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Section for Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research methods are increasingly used in all areas of psychology. We have proposed a new Section – the Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section – for anyone with an interest in using these research methods.

The proposed Section would parallel the existing Mathematical, Statistical and Computing Section, by providing a forum for methodological discussion, training and development of research techniques. The aims of the proposed section are:

1. to promote the use of qualitative research methods in both the scientific and professional domains of psychology (making it easier to identify examiners and consultants with expertise in qualitative methods);
2. to provide a forum for the development of qualitative methods in psychology that will draw together those working in different specialisms, using different approaches and different epistemologies; and
3. to foster the exchange of ideas, research and information on qualitative methods in psychology through the organisation of workshops, conferences, symposia and training sessions of special interest to psychologists using, or wanting to use, qualitative research methods.

British psychologists use a wide range of qualitative methods, and the proposed Section will reflect this diversity, including (but not limited to) semi-structured interviews, focus groups, grounded theory, discourse analysis, ethnography, and interpretive phenomenological analysis.

The proposed Section was approved by Council, and the next stage is for 1 per cent of members to say that they would want to join the Section, if formed. Please support the proposed Section by completing the form at www.psyc.leeds.ac.uk/research/qual/ and returning it to the address provided. A full version of the proposal can also be found at this URL.

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