# Unit Outline

**ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Unit Number:</strong></th>
<th>ED691</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode of Study:</strong></td>
<td>Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit:</strong></td>
<td>6 credit points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost:</strong></td>
<td>$1,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-requisites:</strong></td>
<td>A minimum of four 600-level units, including ED690 Action Research in Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Location:** | Quinns Baptist College  
Austin Cove Baptist College |
| **Study Hours:** | Fortnightly meetings with supervisor, minimum 2 hours per fortnight across 24 weeks (total = 24 hours)  
Private study, at least 10 hours per week (total = 240 hours) |
| **Learning Management System:** | Canvas (canvas.sheridan.edu.au) |
| **Project Supervisor:** | TBD  
Phone: 9221 8170  
Email: TBD |
| **Course Coordinator:** | Dr Natalie Leitão  
Phone: 9221 8170  
Email: nleitao@sheridan.edu.au |
Introduction

Action research is increasingly regarded as a professional form of inquiry whereby school practitioners observe and improve their own practice. This unit is designed to equip you to become an active researcher in your own classroom or school. In this unit you will build on the knowledge and skills developed in the pre-requisite unit “Action Research in Schools”. You will apply current theories and practices in order to conduct an Action Research project of your own and to complete a final report.

Master of Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

The Sheridan College Master of Education is currently being considered for accreditation by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and confirmed as meeting the standards set by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

A Master of Education qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for professional practice and as a pathway for further learning.

Upon completion of the Master of Education you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a mastery of theoretical knowledge and workplace practice in education.
- Demonstrate your knowledge of research principles and methods in the discipline of education.
- Critically evaluate current and past scholarship and professional practice in the field of education in the light of contemporary research, of workplace practice, and of perspectives grounded in Christian scholarship.
- Demonstrate your ability to investigate, analyse and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories in education for application across multi-disciplinary contexts.
- Demonstrate your intellectual independence by making complex, creative and original contributions to the body of knowledge and workplace practice in education at both an abstract and practical level.
- Justify and interpret theoretical propositions, methodologies, conclusions and professional decisions to specialist and non-specialist audiences through prepared presentations and projects in a variety of settings.
- Plan and execute a substantial research project.
- Model a high level of self-discipline, professional judgment, personal integrity, teamwork and respect for the dignity of individuals and groups in study and workplace settings.

Each unit you take in the Master of Education program will contribute towards the fulfilment of these broader learning outcomes.
Action Research Project Unit Learning Outcomes (ULOs)

Upon completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Justify the investigation of a topic.
2. Critically engage with the literature regarding the topic and regarding research methodology.
3. Demonstrate ethical and rigorous research skills.
4. Use highly developed communication skills to complete a written report in which findings are explained, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made.

Graduate Attributes (GAs)

Study does more than equip you with knowledge in a specific academic discipline. It can also have a transformational effect on your own nature.

Moreland and Craig write:

“Study itself is a spiritual discipline, and the very act of study can change the self. One who undergoes the discipline of study lives through certain types of experiences where certain skills are developed through habitual study: framing an issue, solving problems, learning how to weigh evidence and eliminate irrelevant factors, cultivating the ability to see important distinctions instead of blurring them, and so on. The disciplines of study also aids in the development of certain virtues and values; for example, a desire for the truth, honesty with data, an openness to criticism, self-reflection and an ability to get along nondefensively with those who differ with one.”


The higher education sector in Australia describes these kinds of outcomes as “Graduate Attributes” (GAs). GAs do not necessarily follow in a direct line from Unit Learning Outcomes (ULOs) but are shaped by the learning process itself. Sheridan College’s GAs, displayed in the table on the next page, are integrated into the College’s assessments and cultivated in all the College’s learning activities. They describe the kind of personal characteristics we hope you will exhibit when you graduate. If in future your referees use these kinds of descriptors when writing about you, we will consider this a sign of a successful higher education.
### College Vision Statement

**Sheridan College**

To offer higher education to those who are seeking to live an extraordinary life. To this end, the College will inspire its students to...

