



Advanced Certificate in Market & Social Research Practice

A Guide to Mapping of new Syllabus Learning Outcomes in

The Practice of Market Research – An Introduction
McGivern, 4th edition

Effective from June 2020 Assessment

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A Guide to Mapping of new Syllabus Learning Outcomes in The Practice of Market Research – An Introduction McGivern, 4th edition September 2019
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INTRODUCTION

Changes to the Advanced Certificate Syllabus content and structure (effective from June 2020 assessment round), has resulted in the mapping of Chapters to Learning Outcomes in the recommended text, *The Practice of Market Research*, 4th edition, to become misaligned.

The changes to structure are as follows:

- Number of learning outcomes has been reduced to 22 from 36.
- Syllabus is divided into two sections. However, the aims of each section have been refined:
 - The Research Context: Refers to the setting in which research takes place and the ethical principles that underpin the research process. The learning outcomes in this section inform and guide each stage of the development of a research project.
 - The Research Project: The learning outcomes in this section reflect the specific skills and understanding required to develop each stage of a research project.

The new edition is due out in late 2020/early 2021. In the meantime, MRS has devised this brief guide on where to find textbook material for the new syllabus elements, topics and learning outcomes in the 4th edition.

It should also be noted that the 4th edition is out of date in terms of coverage of topics including ethics and GDPR, definition/scope of research, the roles of researcher, use of digital research, passive data and analytics, data visualisation and the terminology around all those topics as well as examples of them in practice. Content in relation to these topics can be found in other texts, Codes, Guidelines and Legislation within the Recommended Support Materials (Syllabus doc).

Candidates need to understand not only the discrete parts of the research process but also how they link together and how they depend on each other. So, as with the previous syllabus, there are be areas that require content to be drawn from/candidates to read several chapters in order to understand a concept, e.g. validity, or planning data collection.

Candidates may also find the case studies of use. In the preface of the 4th edition there is a guide which summarises what each case study is about and which techniques, issues and type of research it covers.

ELEMENTS, TOPICS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

There are two elements, The Research Context and The Research Project. Within Element 1 there are two topics with 8 learning outcomes. In Element 2 there are three topics with 13 learning outcomes.

Element 1 - The Research Context

Topic 1 Understanding the research context and planning the research project

Learning Outcomes - For a given research setting, successful candidates will be able to:

1. Evaluate the usefulness of research to a given setting

Relevant material: Chapter 1 The practice of market research, plus the case studies throughout the book

2. Identify and define the problem to be researched and the associated research objectives within a given setting

Relevant material: Chapter 3 Defining the research problem, plus the case studies throughout the book

3. Identify the information needed to address defined research objectives

Relevant material: Chapter 3 Defining the research problem, plus the case studies throughout the book

4. Plan and/or evaluate a research brief for a given research problem

Relevant material: Chapter 3 Defining the research problem and Chapter 4 Writing a research brief, plus the case studies throughout the book

5. Plan a research proposal for a given research brief

Relevant material: Chapter 2 Types of research, Chapter 3 Defining the research problem, Chapter 4 Writing a research brief, Chapter 5 Secondary research, Chapter 6 Qualitative research, Chapter 7 Quantitative research, Chapter 8 Sampling, Chapter 10 Writing a proposal, plus the case studies throughout the book

6. Develop plans for the appropriate use of resources (people, time & money) during the delivery of the research project

Relevant material: Chapter 12 Managing a research project plus case studies

Topic 2 Guiding principles

Learning Outcomes - For a given research setting, successful candidates will be able to:

7. Apply the concepts of validity and reliability, and/or their qualitative equivalents, as appropriate throughout the research process

Relevant material: Chapter 2 Types of research, Chapter 3 Defining the research problem, Chapter 5 Secondary research, Chapter 6 Qualitative research, Chapter 7 Quantitative research, Chapter 8 Sampling, Chapter 9 Designing questionnaires, Chapter 13 Analysing qualitative data and Chapter 15 Analysing quantitative data

8. Identify relevant ethical principles and apply them appropriately throughout the research process

Relevant material: Chapter 1 The practice of market research plus the new Code of Conduct (October 2019) and the guidelines documents.

Element 2 - The Research Project

Topic 3 Selecting the research design and planning the approach

Learning Outcomes - For a given research setting, successful candidates will be able to:

9. Identify and evaluate possible research designs

Relevant material: Chapter 2 Types of research, Chapter 3 Defining the research problem, plus case studies throughout the book

10. Select the most appropriate research design and justify that selection

Relevant material: Chapter 2 Types of research plus case studies throughout the book

11. Evaluate sources of data and select the most appropriate

Relevant material: Chapter 2 Types of research, Chapter 5 Secondary research plus case studies throughout the book

12. Identify and evaluate a range of data collection methods

Relevant material: Chapter 5 Secondary research, Chapter 6 Qualitative research, Chapter 7 Quantitative research, plus case studies

13. Select the most appropriate data collection method(s), and justify that selection

Relevant material: Chapter 5 Secondary research, Chapter 6 Qualitative research, Chapter 7 Quantitative research plus case studies

14. Plan all aspects of the data collection, including fieldwork and the design of data collection tools

Relevant material: Chapter 5 Secondary research, Chapter 6 Qualitative research, Chapter 7 Quantitative research, Chapter 8 Sampling, Chapter 9 Designing questionnaires and Chapter 12 Managing a research project

Topic 4 Selecting an appropriate sample

Learning Outcomes - For a given research setting, successful candidates will be able to:

15. Identify and evaluate possible sample sources
16. Identify and evaluate possible sampling approaches and techniques
17. Create a suitable sampling plan and plan its implementation

Relevant material: all of the above: Chapter 8 Sampling and Chapter 12 Managing a project plus case studies

Topic 5 Analysing and interpreting data and reporting findings

Learning outcomes - For a given research setting, successful candidates will be able to:

18. Identify and evaluate possible suitable approaches for the analysis and interpretation of data
19. Create a suitable analysis plan and plan how to implement it
20. Identify and evaluate the usability of research findings
21. Identify and evaluate the suitability of different approaches for the reporting of findings
22. Select the most suitable approach for the reporting of findings and justify that selection

Relevant material: all of the above: Chapter 13 Analysing qualitative data, Chapter 14 Understanding quantitative data, Chapter 15 Analysing quantitative data and Chapter 16 Communicating and reviewing the findings