

# MRS Diploma



PROSPECTUS



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## Welcome to The Market Research Study Centre's prospectus for The Market Research Society (MRS) Diploma in Market and Social Research Practice (MRS Diploma).

The MRS Diploma is designed for those who have been in a research role for three years, or for people who have already gained their MRS Advanced Certificate in Market & Social Research Practice and who have worked in a research role for one year or more.

The MRS Diploma is suitable for anyone working in all areas of research, either within research agencies or client-side research departments. The overall aim of the qualification is to enable candidates to understand the principles underlying a wide range of research practice, and to use this understanding to design and evaluate research. Agency researchers will develop a better understanding of the market research tools available to them, and client-side researchers will be able to evaluate research proposals and research findings critically. And because both types of researcher complete exactly the same course of study it means that agency researchers emerge with a much better understanding of client-side issues, and client side researchers emerge with a much better understanding of the mechanics of research.

The MRS Diploma takes at least two years to complete. There are five different units, with a choice between Units Three and Four, so you complete four units in order to obtain the qualification.

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### UNITS

- Unit One: The Principles of Market & Social Research
- Unit Two: The Practice & Context of Market & Social Research
- Unit Three: Analysing & Interpreting Quantitative Market & Social Research Data
- Unit Four: Collecting, Analysing & Interpreting Qualitative Market & Social Research Data
- Unit Five: Case Studies in Market & Social Research

### METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

- Unit One – three hour exam
- Unit Two – 7,000 word assignment
- Unit Three – 6,750 word assignment
- Unit Four – 6,750 word assignment
- Unit Five – three hour exam

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To complete the qualification successfully you need to pass all four units within four years of registering to study for the qualification.

The MRS Diploma is highly thought of throughout the research industry. Once you have passed The MRS Diploma you can apply to be a 'Certified' member of The Market Research Society.

You can find out more about the qualification itself on The Market Research Society Website:

<https://www.mrs.org.uk/qualifications/diploma>

## About us

The Market Research Study Centre was set up by Virginia Barstow and Hilary Birt in June 2018. Virginia and Hilary have both worked for BPP (a leading provider of professional qualifications) for many years, and have vast experience of tutoring on MRS qualifications. Virginia is course leader for the MRS Diploma - Hilary looks after the Advanced Certificate. Richard Payne, our third tutor is also one of the original tutors from BPP - all three tutors have been tutoring students since 2004.

BPP was the first training provider to offer distance learning for the MRS Diploma when the qualification was first established by the MRS in 2006. Virginia and Richard have been tutoring Diploma students since then and have helped many students to complete their studies successfully.



**Virginia Barstow, CMRS**  
Course leader and tutor

Virginia studied psychology at Sheffield University. She started her career in research working for three research agencies in London, before moving onto the clientside to work for Barclays Bank in a research role. In 1992 Virginia set up her own research consultancy and since then has worked for several of the large banks, transport companies and various Government quangos.

In 2003 Virginia was approached to give a workshop to some start-up companies by The University of Glamorgan, and was subsequently asked to cover the market research element of the CIM Diploma at Newport University. She enjoyed teaching so much that she completed a Post Graduate Certificate of Education. Since then she has also lectured in market research at Cardiff University's Business School on a regular basis.

Virginia is a Certified Member of the MRS. When she was young, single, footloose and fancy free, Virginia was a very active member of the MRS, speaking at evening meetings, serving on the MRS Conference Committee and (one of her madder ideas!) swimming a cross Channel relay in aid of the Market Research Benevolent Association.



## Richard Payne MMRS

Tutor

Richard has spent his working life in the fields of education, training and research. He graduated from the LSE with a degree in Economics and worked as market research executive for Industrial Market Research and as an economist for Consolidated Gold Fields. This gave him a strong grounding in Business to Business (B2B) research as an interviewer and as a project manager.

He then did a Masters at SOAS and worked full time as a Senior Lecturer teaching marketing on the Diploma in Management Studies (DMS) and Higher National Diploma (HND). While teaching he completed the CIM Diploma in Marketing in 1987.

Richard moved from education to work as Director of Corporate Marketing for the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) and then as Executive Director on the Board of ABG Professional Information, part of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). While working for CIMA and then ABG, Richard was also a part time Associate Lecturer with the Open University Business School tutoring on the MBA, which included the topics of marketing and business strategy.

After taking early retirement Richard worked part time as a team manager and as an interviewer for the Office for National Statistics. He began part time tutoring at BPP fifteen years ago. Richard combines his tutoring role with voluntary work at his local Citizens Advice Bureau.

The Market Research Study Centre is an **MRS accredited centre** for the provision of both The **MRS Advanced Certificate** and The **MRS Diploma**.