### College Graduate Attributes

**Sheridan College graduates will be...**

**Methods of Evaluation**

See unit assessment schedule for alignment with specific assessments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOVE TRUTH...</th>
<th>1. Lovers of truth who:</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Tests &amp; Exams</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Workplace Learning</th>
<th>Academic Integrity Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Pursue knowledge, understanding and insight with persistence, independence, rigour, critical thinking and academic integrity.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Attain a comprehensive understanding of the body of knowledge and professional skills within a specialised learning area or discipline.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Can identify and analyse the pre-theoretical assumptions that underpin the relevant theoretical frameworks and perspectives within a specialised learning area or discipline.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEEK WISDOM...</th>
<th>2. Seekers of wisdom who:</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Tests &amp; Exams</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Workplace Learning</th>
<th>Academic Integrity Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Recognise the limits of their knowledge and understanding, receiving and evaluating correction or advice with grace and humility.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Exercise sound, fair and ethical judgment in study and workplace learning environments.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Carefully consider their life’s purpose and make the most of opportunities as they emerge.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMBRACE INNOVATION...</th>
<th>3. Innovative thinkers who:</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Tests &amp; Exams</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Workplace Learning</th>
<th>Peer review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Identify research gaps and make original contributions that extend the body of knowledge, both independently and in collaboration with others.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Synthesise, analyse and interpret information drawn from diverse sources using diverse mechanisms.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Adapt effectively to changing circumstances, take appropriate risks, and solve problems in new situations.</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively to a range of audiences and across a range of mediums/technologies.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Build classmates and colleagues up according to their needs and for their benefit. Avoid slanderous speech.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Promote respect, hospitality and understanding towards cultures and groups.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEPENDENT LEARNERS...</th>
<th>5. Independent learners who:</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Tests &amp; Exams</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Workplace Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Perform tasks to the best of their own abilities and strive for a high academic standard.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Set reasonable goals, determine personal boundaries and drive set tasks to completion.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Take responsibility for their own learning and research.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERVANT LEADERS...</th>
<th>6. Servant leaders who:</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Workplace Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Model respectful and ethical behaviour in team environments.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Serve the local, national and global community.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Understand and support Australian democratic traditions, including pluralism, freedom of speech, freedom of association, and equality of opportunity.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Course Structure

Learning Calendar
The Sheridan College Master of Education uses a trimester model and may be completed in one year if you were taking a full-time load or in two years if part-time. The units are delivered in twelve-week learning blocks apart from the Action Research Project which is delivered in one final twenty-four week learning block. The table below gives you an idea of how your academic program might look if you were taking a full-time load.

SAMPLE M. Ed. PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRIMESTER 1</th>
<th>TRIMESTER 2</th>
<th>TRIMESTER 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worldview Foundations in Education (3cp)</td>
<td>Servant Leadership in Education (3cp)</td>
<td>Assessment and Evaluation: Refining Understandings and Practices (3cp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Construction: Analysis and Perspectives (3cp)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Leading Change (3cp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research in Education (3cp)</td>
<td>Action Research Project (continued in Trimester 3)</td>
<td>Action Research Project (6cp)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Meetings with supervising mentor
The appointment of a supervising mentor is to be done in consultation with the staff at Sheridan College. The supervising mentor may be a member of staff at Sheridan College or a member of staff at your school. It is a requirement for you to meet with your supervising mentor fortnightly throughout the semester. In this way you can regularly discuss your progress and receive guidance as needed.

Private Study Expectations
You should expect to spend additional hours each week in private study, immersing yourself in the readings and completing the recommended targets of the Project Schedule.

Canvas
Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) used at Sheridan College. Canvas allows you to view your courses, communicate with staff and other students, access assessment scores, participate in online discussions and much more.

