# Writing up

Writing up involves pulling together all the ideas and information you have gathered in your literature search and research. You should now try to fit what you have collected into your plan and see if the structure still works. If you want to make any major changes to your structure, you should check these with your supervisor first.

Watch four WBS PhD students talking about their Masters dissertations.
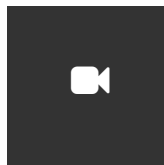
- What advice do they give about the academic writing process?
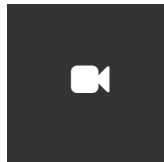- What does each of them do when they get stuck?
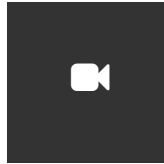
[📹]

Note: *Audio and video is only available in the online version of this content.*
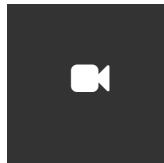
[📹]

Note: *Audio and video is only available in the online version of this content.*

[📹]

Note: *Audio and video is only available in the online version of this content.*

[📹]

Note: *Audio and video is only available in the online version of this content.*

Watch the three films below from Dr Mark Johnson (Associate Professor of Operations Management) about his ideal writing environment, writing routine and what he does when he gets stuck.

- How do his preferences compare with yours?
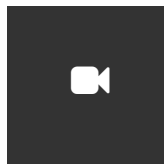
[📹]

Note: *Audio and video is only available in the online version of this content.*

[📹]

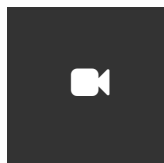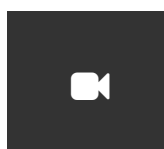**Note:** *Audio and video is only available in the online version of this content.*

[📹]

Note: *Audio and video is only available in the online version of this content.*

Setting the scene can help you get on with the task of writing. For example, some people make a soundtrack of music that inspires them and others create a routine involving rewards and mini-deadlines, like mealtimes or TV shows.

Click on the links below to see famous authors of fiction talking about writing:

- Ian McEwan on his Writing Process (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0ZEE9_iZRk)
- John Irving's Creative Schedule (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDN4UwtXcfs)
- James Scott Bell on Writing: The Best Advice I Know (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ixZJzrkZ2g)

Editing

Editing is a very important stage in your dissertation writing journey. The website 'Write to Done: Unmissable articles on writing' suggest the following editing steps:

> 1. Don't edit while you're writing.
>
> 2. Put your work aside for a few days.
>
> 3. Read through in a different format.
>
> 4. Edit for structure and content first.
>
> 5. Cut out 10% of your words.
>
> 6. Use spell-check - but use your eyes too.
>
> 7. Read your piece backwards (or slowly).
>
> 8. Let it go.

For further information about each step, go to Write to Done (http://writetodone.com/eight-simple-tips-for-editing-your-own-work/).

Here are some other ways to help you edit your work:

- Make sure your grammar and spell-checkers are on and then investigate any words that are underlined or highlighted.

- Read your work aloud and where you trip over the words or it does not sound right, check for an error.

- Make a list of the errors that you know you often make and check your work systematically for them.

- When you think you have finished, send your final draft to your supervisor for feedback.

Skills development

As a WBS student and soon-to-be alumnus, you are expected to hold very high standards in everything you do. Editing is one way to develop the meticulous attention to detail that will be required of you in the business world.

Formatting

- Typed in Arial 11pt.

- A4-size page layout.

- 1.5 lines spacing.

- 2.54cm margins.

- ID number in the header of every page.

- Page numbers (bottom centre).

- If you are required to print your dissertation, print it double-sided. The in-house print service at the University - Warwick Print - offer a dissertation binding service. By providing your dissertation as a PDF document they will print, bind and deliver direct to your Programme Team. Rates start at approximately £15. Further information can be found at www.warwickprint.co.uk (http://www.warwickprint.co.uk/).

Contents

1. In the middle of the title page, give the project title and your student ID number. At the bottom of the page, write:

> *This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified within the contents. I am aware of the University of Warwick regulation concerning plagiarism and collusion.*
>
> *No substantial part(s) of the work submitted here has also been submitted by me in other assessments for accredited courses of study, and I acknowledge that if this has been done an appropriate reduction in the mark I might otherwise have received will be made.*

2. You should include a 1-page summary (abstract), setting out briefly the objectives of the project and conclusions reached. The abstract will be included in the word count (see your Student Handbook for more details on the word count policy). The abstract should be a maximum of 500 words.

