

Embedded Librarians in the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) and Chemistry

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Introduction

In January 2014 ITaaU+ announced the **Embedded librarian secondment scheme**¹ They were looking to fund information specialists to spend two months acting as an embedded librarian within an academic research team. This was the result of a series of workshops they had run on the theme of Libraries of the Future. Information specialists were recognised as becoming increasingly relevant across many areas in research and beyond. They offer skills that as well as curating knowledge produced they can support the knowledge production process from within the research team.

The objective of the scheme to deepen the library professional's understanding of the research process matched with the focus of the University of Southampton Library. It seemed an ideal opportunity to further work in the area of research data management and research support. Two areas emerged

1. Work with Chemistry to encourage good practise in data handling among members of the Characterisation and Analytics Research Group, Chemistry, University of Southampton led by Dr Simon Coles. This work was undertaken by Isobel Stark, Academic Liaison Librarian
2. Work with the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) to review their typology of research methods in the Social Sciences² in preparation for its on-going use on the NCRM website. This work was led by Dr Rebekah Luff under Prof. David Martin, working alongside Arshad Khan and was undertaken by Dorothy Byatt, Academic Liaison Librarian.

To enable both these projects to go ahead the decision was to propose that the posts were 0.5 FTE for a period of two months, commencing in May 2014.

The Projects – Research Methods in the Social Sciences Typology

The National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) typology was originally developed by Beissel-Durrant (2004). That typology provides a hierarchical classification of research methods used in the Social Sciences and has been used by the NCRM to categorise training events, research activities and other outputs and has become one of the most frequently downloaded items from the NCRM website. The typology underpins the reporting of training and research needs within Social Science research methods to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). As a key resource it is was thought important to review

- how the typology was working,
- whether it required any revisions in light of developments over the last 10 years,
- how it was being applied,
- how effective this was and
- whether there were any new approaches that should be considered to enhance or indeed replace the Research Methods Typology

Recommendations

After consultation with academic users, the NCRM IT and communications group and a university librarian, it was decided that the second option would best meet the requirements of an updated NCRM. The following recommendations were made:

1. Adopt the Major Revision with expended terms option approach to revision of the typology, but consider adding tag cloud feature at a later stage.
2. Reconfigure the current typology so the 'Main and subcategories' are presented as level 1 and level 2 headings only. Develop a 3rd level of headings similar to the descriptor terms as well as developing the connected and related terms.
3. Categories in the typology should be more conceptual in nature, with only the lowest level (Descriptor) having a level of specificity
4. Create practical guidance for use with the Training and Events database and EPrints. This would be embedded guidance on the input screens, or a link to a suitable resource

Browse by Subject
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- NCRM Typology (2429)**
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 - 1.1 Epistemology (44)**
 - 1.2 Descriptive Research (23)**
 - 1.3 Exploratory Research (32)**
 - 1.4 Explanatory Research and Causal analysis (27)**
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 - 1.11 Evaluation Research (45)**
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 - 1.14 Participatory Research (81)**
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 - 1.14.2 Emancipatory research (1)**
 - 1.14.3 Inclusive research (1)**
 - 1.17 Behavioural Research (25)**
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 - 1.20.1 Archival research (1)**
 - 1.20.3 Analysis of official statistics (28)**
 - 1.20.5 Analysis of administrative data (28)**
 - 1.21 Digital Social Research (3)**
 - 1.21.1 Online qualitative fieldwork (1)**
 - 1.22 Mixed Methods (125)**
 - 1.24 Frameworks for Research and Research Designs (other) (222)**
 - 1.24.1 Hypothesis testing research (20)**
 - 2. Data Collection (351)**
 - 2.1 Sampling (27)**
 - 2.3 Survey and Questionnaire Design (69)**
 - 2.3.1 Questionnaire design (1)**
 - 2.4 Diary Methods (1)**
 - 2.5 Qualitative Interviewing (6)**
 - 2.6 Observation (24)**

The Projects - Chemistry

This project was based in the Characterisation and Analytics Research Group within Chemistry.

- The primary purpose was to inculcate a culture of good practise in data handling in, in particular amongst the research students, to enable easier reuse of the data by the author and/or others.
- A further aim was to build on the expertise of the Librarian from her work as part of the Library's Research Data Support Group.
- Outcomes included contributing to future PhD training sessions on data handling work and the Librarian gained experience and understanding of concrete examples of data management.
- Fringe benefits included gaining card access to the whole department and spreading knowledge of the Library's remit and various support services.

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National Centre for Research Methods

- Embedding the typology in the NCRM website (<http://www.ncrm.ac.uk>)
- NCRM website provides major resource for UK social science researchers, covering publications, training and research methods development
- Accurately searchable content by users is therefore of key importance
- Consensus on using typology terms make it a gold standard for annotating content, information retrieval and refining online search results in the NCRM website
- Much better approach to labelling content compared to free text tagging and subsequently search using multi-faceted search application i.e. our new Elasticsearch searching application
- Embedding in the search index on the fly to address inefficiencies in search results
- Multiple filters to refine search results based on main, sub terms and related terms
- Links disparate web content via inter-terms typology relationships at the time of searching
- Exact Match-typology + Keywords-typology based search results

You are here: [Home](#) / [NCRM portal search](#) / [Main typology categories](#) / [ICT and Software](#)

Typology categories

- ICT and Software (16)**
 - Quantitative Software
 - Qualitative Software
 - Qualitative Data Handling.. (15)
 - Data Collection.. (9)
 - Data Quality and Data Man.. (8)
 - Quantitative Data Handlin.. (6)
 - Frameworks for Research a.. (5)
 - Mixed Methods data handli.. (2)
 - Research Skills, Communic.. (2)
 - Research Management and I.. (1)
- Training & Publications
- Training & Events (44)
- Publications (1)

You searched for **analysis software**

Keywords-Typology search

Total results found: **16** Go to Page: [1](#) [2](#)

Exact Match

Qualitative Software Planning Seminar (CAQDAS)

Location:University of Manchester, Oxford Rd, Manchester

End date:2015-03-25

Seminar 9.30am - 1pmChoosing the appropriate **analysis software** package is an important part of planning any research project. There are a range of options available, but it is not always

Mixed Methods Software Planning Seminar (CAQDAS)

Location:High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddeson, Hertfordshire

End date:2015-03-11

Seminar - 9am - 1pmChoosing the appropriate **analysis software** package is an important part of planning any research project. There are a range of options available, but it is not always

Master Class in text analysis: mixed methodology with QDA Miner and Wordstat

Location:London School of Economics Houghton Street London

End date:2015-01-21

need for putting the canons of all these three approaches in a toolbox. WordStat and QDA Miner are

References

1. ITaaU+ (2014) *Embedded librarian secondment scheme*
<http://www.itutility.ac.uk/2014/01/22/embedded-librarian-secondment-scheme/>
2. Beissel-Durrant, G. (2004) *A Typology of Research Methods Within the Social Sciences* NCRM Working Paper. Unpublished. <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/115/>
3. Luff, R., Byatt, D. and Martin, D. (2015) *Review of the Typology of Research Methods within the Social Sciences*. Project Report. National Centre for Research Methods.
<http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/3721/>
4. Byatt, D. (2015) We can do more for you! Librarians can work as part of your research team: Working with the National Centre for Research Methods. *University of Southampton library blog*
<http://bit.ly/1ATonyL>
5. Stark, I (2015) My time in Chemistry. *University of Southampton Library blog*
<http://bit.ly/1C8DbC6>

Acknowledgements

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