IT Resources
The internet is an extraordinary resource for students and using it effectively contributes to the nurturing of the College's graduate attributes in each student. We encourage you to bring your electronic devices (college-supplied or personal tablets, mobile phones, laptops) into the class as a learning resource. As a courtesy to your classmates, please keep these learning devices on “silent” and do not take phone calls during class hours.

Wireless internet access will be available for all students at the Aberdeen Street campus, if you wish to meet there in study groups or for private study. You can also access printers, scanners and photocopiers at the office.

Location
The unit will be taught at one of the following locations:

- **Quinns Baptist College**, 8 Salerno Drive, Mindarie, WA, 6030
- **Austin Cove Baptist College**, Inlet Boulevard, South Yunderup, WA, 6028
- **Alkimos Baptist College**, 60 Seagrove Boulevard, Merriwa WA 6030
Learning Resources

Recommended Reading


**Additional Resources**

http://www.aare.edu.au/

http://research.acer.edu.au/

http://www.researchforaction.org/

**Relevant journal articles may be found in the following journals:**

- Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice
- Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice
- Journal of Christian Education
- Journal of Education and Christian Belief
- The Australian Educational Researcher
- The Australian Journal of Early Childhood Education
- The Australian Journal of Teacher Education
- Theory Into Practice

**College Library Resources**

In 2017, Sheridan College students will have direct access to four (4) major academic database collection providers, granting Sheridan College students direct onsite (IP) and remote access to:

1. **Academic OneFile** from Cengage Gale (now active)
2. **Oxford University Press Arts and Humanities Collection** (now active)
3. **EBSCO collections** (to be activated from 1 February 2017), including:
   - Business Source Premier
   - Academic Search Premier
   - Humanities International Complete
Science and Technology Collection

4. Informit collections (to be activated from 1 February 2017), including:
   - Business Collection
   - HSS Collection

Cunningham Library

Sheridan College is an institutional member of the Australian Council of Educational Research’s Cunningham Library.

Cunningham Library is a unique, comprehensive collection of Australian educational research material dating from the early 1900s to the present day. The vast resources of Cunningham Library offer the researcher a complete and up to date collection of educational research documents in Australia, including:

- books with over 50,000 titles, both Australian and overseas publications
- journals with over 400 titles, both Australian and overseas publications
- e-journals
- government reports & conference proceedings
- bibliographic database of educational theses
- audio, video & CD-ROM material
- educational and psychological tests
- databases, directories and research discovery tools
- web documents & e-books


The Cunningham Library will be an invaluable resource for Sheridan College educators across all disciplines in keeping current with educational research in curriculum design, assessment, course delivery (including andragogical methodologies).

Public Libraries

You will have signed up with the State Library of WA (SLWA) and the National Library of Australia (NLA) when you enrolled at Sheridan College. It takes about one week from the date of enrolment for your subscription to SLWA to become active.

The e-resources of SLWA and NLA are available online for library members (free to members of the public with an Australian residential address), including thousands of peer-reviewed journals across the full range of academic disciplines.

Other Free Resources

Access to free full-text journals can also be found through the following sites, among many others:

- VOCEDplus (www.voced.edu.au/journalbrowse)
- Stanford University’s Highwire site (http://highwire.stanford.edu/lists/freeart.dtl)
- Directory of Open Access Journals (http://www.doaj.org/)
- Open Directory Project (http://www.dmoz.org/Reference/Education/Journals)

Community Memberships

Community memberships are available at Perth higher education institutions. Research students wishing to join the libraries of Perth’s universities will be fully reimbursed by Sheridan College for their membership costs.

Community memberships are available as follows:
Community members who wish to access online resources at some of these institutions may only be able to access those resources while logging in from a terminal within the library itself. However, the resources of the Vose Seminary are fully available to community members.

Reserve Collection
A growing physical reserve library of books will be maintained at the Aberdeen Street campus for resources specifically chosen by lecturers for individual units. These resources will be nominated by the lecturers and purchased if there are no online options available.