[www.mrs.org.uk](http://www.mrs.org.uk)



## Learning with us

We offer all our students a completely bespoke training programme – you decide when you want to study. We know that working and home life can be unpredictable and that you might not be able to work on your qualification on a regular, week by week basis. We will just fit in with you! You might decide to take a break from your studies after a unit – that’s fine! As long as you complete the qualification with the four year limit set by the MRS, when you decide to study is up to you. If you start a unit and then decide that you are too busy at work/moving house/having a baby/going on a long holiday and can’t complete the unit for the next assessment date, just re-start the unit when you can. We’re all about flexibility!

Most students like to have some sort of timetable to work to, and when you enrol on each unit we will work out a timetable together taking into account your busy periods at work and any planned holidays. If you have unexpected events at work or in your home life, it’s not a problem – we’ll just rework the timetable. We are here to help you get through your studies as painlessly as possible – no weekly commitments or rigid timetables – learning is meant to be fun, not a chore!

You can start your studies at any time – you are not limited to a certain start date. When the MRS entry closing date approaches (usually about six weeks before an exam/assignment submission date) we will review with you whether you feel ready to sit the exam or submit your assignment, or whether you should consider delaying things until the next sitting.

All our teaching is done via e-tutoring – you will have regular one-to-one contact with your tutor via email.

Some people find that distance learning can feel a bit isolated. We can put you in touch with other students who are studying at the same time as you are, so that you can compare work and help to keep each other motivated.

## How much it costs to complete the Diploma

Our costs for studying The Diploma are £1,000 per unit, plus MRS fees and VAT:

UNIT ONE		VAT (20%)	TOTAL
MRSC tutor support and study materials	£1,000.00		
MRS registration fee (one off)	£550.00		
MRS exam venue fee	£27.50		
	<b>£1,577.50</b>	£315.50	<b>£1,893.00</b>
<b>UNIT TWO</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	£200.00	<b>£1,200.00</b>
<b>UNIT THREE*</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	£200.00	<b>£1,200.00</b>
<b>UNIT FOUR*</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	£200.00	<b>£1,200.00</b>
<b>UNIT FIVE (includes MRS exam venue fee)</b>	<b>£1,027.50</b>	£205.50	<b>£1,233.00</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR ALL FOUR UNITS</b>	<b>£4,605.00</b>	£921.00	<b>£5,526.00</b>

\* Students sit either Unit Three or Four

For students wishing to pay for all four units at the start of the course, there is a discount of 10% on tutoring fees (i.e. £400 + VAT).

If you have already passed the MRS Advanced Certificate you should not need as much support to pass the Diploma Unit One exam as students who have not taken the qualification. We are able to offer a 50% discount on the tuition fees for Unit One for successful Advanced Certificate students (£1,077.50 + VAT in total).

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## Study materials

Our study materials vary depending on whether you are sitting an exam or completing an assignment.

The Unit One study materials contain chapter summaries from the recommended MRS texts, worksheets, quizzes, example questions from past exam papers and two mock exams to help you pass the Unit One exam.

The Unit Two study materials contain several examples of how to complete the case study assignment which you will work through with your tutor, finally completing a practice run before the assignment task is set by MRS.

The Unit Three study materials are similar to those issued for Unit Two – students work towards completing a practice run assignment before the assignment is published by MRS.

The Unit Four study materials consist of a step by step guide to doing your own small piece of qualitative research and completing the Unit Four assignment.

The Unit Five study materials talk you through the case history approach to the exam, helping you to understand what is expected of you in the exam. Again, your tutor will comment on practice questions and a mock exam, so that you are fully prepared for the exam itself.

We will also send you tips on distance learning, exam revision and other things which it is useful to know for your studies, when you sign up for the course.

## Course schedule

MRS assesses all units of the Diploma twice each year – in January and June.

You can start the course with us at any time. We would usually recommend that you take at least six months to complete all the necessary reading and the written assignment or exam preparation for each unit.

## How the Assessment Works

In order to obtain your Diploma qualification you need to pass all four units within four years.

If you fail a unit you can resubmit the assignment or re-sit the exam up to two more times within the four year period.



## Entry requirements

Candidates will normally meet one or more of the following criteria:

- successful completion of the MRS Advanced Certificate and a minimum of one year's experience in a research-related role
- successful completion of The Chartered Institute of Marketing's (CIM) Professional Diploma in Marketing, Marketing Research & Information Level Six module plus a minimum of one year's experience in a research-related role
- a degree or appropriate professional qualification which contained a significant research component and a minimum of two years' work experience in a research-related role
- a minimum of three years' work experience in a research-related role and evidence of training within that role

Please contact us if you are unsure whether you are able to meet the necessary criteria.

## Overseas Students

We welcome overseas students but please be aware the language used in both assessment components is English.

