Process Analysis Task 4: Exploring
ways of analysing and displaying
data.
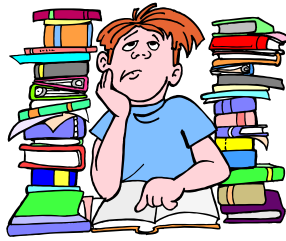
Following on your selection of a method of gathering data your group will go on
to use the chosen method to carry out your enquiries. The next step then
focuses on how to analyse and display your data. This is a vital stage of your
enquiry. It is important to remember that your in-depth analysis should allow you
to interpret the data rigorously and to relate it to relevant concepts and theories.
You should note that there may be a range of ways of analysing your data and
that your analysis will be influenced by the method chosen. Your expertise, and
the time available, may also dictate how you tackle data analysis.

Before starting to consider the most relevant and effective way of analysing and
displaying your data in your group meeting you each need to familiarise
yourselves with what is most relevant for the method that you have chosen. You
should do so by identifying the relevant chapter in Bryman (or in Robson). You
may also wish to consult one of the more specialist texts which relate to
particular types of data analysis. The reading list provides you with information
on these texts.

The next stage of this activity is then carried out at your next group meeting. You
should together examine and summarise the range of options available for
analysis of data, and decide which ones to consider in more detail. The outcome
of this should lead to each group member being given the task of exploring one
of the possible options for analysis in depth, in preparation for the next meeting.
This should allow the group to consider further the range of possible options at
the next meeting, and to reach a decision. Note that, depending on data analysis
tools and ways of displaying date available to you, it may be necessary for two or
even three members in the group to explore the same area. Nevertheless,
however much you opt to consult, each should submit a separate report to the
group. You may use email with your tutor in between the meetings if you have
any specific queries regarding the suitability of a particular way of analysing or
displaying data.

You should guide your exploration of your particular method for analysis and
display of data by the following:

- If you are using statistical analysis:
    - do you know how to select the relevant test(s)?
    - do you know how to produce summary statistics of the data?

- do you know how to display this data in relevant graphs – with the correct labels of your tables or graphs?
- do you know how to interpret the analysis of any data?
- If collecting qualitative data
  - do you have an effective means of summarising and categorising this data?
  - do you know how to analyse such qualitative data?
  - do you know how to interpret such qualitative data and how to link it to conceptual and theoretical frameworks?

Record, briefly, the outcomes of your appraisal under the following headings:

- Outline the method for the analysis and display of data that you have explored – including its general strengths and weaknesses
- List the possible advantages of using this type of analysis and display of data on this *particular* occasion – here you should try to put the method into the specific context in which it will be used.
- List the possible disadvantages of using this type of analysis and display of data on this particular occasion – again try to put the method into the context where it will be used

Then summarise briefly what you feel are the main advantages and disadvantages to the group in using this method on *this occasion and for the particular research question that you have identified* and post this on the group Discussion board so that these can used in the group discussion and decision-making in the next meeting.

Please remember that the minutes of your meeting should be posted on the Discussion Board.

Following the meeting, you should each review the method proposed for the analysis and display of data. Use the comments from the group on these questions and the tutor comments from the Discussion board

Process Analysis

While you are engaged in this task, write and send to your commenter a 300 - 400 word account in which you think through the answers to one or more of these questions, whose answers are likely to be of immediate use to you:

- How are *we* tackling identifying a suitable way of analysing and displaying the data?
- What is working well for *us* in this process and why?
- What is problematic for *me* and why? How might I overcome that problem?

- What am *I learning* from this that *I can use* next time I have to select a valid and relevant way of analysing and displaying data, in a different context (such as next semester in the Interdisciplinary project)?

Submit this process analysis to your commenter by the date set out in the Course Calendar.