

# Handling Qualitative Data

## A Practical Guide

Second Edition

Lyn Richards

**®SAGE**

Los Angeles | London | New Delhi  
Singapore | Washington DC

# CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Starting points</i>	1
<i>The shape of this book</i>	5
<b>PART I   SETTING UP</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1   Setting up your project</b>	<b>11</b>
Purpose, goal and outcome	12
Designing the project	13
You and your data	20
Logging your design	25
Learning your software	27
To do	30
Suggestions for further reading	31
<b>2   Making qualitative data</b>	<b>33</b>
Understanding data	33
Preparing to 'make' data	39
Purposive data making	47
Data about your project (and you)	48
To do	52
Suggestions for further reading	52
<b>3   Data records</b>	<b>55</b>
What will the records be like?	56
How big should a data record be?	58
How will the records be stored?	61
What information will be stored with the record?	64
When can you start analysing?	68
To do	69
Suggestions for further reading	70

<b>PART II</b>	<b>WORKING WITH THE DATA</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Up from the data</b>	<b>73</b>
	Meeting data	75
	Where do your ideas go?	79
	Handling your discoveries	82
	Drawing it - the early uses of models	83
	Revisiting design	83
	Revisiting and reviewing records	85
	Writing it	88
	Up to the category	89
	To do	89
	Suggestions for further reading	90
<b>5</b>	<b>Coding</b>	<b>93</b>
	Qualitative and quantitative coding	93
	What can you do with coding?	95
	Ways of coding in a qualitative project	96
	Revisiting the coded data	104
	Coder reliability in qualitative research	] 08
	Avoiding the coding trap	109
	Establishing your personal data processing style	110
	Writing about coding	111
	To do	112
	Suggestions for further reading	112
<b>6</b>	<b>Handling ideas</b>	<b>115</b>
	Organization and creativity	116
	Catalogues of categories	117
	Writing your ideas	127
	To do	129
	Suggestions for further reading	129
<b>PART III</b>	<b>MAKING SENSE OF YOUR DATA</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>What are you aiming for?</b>	<b>133</b>
	What are you seeking?	134
	What can you achieve?	136
	What would be satisfactory?	138
	What might it look like? Possible outcomes	139
	How will you know when you get there?	143
	How will you know if it is good enough?	147
	To do	153
	Suggestions for further reading	153

<b>8</b>	<b>Searching the data</b>	<b>155</b>
	Moving forward	155
	The data-theory process	157
	Searching coding	159
	Searching the text	164
	Building on searches	166
	Reporting searches	167
	To do	168
	Suggestions for further reading	168
<b>9</b>	<b>Seeing a whole</b>	<b>171</b>
	Seeing what's there - and what's not there	171
	Ways of seeing	172
	Accounting for and validating your 'seeing'	185
	To do	189
	Suggestions for further reading	189
<b>10</b>	<b>Telling it</b>	<b>191</b>
	Start with what you have written	192
	What if it won't write?	195
	Planning a qualitative report	197
	What about validity and reliability?	199
	<i>Using</i> your data	201
	Reports that don't work	203
	Concluding your study	206
	To do	207
	Suggestions for further reading	207
	References	208
	Index	211