

Unit AA2 Commission research

Elements

AA2.1 Specify research requirements

AA2.2 Commission and brief researcher(s)

AA2.3 Monitor the progress of the research programme

AA2.4 Verify research outcomes against the brief

Unit Commentary

This unit is for archaeologists who are responsible for the commissioning of research by others in any occupational context within the profession. This involves assessment and prioritisation of data requirements leading to the specification of research requirements; researchers can then be commissioned and briefed. The progress of the research programme should be monitoring and the outcomes verified against the brief at the end of the programme.

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AA2.1 Specify research requirements

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) clarifying intended purpose, scope and parameters of **research** with interested parties
- b) assessing, justifying and prioritising **data requirements**
- c) identifying and assessing potentially relevant data sources
- d) investigating valid and ethical means and methods for acquiring data and identifying best practice options
- e) where appropriate, ensuring that expert opinion is canvassed to assist in the preparation of the research specification
- f) ensuring that **resource** requirements for research are estimated accurately, summarised and justified
- g) presenting the specification of research requirements in a suitable format

Occupational Context

1 Research (may be related to):

- policy formulation
- policy implementation
- project design
- programme implementation
- project evaluation

2 Data requirements (may include):

- Policy (local, regional, national, international)
- legal and regulatory
- social and economic
- historical
- archaeological
- natural and built environment
- infrastructure
- resources
- public opinion

3 Resources:

- human
- financial
- documents and records
- data
- time

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know and understand how to:

- Specify data requirements
- Evaluate and prioritise research needs
- Estimate resource requirements for research

You need to know about:

- Relevant existing policies affecting the research area
- Sources and of existing data
- Research methods
- Types of resource requirement
- Presentation formats

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AA2.1 Specify research requirements

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- The preparation of research specifications

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can specify research requirements

Documentary evidence will include:

- records of data requirements specified and justified
- records of research needs identified, evaluated, justified and presented

The candidate should be questioned, based upon the documentation provided, to explore the following:

- their ability to accurately specify data requirements
- their ability to identify and use data sources
- their skill at assessing whether or not data is adequate
- their canvassing of expert opinion when it is warranted
- that resource requirements are accurately estimated, recorded and justified
- that the research specification has been presented in a suitable format

Evidence Rules

- The candidate should have been involved in at least 2 substantive research commissions

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AA2.2 Commission and brief researcher(s)

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) Ensuring that project **specifications** are consistent with organisational requirements and provide full and accurate information to enable potential researchers to prepare and submit appropriate proposals
- b) Developing **criteria** for selection of researchers and making the criteria available to potential researchers
- c) identifying potentially suitable researchers and issuing project specifications in accordance with organisational procedures
- d) Responding to enquiries from potential researchers in accordance with organisational procedures
- e) Ensuring that selection procedures are fair and just and enable the selection of those best able to fulfil the research brief
- f) Ensuring that **contracting** arrangements accurately detail both the requirements which the researcher must meet and the conditions of employment
- g) Ensuring that appointments are confirmed in time to allow work to proceed effectively and efficiently
- h) Ensuring that researchers are provided with **appropriate information and support** to enable them to plan the project and incorporate best practice
- i) Ensuring that researchers are aware of monitoring arrangements and the criteria by which their work will be evaluated

Occupational Context

1 Specifications

- purpose
- objectives
- methods
- legislation
- parameters
- outcomes
- budget

2 Criteria

- requirements
- preferences
- parameters

3 Contracts

- of employment
- for services

4 Appropriate information and support

- on the organisation and its preferred methods of working
- on matters which arise during commissioning
- on how to handle contingencies which arise during the contract

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know and understand how to:

- Develop clear and concise project specifications which will enable potential contractors to assess their suitability to do the work and the organisation to assess those likely to meet the specification
- Set up selection procedures for researchers

You need to know about:

- Organisational strategy and policy and its relationship to the project in question,
- Why it is important to clarify and include in the project specification information in relation to purpose, objectives, methods, legislation, parameters, outcomes, budget
- The criteria for selecting researchers
- Relevant contract law
- What standard contracts are available
- How and where to advertise for researchers

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AA2.2 Commission and brief researcher(s)

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- How to write clear research specifications
- How to brief researchers
- How to network and communicate with other professionals

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can Commission and brief researchers.

