

Department of Business Administration

EHFE014, Action Research,  
7.5 credits  
*Action Research,*  
7,5 hp  
*Third Cycle/Forskarutbildningsnivå*

### General information

The course EHFE014 is a course on Business Administration at the third cycle level.

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of studies:* Business Administration

The course consists of an introduction to action research focusing on its origins, scientific foundations, epistemologies, practices and implications in terms of doing PhD and other projects. It is expected that the course will mainly be of interest to doctoral students in the sub-fields of organization studies and strategy, but participants from other sub-disciplines and elsewhere in the social sciences will be welcome.

### Learning outcomes

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

A passing grade on the course will be awarded to students who actively attend all the classes and show that they have mastered the theoretical content of the course literature in the seminars and the final course assignment.

#### **Competence and skills**

A passing grade on the course will be awarded to students who actively attend all the classes and show that they have a thorough grasp of the methodological approaches and challenges of action research in the seminars.

### **Judgement and approach**

A passing grade on the course will be awarded to students who show that they have a thorough grasp of the theoretical underpinnings and methodological approaches of action research in the final course assignment.

### **Course content**

The course will start with classical approaches to action research from Levin onwards and will acquaint students with various approaches including action science, action learning, participative action research and so on. The course will also explore more recent approaches that have embraced the linguistic turn in the social sciences such as dialogical approaches and appreciative enquiry. The implications of more critical approaches such as interactive research will be taken up as will the relationship between action research and critical theory more generally. Throughout the course students will be encouraged to apply their own material to the methodological approaches of action research.

### **Course design**

The course content will be divided into a series of sub-topics broadly organized around various themes in the literature including sessions on a historical overview, scientific foundations, interactive research, dialogical approaches, doing action research in your own organisation and critical approaches. The course will normally be held on two separate blocks each of two days duration. The readings for each of these sessions will be books and articles and students will be expected to supplement these with their own selected texts.

The pedagogical model for the course will be that of presentations and seminars led by exponents of action research as well as opportunities for students to present and discuss their own projects where relevant.

### **Assessment**

To pass the course, the student will be expected to read texts that amount to around 1,500 pages in total according to the literature list, actively attend the seminars and complete a written assignment at the end of the course, to an acceptable standard, in the format of a journal article. Typically the written papers will discuss and problematise the various approaches to action research taken up in the course and/or comprise a methodological outline and motivation in relation to one's own project. Students who are unable to attend any seminar are required to contact the course co-ordinator with a view to undertaking a compensatory assignment.

### **Credits**

Grades are Pass or Fail.

*Plagiarism is considered to be a very serious academic offence. The University will take disciplinary actions against any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other improper practices in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University for a specific period of time.*

## Entry requirements

PhD students accepted to the PhD programme in Business Administration or an adjacent subject are eligible for the course.

## Course literature

See separate literature list.

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### **Books**

Coghlan, D. and Brannick, T. (2014) *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization* (4<sup>th</sup> edn) London: Sage.

Freire, P. (1970) *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder.

Greenwood, D. and Lewin, M. (2007) *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn) Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Herr, K. and Anderson, G. L. (2005) *The Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### **Selection of articles including**

Bradbury-Huang, H. (2010) 'What is Good Action Research? Why the Resurgent Interest?' *Action Research*, 8(19): 93–109

Svensson, L., Ellström, P-E. and Brulin, G. (2007) 'Introduction – on Interactive Research', *International Journal of Action Research* 3(3): 233–249.

Johansson, A.W. and Lindhult, E. (2008) 'Emancipation or workability? Critical versus pragmatic scientific orientation in action research', *Action Research*, 6(1): 95–115.

### **Reference Books**

Bradbury, H. (2015) *The Sage Handbook of Action Research* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn). London: Sage.

Shani, A.B., Mohrman, S. A., Pasmore, W. A., Stymne B. and Adler, N. (eds.) (2008) *Handbook of Collaborative Management Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Svensson, L. and Nielsen, K. A. (eds.) (2006) *Action and Interactive Research: Beyond Theory and Practice*. Maastricht: Shaker Publishing