**Research designs**

Qualitative approaches include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Approach | Description | Further information links |
| Action Research | A strategy that is focused on creating change and evaluating its impact. This process is often repeated in a cyclical manner, the evaluation of each action informing subsequent planning for change. | <http://www.nefstem.org/teacher_guide/intro/index.htm> <http://www.ecs.org/html/educationissues/research/primer/appendixa.asp#sub4> Somekh, B. and Zeichner, K. (2009) ‘Action research for educational reform: remodelling action research theories and practices in local contexts’,*Educational Action Research,* 17 (1), 5-21. [Online at: <http://eppl751socofed.wmwikis.net/file/view/Action.Research.Educational.Reform.pdf>; accessed: 12.1.12] |
| Ethnographic Study | The researcher is a participant within a culture (community, organisation, group, etc) and seeks to describe and explain the customs and behaviour of that culture to make sense of their experiences. | <http://cira.med.yale.edu/events/mbseminars/mbs070705.pdf> <http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PA765/ethno.htm>  |
| Case Study | In-depth analysis of a case (or a number of related cases) within its natural context. The ‘case’ may be an individual, a group of people, an organisation or institution, an event, a situation, etc.  | <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-2/tellis1.html> <http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~ssoy/usesusers/l391d1b.htm>  |
| Grounded Theory | A research approach that aims to construct a theory to explain the subject from the research data, rather than propose a theory and then test its validity. | <http://www.analytictech.com/mb870/introtoGT.htm> <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/grounded.html>  |

Approaches associated with quantitative research include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Approach | Description | Further information links |
| Survey Research | Gathering information from a sample of individuals in relation to a particular subject. Typically by questionnaire or interview. | <http://www.whatisasurvey.info/> <http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/GPP/Students/ch10.html>  |
| Experiment  | A strategy in which aspects of the study are purposefully manipulated. Participants are randomly selected to be either exposed to the experimental conditions (experimental group ) or not (control group). Any change in one group compared to the other is then analysed to determine the impact of the experimental condition. | <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/desexper.htm> <http://www.nber.org/reporter/summer03/angrist.html> |
| Quasi-experiment | As with an experiment, but without the random allocation of participants. | <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/quasiexp.php>  |