The English requirement for this course is Cambridge English: Advanced Proficiency 175 with no less than 162 in each component or equivalent. All candidates must have a good command of written and spoken English. Please contact us if you need more details about the required language proficiency.

Overseas students will need to arrange to sit the two Exams at a local British Council Exam centre. An additional fee of £80 is payable to MRS by candidates for assessment outside of the UK. This fee covers MRS administration and examination materials despatch costs. Candidates who wish to sit the exam in their country of residence are responsible for making the British Council venue arrangements and for payment of the associated costs i.e. venue hire, invigilation, return postage & packaging etc. You can find your local British Council Exam centre at [www.britishcouncil.org/Exam](http://www.britishcouncil.org/Exam).



## Testimonials

### Testimonials about the course:

“Having the MRS Diploma has opened up so many more career opportunities, and without it I am sure I would not be in the senior management position I am in today. Having the Diploma demonstrates commitment and interest in the field of research, as well as ability and knowledge. I use the knowledge gained during the qualification almost every day in my role as Head of Research for an investment platform, and my colleagues respect my opinions and direction partly due to experience but mostly due to the formal qualifications which prove my ability.

The modules of the Diploma build upon your learning as you work through them which I found made the experience of studying much more manageable. With any qualification, it can feel as if you are learning lots of theory but with the Diploma, the course turns much of this into practical examples and case studies, and I particularly enjoyed holding my own focus group as part of a piece of course work. I would recommend anyone working in the research industry to consider the Diploma as whilst it is not easy, it is a rewarding experience and you will learn a huge amount from it which is applicable throughout your future career.”

[Head of Insight, Financial Services](#)

“The MRS Diploma has really helped me to advance my career and has definitely made me a more competent and credible researcher. Doing the Diploma gave me a broad and deep understanding of the entire market research process which I fall back on to this day. By the end of the course I certainly had more confidence about my knowledge of the whole research process. Once I had achieved the qualification and was job hunting, it helped me to stand out against others who were applying for the same position. It is also something which I promote in my CV and which goes into all the proposals submitted to clients and potential clients.”

[Head of Quantitative Research, Research Agency](#)

“The MRS Diploma has helped me tremendously as I have been able to apply what I learnt during the course in my day to day role, working on the client side. My job involves managing research projects and this course has helped me to ask those very challenging questions at the start of the project which enable me to really understand the business problems and define the research objectives. It has also helped in how I evaluate proposals I received from external agencies.”

[Research Manager, Professional Services](#)

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“The MRS Diploma in Market and Social Research is a really worthwhile qualification to take if you want an in-depth understanding of the skills needed in the market research industry. Studying this Diploma gave us a qualification from the recognised and highly respected Market Research Society which would set us apart from the rest in the workplace. On the whole, it was enjoyable and we are able to bring the skills and knowledge we have learnt back into our day-to-day market research job and sets us up to progress further in our career.”

[Research Mangers, Financial Services](#)

“I studied for the MRS Diploma over a period of two years, and enjoyed the experience very much. It gave me a good insight into many different research techniques, some of which were new to me and which I’ve been able to start using in my job as a result. Achieving the Diploma has given me greater confidence and credibility. I would certainly recommend the Diploma to others working in a research role.”

[Associate Director, Research Agency](#)

#### **Testimonials about our tutors:**

“Virginia helped me pass my Diploma. Her attention to detail and friendly, but critical, approach was invaluable. I appreciated her quick response and proactive style... I simply wasn’t allowed to fall behind. I had worked with distance learning tutors in the past but far and away my experience with Virginia was the best I have experienced. I would not hesitate to recommend her to anyone setting out on distance learning for the first time or an older candidate with some experience under their belt already. She knows how to set the tone.”

[Client manager, Research Agency](#)

“It can be difficult to study on a distance learning course, but Virginia and Richard, from the off, were very approachable welcoming us on-board our studies. They set us up with a study guide and reading list with regular tasks to be completed but with added flexibility to work around our full-time job. The great thing about Virginia and Richard is they gave us constructive feedback quickly so we could brush up on the areas we were weaker on, setting us up for success for our exams or assignments which I’m pleased to say we passed all the units first time. They gave us encouragement throughout the whole course so we never gave up when things got a little tough.”

[Research Mangers, Financial Services](#)

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“I couldn’t have asked for more from my tutor, Virginia, when studying for the MRS Diploma. She is clearly very passionate about research and teaching it, and I felt that my success really meant a lot to her. She was incredibly flexible when I needed to defer an exam for personal reasons and she was there for me when I was ready to begin again with a few encouraging e-mails to get me over the hurdle of getting back on track.”