This evidence should be presented in the form of a project proposal with model advertisement and contract in which you:

- provide full and accurate information to enable potential researchers to prepare and submit appropriate proposals
- develop criteria for selection and make them available to potential researchers
- advertise project requirements, identifying potentially suitable researchers and issuing project specifications
- respond to enquiries from potential contractors
- ensure that selection procedures are fair and just and enable selection of the best able to fulfil the project brief
- ensure that contracts accurately detail both the requirements the researcher must meet and the conditions of employment
- ensure that the contract is issued as quickly as possible to allow the project to proceed
- ensure that the contractors are provided with appropriate information and support

Evidence Rules

- The candidate should have been involved in at least 2 substantive research commissions

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AA2.3 Monitor the progress of the research programme

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) defining appropriate criteria for evaluating achievements and agreeing monitoring procedures and milestones for reporting on progress
- b) providing researchers with the necessary **data** at the right times to enable them to meet the objectives and deliver required outcomes
- c) offering researchers appropriate and accurate feedback on their work to encourage good practice and increase motivation
- d) maintaining effective relationships with researchers to support the organisation's work and enable it to meet its objectives
- e) communicating **variations** to specifications to the researchers accurately and without delay
- f) settling **disputes** promptly and in accordance with contract conditions and organisational procedures
- g) preparing reports on progress as necessary to interested parties

Occupational Context

1 Data

- organisational & regulatory requirements
- project specifications & schedules
- contextual & project related

2 Variations

- organisational requirements
- specifications & schedules
- contextual & project related
- changing circumstances & personnel

3 Disputes in relation to

- working conditions
- the quality of the work
- the support provided
- scheduling
- conditions of employment

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know about:

- Information which contractors might need to enable them to act effectively
- Contractors' rights to organisational information and where there may be a need to highlight its confidentiality
- The role of the project manager in offering support to contractors and the relationship of this to the achievement of objectives
- How to offer constructive feedback (compared with positive feedback) to contractors and the relationship of this to achievement of project outcomes and contractor motivation
- Contract conditions
- Organisational procedures with regard to contracts and contract management

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AA2.3 Monitor the progress of the research programme

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- How to set up work schedules
- Report writing
- Your ability to deal tactfully and patiently with researchers' questions and problems
- How to monitor the quality of researchers' work

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can monitor the progress of the research programme

The candidate should be questioned, based upon the documentation provided, to explore how they:

- define appropriate criteria for evaluating achievements and monitoring procedures
- provide researchers with necessary data to enable them to meet objectives
- offer researchers appropriate and accurate feedback on their work
- maintain effective relationships with the researchers
- communicate variations to specifications
- settle disputes
- prepare reports on progress

Evidence Rules

- The candidate should have been involved in at least 2 substantive research commissions

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AA2.4 Verify research outcomes against the brief

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) objectively comparing research outcomes against the requirements set in the project specification
- b) reviewing the findings in the context of comparable studies
- c) assessing data quality and reviewing the methodology used for obtaining and evaluating data and challenging departures from accepted best practice
- d) reviewing the interpretation of research findings and challenging assumptions which appear to depart from accepted norms
- e) reviewing the presentation, content and structure of the research report and advising on any modifications required to meet organisational requirements
- f) advising **interested parties** on the acceptability of the final report on research outcomes.
- g) where appropriate, identifying opportunities for and encouraging the publication and dissemination of research outcomes

Occupational Context

1 Interested parties

- commissioning clients
- publishers
- interested local, national and international organisations

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know and understand how to:

- Constructively criticise researcher's outputs

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AA2.4 Verify research outcomes against the brief

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- How to constructively criticise researcher's output

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can verify research outcomes against the brief

The candidate should be questioned, based upon the documentation provided, to explore how they:

- define appropriate criteria for evaluating achievements and agreeing monitoring procedures
- provide researchers with necessary data at proper times to enable them to meet objectives
- offer researchers appropriate and accurate feedback on their work
- maintain effective relationships with the researchers
- communicate variations to specifications to researchers accurately without delay
- settle disputes promptly in accordance with contract conditions
- prepare reports on progress as necessary

Evidence Rules

- The candidate should have been involved in at least 2 substantive research commissions