Learning Support
Any student who feels they may need special provisions for any type of disability should see an instructor during regular office hours or contact the Registrar, Mrs Christa Smith, who will help you make any necessary accommodations for academic support.

Assessment Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>ULOs Assessed</th>
<th>GAs Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action research report (10 000 - 12 000 words)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Week 24</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation of Assessments
Sheridan College assessments are designed to measure your successful demonstration of the full range of learning outcomes for the unit, and to cultivate the Sheridan College graduate attributes.

You must submit all assessments to satisfy the course requirements.

1. Action research report
Format: Report
Length: 10 000 - 12 000 words
Weighting: 100%

You will carry out an action research project. To successfully complete the project you must justify the investigation of a topic relevant to you in the workplace, critically engage with the literature regarding the topic and regarding research methodology, demonstrate ethical and rigorous research skills and use highly developed communication skills to complete a written report in which you explain your findings, draw conclusions and make recommendations. The report must follow...
writing conventions as covered in the pre-requisite unit *Action research in education* and use the headings as follows:

Abstract

Introduction
- Background
- Research Questions
- Definitions of terms
- Limitations

Literature Review (of the topic and the methodology)

Method
- Design
- Participants
- Data collection tools
- Data analysis procedures

Findings and Discussion

Conclusions and Recommendations

References

Appendices

*ULOs addressed 1, 2, 3, 4.*

**Marking Guide**

**NB:** this Marking Guide is reviewed in the final week of the previous unit, *Action Research in Education*, to ensure students are clear about the expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fail (&lt;50)</th>
<th>Pass (50-64)</th>
<th>Credit (65-74)</th>
<th>Distinction (75-84)</th>
<th>High Distinction (85+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract</strong></td>
<td>Lacking or irrelevant.</td>
<td>Relevant and detailed.</td>
<td>Very relevant and detailed.</td>
<td>Highly relevant and detailed.</td>
<td>Highly relevant and extensively detailed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Topic not clearly identified; irrelevant research question/s.</td>
<td>Well-developed identification of research topic; research question/s clearly defined with link to problem or situation identified in the classroom</td>
<td>Pronounced identification of research topic; research question/s clearly defined with justified link to problem or situation identified in the classroom</td>
<td>Superior identification of research topic; research question/s clearly defined with extensively justified links to problem or situation identified in the classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(As addressed in supervisor meeting in Week 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature Review</strong></td>
<td>Limited evidence of engagement with the literature.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a ability to engage primary sources, a sound grasp of the foundational features of the discipline as that intersects with the topic, and an ability to critically evaluate</td>
<td>Demonstrates a pronounced ability in the analysis of primary sources and in the tasks of evaluating and assessing empathically a range of scholarly points of view, and evidences ability to arrive at genuinely</td>
<td>Demonstrates pronounced ability in the analysis and critique of primary sources and ideas in dialogue with a wide range of scholarly points of view reporting these empathically, to the extent that genuinely</td>
<td>Demonstrates superior knowledge and skills in the analysis and critique of primary sources and ideas, and evidences genuinely independent scholarly judgments appropriate to early postgraduate level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Investigation incomplete; method inappropriate and research ethics lacking</td>
<td>Sound investigation of the topic; method employed with a well-developed level of research ethics evidenced.</td>
<td>Pronounced investigation of the topic; method employed with a highly developed level of research ethics evidenced.</td>
<td>Pronounced investigation of the topic; highly appropriate method employed with a superior level of research ethics evidenced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings (data collection) and Discussion (data analysis)</td>
<td>Findings lacking and / or unclear Discussion is unsatisfactory, limited links made to the literature.</td>
<td>Demonstrates ability to collect and analyse data; pronounced ability to engage with a range of scholarly viewpoints.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a pronounced ability to collect and analyse data; pronounced ability to critically evaluate a range of scholarly viewpoints.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a superior ability to collect and analyse data; superior knowledge and skills in the analysis and critique of an extensive range of scholarly viewpoints.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and Recommendations</td>
<td>Conclusions are inadequate. Implications for practice/further research are lacking.</td>
<td>Conclusions are detailed; strong implications for practice/further research.</td>
<td>Conclusions are very detailed; very strong implications for practice/further research; evidence of genuinely independent scholarly judgments.</td>
<td>Conclusions are very detailed; very strong implications for practice/further research; evidence of genuinely independent scholarly judgments are beginning to emerge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referencing (APA style)</td>
<td>Minimal list of relevant literature (few to no references).</td>
<td>Satisfactory list of relevant literature (minimum of seven references apart from those on the recommended reading list).</td>
<td>Extensive list of relevant literature (minimum of ten references apart from those on the recommended reading list).</td>
<td>Very extensive list of relevant literature (minimum of fifteen references apart from those on the recommended reading list).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>Lacking or irrelevant.</td>
<td>Relevant and detailed.</td>
<td>Very relevant and detailed.</td>
<td>Highly relevant and extensively detailed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing conventions</td>
<td>Lacking.</td>
<td>Well developed.</td>
<td>Very well developed.</td>
<td>Highly developed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>Poor time management.</td>
<td>Well-developed time management.</td>
<td>Very well developed time management.</td>
<td>Highly developed time management.</td>
<td>Superior level of time management.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guidelines for Written Assignments
These general guidelines will assist you in preparing and writing your assignments. Your instructor will discuss these in greater detail.