[Head of Insight, Financial Services](#)

“The e-tutoring was ideal for me. Having a family and working full time, it was important to have the flexibility to study at my own pace. I have found the tutors extremely helpful, motivating and quick to respond to all of my queries.”

[Research Manager, Professional Services](#)

“I took on the challenge of doing the Market Research Society Diploma at perhaps one of the busiest times of my life - working full-time, with two young children and a husband retraining to be a teacher. So it was vital for me to be able to do the Diploma in my own time and at my own pace, without the added stress of being available at particular times. Virginia was an excellent tutor, incredibly flexible with her time, always at the end of an email with advice and support, always encouraging me to go for it - and I achieved a distinction in all four modules!”

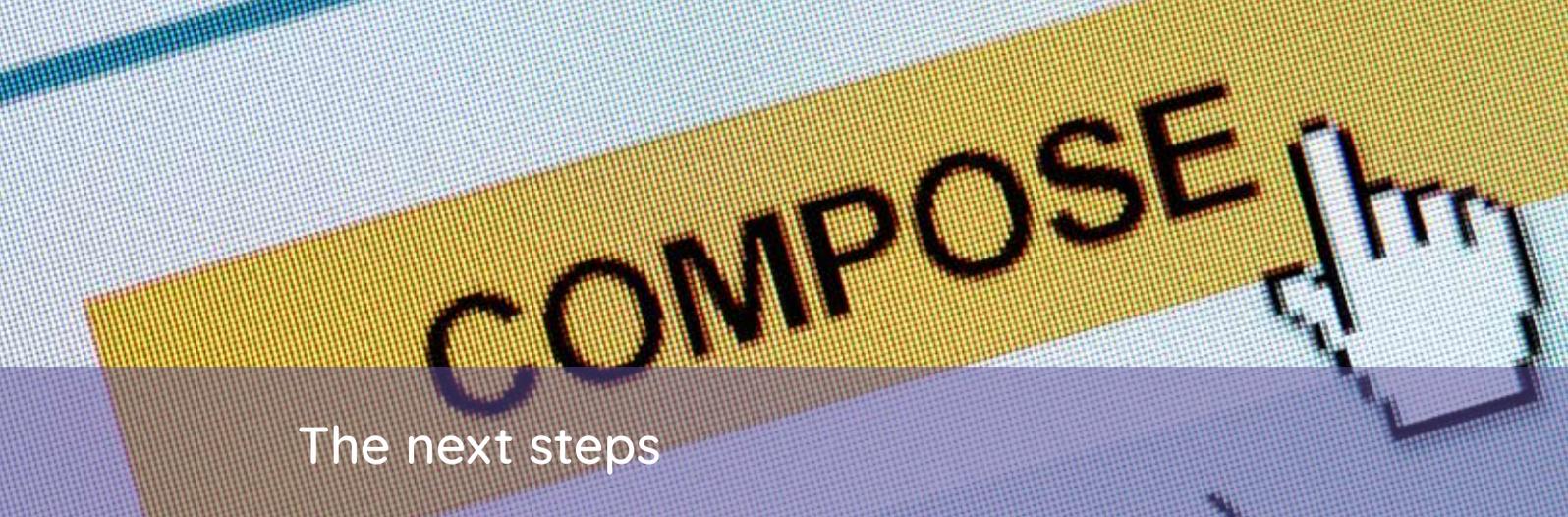
[Insight Manager, News organisation](#)

“I would like to say thank you for your help and support. You have been brilliant. Even when I have been a bit slack - it’s great that you have always been there to give me a push (I mean that in a nice way). Your straightforward feedback has always been invaluable.”

[Client Manager, Research Agency](#)

“Unit Five - wahoo - I passed!! Literally over the moon at getting through this, as I have found it a struggle! Thanks for all your help, support and encouragement along the way, especially back in Unit Four when I had a meltdown over the amount of work. I wish I was working from home as there’s a bottle of champagne in the fridge that I’ve been waiting for the right occasion for!”

[Another satisfied customer!](#)

A close-up, slightly angled view of a yellow button with the word "COMPOSE" in black, bold, sans-serif capital letters. A white mouse cursor with a black outline is positioned over the right side of the button, pointing towards the text. The background is a light blue and white grid pattern.

# COMPOSE

## The next steps

Contact us at [info@themarketresearchstudycentre.co.uk](mailto:info@themarketresearchstudycentre.co.uk) to talk to us about whether the Diploma is suitable for you. If you would like us to give you a call, just email us your 'phone number.

Alternatively you can simply download an [application form](#) and email it to us – we'll get back to you as soon as we can.



email: [info@themarketresearchstudycentre.co.uk](mailto:info@themarketresearchstudycentre.co.uk)

web: [themarketresearchstudycentre.co.uk](http://themarketresearchstudycentre.co.uk)