

April Correspondence

Key Points

- Ongoing analysis of Webcourses data
- Final findings of data analysis, including correlation analysis circulated to each staff participant for their respective modules in advance of qualitative phase
- Fixed interview questions finalised and reviewed.
- Updates on e-portfolio
- Interviews conducted with two of the staff participants
- Number of staff participants reduced by one
- Telephone correspondence with supervisor during this period to discuss ongoing study

From: Patrick Walsh [mailto:patrick.walsh@dit.ie]
To: Frances Boylan
Subject: Interview Questions

Hi Frances

Attached is a draft list of questions I had in mind for the upcoming interviews. Some are simple Y/N answer but the majority are open ended questions. Some of the questions contain prompts or other questions for me to ask "in case i forget during the course of the interview.

These questions are influenced by the research question, workshop and lit review but might also help with future research?

My only concern is that there might be too many, I'm not sure as this is my first proper experience of being the "interviewer"

Anyways I'd be grateful for any feedback if you have a chance to review them.

Many Thanks

Pat

From: FRANCES BOYLAN [mailto:frances.boylan@dit.ie]

Sent: 03 April 2014 11:46

To: Patrick Walsh

Subject: Re: MSc

All is looking good. Good to know everything is moving along. The work with ■ that you hope will feed into the qualitative process - was this covered in your ethics submission. If it includes student data you will need to think if your ethics clearance covers it.

Am glad you're meeting with someone to look at your correlation analysis - I wouldn't have a hope of directing you there, and if you go on to publish this paper (which I really think you should) then all that will have to be right.

I know you hope to have it all written up and submitted by the due date (that's June sometime isn't it if my memory serves me correctly), and you hopefully you will. Just be aware that if you think you may require an extension to August, then that request form can't be submitted within the month before the submission date I think, so that means you'd have to have the request in over a month before the submission date. Have a think as to whether you've enough time in the x number of weeks left to you to get the paper written up and the eportfolio sorted or if you need a safety net. Even if you'll only need an extra week you'll still have to have the form in and approved. Just want to flag that with you in case you weren't aware. Even if you get an extension approved you can still submit on time of course.

F

From: FRANCES BOYLAN [mailto:frances.boylan@dit.ie]
To: Patrick Walsh
Subject: Re: Project Update

Hi Patrick,

Just going back over your progress report here and I know you've moved on by now and have most of the workshops done etc. Yes the methods section would be in the past tense for the final paper but for the drafts do whatever you need to to get your thoughts on paper. I'll read that draft now and will get back to you if there is any bigish that I think I feel I need to flag, otherwise I'll wait for a more final draft before commenting. Nothing worse than getting detailed feedback on a something that isn't complete and that you know you want to add to and edit yourself.

And yes, I'm not sure you can use [REDACTED] info re attendance. This type of data wasn't referring to in your submission to the ethics committee if I remember correctly (if I'm wrong here please shout) and I don't think you have negotiated the use of this type of data with the students either. So, while it's interesting to chat to [REDACTED] about it, I don't think you can include it in your findings.

Frances

From: FRANCES BOYLAN [mailto:frances.boylan@dit.ie]

To: Patrick Walsh
Subject: Re: Interview Questions

Hi,

Sorry for taking so long to get back to you. These questions look fine and they cover a range of issues. There certainly are a lot of them and it could make for a very long interview but it all depends on what data you're trying to get at. If you need them, then you need them. You will need to pilot them with someone - maybe use someone from your class who knows something about the reporting features but isn't part of your project? That will give you a sense of what questions work, which you might need to reword, and how long an interview might take.

f

From: Patrick Walsh [mailto:patrick.walsh@dit.ie]
Sent: 03 April 2014 15:24
To: frances.boylan@dit.ie
Subject: Private

Hi Frances,

Thanks for all your feedback.

I have a slight predicament with the final workshop(last of the four staff participants), which I feel is important to mention to you.

As I mentioned in a previous email I suspected that the last of the participants for the workshop may not be all that interested and it appears that might be the case, which is fair enough.

The staff information sheet does provide an opt out, but that would mean that the study would be reduced by one staff participant and his ten students.

Having analysed his ten students no statistically significant data was established.

He responded to the workshop request the other day by saying "Is this a necessary part of your research? - Its not something I'm that interested in, however I'll do it if you need me to. Let me know - maybe we can go through it fairly lively like".

I have absolutely no issue with someone who wishes to withdraw or who may not be overly pushed about the study.

My concern is that if he reluctantly agrees to do the workshop and/or interview his lack of interest may reflect in the qualitative phase.

I'm just wondering if you have come across such situations in your role as supervisor before?

Rather than advising him that he can opt out I could always say I can run through the features very quickly and ask him if he is still willing to do the interviews ,(but I don't wish to make anyone feel too obliged and I get a sense of that here).

Rgds

Pat

From: Patrick Walsh [mailto:patrick.walsh@dit.ie]
Sent: 04 April 2014 14:58
To: frances.boylan@dit.ie
Subject: Finding I forgot to mention from Data analysis

Sorry Frances,

There was one final thing I forgot to mention that emerged from the data analysis. ■ fourth year students are split into groups which mostly contain Irish students but there is 10 "■", French foreign students. ■ grades these two groups slightly differently.

I looked at all students in the module and I also looked at the Irish/■ students groups within the module.

A colleague of mine who knows about Stats sent me on a correlation table whereby I can check if a correlation value is statistically significant or not.

(This correlation table enables me to establish "if the relationship you found in your sample really exist in the population or were your results a fluke")

So I use this table for each correlation in the data analysis.

What I found was that there was statistically significant stronger positive correlation between Webcourses variables for the foreign students versus the Irish students.

Both student groups did show up statistically significant positive correlation , but these findings suggest that for this module that the foreign student may get more out of Webcourses engagement?

Anyways , I just thought I'd mention it, I know I'm not looking at demographic data it just that ■ treats these two groups slightly differently in terms of assigning grades and thought I'd mention it.

I'd imagine its not something I can document in the final paper.

Thanks

Pat