Presentation
- The assignment must be typed on A4 paper with 1.5 or 2-line spacing and a 3cm margin at the top, bottom and right hand side to allow for marker's comments. Headings should be used in accordance with APA levels of headings.
- Your assignment should be grammatically correct and well punctuated. A high standard of written English is expected and your assignments should be clear, concise, neatly presented and easy to read. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in a significant loss of marks.

Academic Integrity
- Your assignment must be your own original piece of work and not that of another student or previously submitted work for another subject. Please be aware there are serious penalties for handing in assignments that have been copied from another source (plagiarism). Please note also that Sheridan College deploys plagiarism-detection software. The Sheridan College Academic Integrity Policy can be located at http://sheridan.edu.au/index.php/home/policy-library.
- You are expected to acknowledge the source of your ideas and expressions used in your written work. Students at Sheridan College are required to use the APA Referencing style. An APA guide has been uploaded to Canvas.

Submission
- Your assignment should be submitted to your instructor by the date specified. If you require an extension of time, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor no later than one week before the due date and provide documentation from a medical practitioner or the student counsellor as to why you cannot adhere to the stated due date. Your instructor may then approve a new due date.
- Any assignment submitted after the due date without the instructor’s permission will be subject to a deduction of 10% of the original mark for each working day (including weekends) for which it is late. Assignments submitted more than one week late will only be accepted with a current medical certificate, which must be dated on the day of the illness.
- You must keep a copy of the completed assignment when you submit the original document for marking.
- All assignments must be submitted to assignments@sheridancollege.com.au.
- If you are in doubt about any of these requirements, you should discuss them with your instructor who will clarify any misunderstanding.

Assessment Moderation
- Your assessments may be marked by an external examiner in addition to your instructor. This is common practice in the higher education industry and is designed to ensure your marks are equivalent to students being assessed at other higher education institutions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester week</th>
<th>Recommended targets</th>
<th>Meetings with supervisor (✓)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ensure topic is clearly identified. Set a timeline of targets for project. Select participants (send invitation to participate and obtain permission) Review the Action Research proposal from ED690 (as presented in Assessment 3) Draft Abstract</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Review the literature (topic and methodology) Begin developing data collecting tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Confirm participants Trial data collecting tools</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Finalise data collecting methods and tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Continue to review the literature (topic and methodology)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Update the literature review</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Continue to update the literature review</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Draw conclusions and make recommendations</td>
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| 23 | Report writing  
Review Abstract | ✓ |
| 24 | Presentation of final report  
Complete a review of the unit. |   |