



UNIVERSITY
OF SKÖVDE

WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Course: **Research Methodology and Communication**

Course code: **VP761**

Credits for written examination: **4 credits**

Date: **2025-12-04 at 08:15 - 12:30**

Examination responsible: **Richard Senington**

Teachers concerned: **Jörgen Hansson**

Aid at the exam/appendices: **No aids, tools, or electronic devices are allowed**

Other: **Choose and answer at most(!) four out of the six questions.** If you are answering more, the last question(s) overflowing the limit will not be graded. Questions are equally weighted (10 points/question). Answer each question as a short text essay composed of one or more paragraphs, supplementing your answer with diagrams if desired. Points are awarded for each reasoning/argument/part of the answer that is distinct (not a repetition of a previous part), relevant to the question and justifiable from an informed reading of the course text.

Answer in Swedish or English. Write legibly!

Instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Take a new sheet of paper for each teacher.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Take a new sheet of paper when starting a new question.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Write only on one side of the paper.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Write your name and personal ID No. on all pages you hand in.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use page numbering. Order your answers in sequential/linear order!
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don't use a red pen.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark answered questions with a cross on the cover sheet.

Failure to follow the above instructions will result in point reductions!

Grade points:	40		
ECTS grading:	A: 36-40	B: 32-35	C: 28-31
	D: 24-27	E: 20-23	F: 0-19

Examination results should be made public within 18 working days.

Good luck!



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Q1: Research Goals, Objectives, and Research Questions

(a) Explain the difference between a *research aim/goal*, *research objectives*, and a *research question*. Furthermore, explain and provide examples on what constitutes a good hypothesis, and elaborate on how it relates to a null-hypothesis.
(5 points)

(b) Define triangulation and describe two types of triangulation commonly used in IS research. Explain how triangulation strengthens credibility.
(5 points)

Q2: Reliability and Data Saturation

a) Discuss what reliability means in qualitative research and describe two practices that increase it.
(5 points)

b) Define *data saturation* and explain why it is important in qualitative research. How can a researcher recognise that saturation has been reached? Give examples of data collection methods where data saturation may occur and give examples of such saturation.
(5 points)

Q3: Case Study

Case studies can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory, and can use single-case or multiple-case designs.

a) Explain why defining the boundaries of a case study is crucial and describe what can go wrong if boundaries are poorly specified.
(3 points)

b) Provide an example of when a single-case design would be methodologically stronger than a multiple-case design, and justify your choice.
(3 points)

c) Explain how case selection strategy impacts validity of the case study.
(4 points)



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Q4: Design Science and Theoretical Contribution

Design science research produces artefacts such as models, methods, and instantiations.

- (a) How can a researcher empirically evaluate whether a system or artefact achieves its intended functional goals (without relying solely on users' subjective satisfaction and use of surveys and interviews)?
(3 points)
- (b) Elaborate on the possible bias/biases that come into play if utility of the artefact is investigated using interviews and surveys.
(3 points)
- (c) Discuss the relationship between the artefact and the study's theoretical contribution.
(4 points)

Q5: Literature Review

Describe systematic literature review, its purpose and components. Give an example of how to conduct such a review. Furthermore, what are important aspects to consider when carrying out a literature review.

Q6: Bias and Validity in Mixed-Methods Research

Mixed-methods research combines qualitative and quantitative components, and, thus, can be exposed to multiple forms of bias already well-known in research.

- (a) Identify and define three well-established biases covered in the course literature (e.g., from Oates or lecture slides) that could appear in a mixed-methods study.
(3 points)
- (b) For each bias, explain how it might arise in both the qualitative and the quantitative strand of a mixed-methods study.
(3 points)
- (c) Discuss how these biases could affect internal and/or external validity and outline specific strategies for reducing their impact.
(4 points)