3. All citations should be punctuated and referenced correctly.

4. References should be quoted in Harvard style in the body of the work and in the bibliography and not at the foot of individual pages.

5. A bibliography should be included at the end of the dissertation.

Wordcount

Please see your handbook for the WBS word count policy.

Quiz (2)

Try the two tasks below to test your editing skills.

Task 1

Read through the following paragraph and see how many grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors you can find. Choose the option that you think is correct - but beware - although we've given you a choice, not all of these are wrong!

[Critically ▼] Penrose (2004) argues that Martin's concept of "instinctive response" (2000, p.23) [were ▼] becoming so widely [accepted ▼] that some companies and individuals were failing to acknowledge [alternitive ▼] approaches to conflict resolution. Chalmers and Reed (2008) undertook a [two year ▼] study looking at how ten multi-national organisations [practicly ▼] applied Martin's [theory focusing ▼] in particular on the elements associated [with: team ▼] dynamics and [change then ▼] conducted employee surveys to establish levels of job satisfaction, [successful ▼] communication and job security. Their findings were [inline ▼] with those of Lopate and Brookfield (2006), Nussbaum (2006) and Straka [(2007) ▼] demonstrating that where [Martins theory ▼] had failed to resolve intra-team conflict, there was a considerable [delay, ▼] of between six and eight [months, ▼] (see Figure 4) before alternative methods of resolution were [sought ▼] and/or applied. Although Chalmers and Reed acknowledge that [there ▼] study did not have a clearly defined control group (2008, p.76), it is obvious from their data that Martin's theory [has ▼] a profound impact on how companies in this sector strategised their [organisational ▼] structures. Penrose (2004) may have been an early [adoptor ▼] of this view point, [but ▼] subsequent studies by Palanchi and Simmons (2010), Benyon (2010), Surande *et al* (2011) and Canavor (2012) reinforce Penrose's initial concern that Martin's framework and analytical approach [creates ▼] the illusion of impartiality whilst [simultaneously ▼] dismantling recognised processes for [acknowledging ▼] , and responding to changes in team and role dynamics. Surande *et al* point out that without a [consistant ▼] and agreed mechanism for reacting to change, any discussion of organisational dynamics is at best [limited, and ▼] at worst "engenders confusion and job insecurity amongst the workforce" (2011, p.142).

If you need more support on the mechanics of writing, please see the Centre for Applied Linguistics' online resources (http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/globalpad/openhouse/academicenglishskills/).

Task 2

Read through the following paragraphs carefully, thinking about how it could be made more concise. How low can you get the word count for this paragraph without losing any of the content or crucial detail? (An answer is attached below, but please try not to reveal it until you have attempted the exercise.)

Since corporate staff are highly important in, perhaps one might say even vital to, the achievement of company strategy, it is unexpected that there are so few empirical studies that systematically and comprehensively examine their functions within organisational dynamics. The very limited range of sources does indeed include a very interesting piece of work by Salvini, Heron, and Argyll (2009), who report their survey results on the multi-layered and complex relationship between headquarters size and the level of success of corporate strategy systems in several hundred international companies. The results of this survey, which did cover a wide range of companies in multiple geographies, did illustrate that there is a very notable level of variation in the size and scope of activities of corporate headquarters that was dependent on and influenced by the individual organisation's location and specific corporate-level strategy. Additionally to this, further, valuable work in the field has been undertaken by Terra and Smith (2010), Corbett, Klaus and Govinski (2011) and Terra, Stevenson and Dvoratz (2011), with a particular focus not on the relationship between geographical location and corporate headquarters size, but rather on the extremely wide variety of functions that corporate headquarters can have in multinational businesses. Also, other studies, such as Simpson (2012), Dorande and Coren (2012) and Liverson (2013), have been undertaken on the perceived visibility of corporate headquarters and the effect of this visibility on the range of functions that the headquarters have in relation to corporate strategy.

Although the above-mentioned studies are valuable in forwarding understanding of this issue, it was clear that there was an urgent need to explore the gaps in the data. The current study conducts a quantitative and qualitative assessment of a large, multinational company, focusing in greatest detail on the relationship between corporate staff function and their level of communication with a carefully chosen selection of other employees within the company's sales force. This approach allows us to clearly establish the level of communication and communicative function of corporate staff within the company, with the expectation that these corporate staff would demonstrate a capacity to construct and maintain more complex, organised and efficient communication networks than those created by other categories of employee with the company's structure. **(369 words)**