes (compared to 3 respondents replying to a high extent). One comment was: “Unfortunately, I did not attend some of the seminars, and therefore I did not do my best in terms of learning objectives.”

They experienced that they achieved the learning objectives of the course and appreciated the weekly flow of ‘lecture-seminar-hand in of paper’. One student commented that: “I gained good insights in new approaches I have not heard off before”.

Regarding how the course's learning activities have supported learning and achieving learning objectives, it is the same unbalance: 2 students reply a low extent and 3 reply to a high extent. This unbalance follows in all questions.

Regarding to what extent the course as a whole has met the expectations, the unbalanced score makes it difficult to know what is not met, as this is not commented upon. However, a pleased student comments: “I believe the course teachers have done a great job in terms of making the classes interesting and appealing.”

Following comment was posted on quiring new wys of thinking: “I had gone through a qualitative methodology course during my bachelor as well and wrote about it in my thesis, so not everything was new. The things that were new were good and challenging.”

As a whole (online evaluation and discussions throughout the course) students evaluate the course as well structured, and well guided and appreciated supervision of the teachers. They experienced that they achieved the learning objectives of the course and appreciated the weekly flow of ‘lecture-seminar-hand in of paper’. However, they experienced the course as too intense and that is was much reading to do. In addition, some of them responded that the one of the two final assignments should have an earlier hand-in date, instead of writing two papers in parallel from the start of the course. “I enjoyed this course, and the seminars were extremely helpful. The hand-in date for the Annotated Bibliography could be moved to the middle of the course, because that will make it easier to also finish the Project Plan in the end.” Some students did not agree on this, rather, they felt that the individual freedom to dispose the writing within the course frame was good.

The students appreciated that the examination forms was a direct link to the following course One year thesis, they could use assignments in the thesis and as such the thesis's work started already in this course. For students who wait and write the Two year thesis, this course was appreciated as a good first opportunity to start thinking of topic, possible methods and limitations.

Overall the course contents was in line with what students expected, but one point was that the seminars could be even more related to working “hands-on” with the papers, and especially a seminar related to assignment Annotated bibliography should be held one week earlier.

## **Summary of the evaluations of the teaching team**

The views of the teaching team regarding the content, learning activities and summative assessment of the course are summarised here.

The teaching team consisted of 3 teachers, of which 2 taught and examined about 90% of the course's learning activities and examinations. The whole course was conducted on Campus, with online assignments through the learning platform Canvas.

The teaching team had a continuous contact to update each other on how the weeks went, how the students experienced one week's content, questions that arose, and worked with a focus to relate the course weeks' contents together to create a red line. Our focus was also to put this methods course in relation to the upcoming one year thesis course, and to prepare students who were to write the two year master in spring 2023 for methodological choices and a critical approach to their topic, purpose and research questions.

We summarize the course as partly successful, as there was an unbalance within the student group. Some students were hardly present, and some students had 100% presence. It created an unbalance in the discussions, in the level of knowledge that the course provided through lectures and seminars, and also in what support the students needed in the paper-support seminars. We worked close to the students, providing open offices and also enabled regular question-time after a lecture or seminar. In that sense, we had the possibility to clarify uncertainties and also alter learning activities if needed. 8 of 14 students has passed the course, and 5 has re-examinations left. 1 student has not handed in any of the three assignments.

### **Analysis**

The analysis is based on a summary of the students' and teachers' individual and joint course evaluations. Both success factors and problems are identified.

Overall, the students' evaluations and teachers' evaluations comply, regarding success factors and problems.

We wanted to provide a structured course that was easy to follow and that teachers were available to support the students throughout the course: it is an intense course with many assignments and individual reading and writing is required, and students have different experiences of research methods from their bachelor programs. According to the various evaluations and feedback that we have received, the students have felt that the structure and guidance provided a good base to fulfil the learning outcomes. As teachers, we wanted to challenge the students' way to work with methods and how to critically scrutinize research, and to introduce new perspectives and ways to justify methodological choices. We perceive that this approach was appreciated and new to many of the students. This is an important approach that we shall continue to work with. One way to support the students in this development, was that we provided feedback when returning assessed assignments in order for the students to improve their writing for the next paper throughout the course, which was appreciated.

Another success factor was the small teaching team consisting of three teachers (of which 2 worked close together 4 weeks). We could follow each other's work closely throughout the course and add small adjustments to the next week depending on what the students needed to deepen, focus or clarify. Being "close" to the students through open offices and available after lectures and seminars also enabled this. Students felt taken care of, listened to and guided.

This year's course provided new challenges with the quite unbalanced student group (presence as well as level of competence of basics in methods in general). We need to be prepared for such unbalance and direct the teaching at a more individualized level when needed, but also support and emphasise when students need to read more about certain methods if they are unfamiliar with them (or does not have had any methods course at bachelor level, or have not had the same requirements in academic writing from their previous University).

### **Action plan**

The short-term and long-term changes that are to be implemented are specified here, along with a timeline. If no action is planned to address a specified problem, this decision must be justified.

Short-term changes:

- Relate seminars even tighter to the assignments, especially Annotated bibliography and Project plan.

Long-term changes:

- Add alternatives of course literature to enable more editions and other handbooks of qualitative methods (online and in print)
- Change number of assignments in the course from three to two, and alter these two assignments to have a more critical discussion-part included (especially the project plan).

### **Proposed revisions to the course syllabus**

Suggestions for possible revisions to the syllabus are proposed here, supported by the above evaluation and the action plan.

- Add alternatives of course literature to enable more editions and other handbooks of qualitative methods (online and in print)
- Change number of assignments in the course from three to two, and alter the two assignments Annotated bibliography and Project plan to have a more critical discussion-part included (especially the project plan).