

Manage the process

Everyone finds that the reading and research process take longer than planned and this can have a negative effect on the writing-up stage. A WBS dissertation should have the following characteristics:

- An ordered, critical and reasoned exposition of knowledge gained through the student's efforts.
- Evidence of awareness of the literature, its strengths and weaknesses and any gaps needing to be filled.

This means that you must manage your time carefully so that you can complete the dissertation process before the deadline. To make a timetable for yourself, you need the following information:

- What is the deadline for your proposal or scoping document?
- What are the deadline and word count for your dissertation?
- How many tutorials can you have with your supervisor?
- Is there a drafting process supported by your supervisor?
- When are the Academic Writing Tutor drop-in sessions?
- Are there other dissertation writing support sessions? See 'Advice and support' tab.

Possible drafting process

- Prewriting → make notes on your ideas and ideas from the literature to create a ...
- rough plan → fill in the text to create a ...
- rough draft → tidy up the language to develop a ...
- Draft 1 → decide where the holes are and fill them or re-organise to develop a ...
- Draft 2 → edit and format, then ...
- submit!

There are a variety of time management methods:

- Outlook (<https://support.office.com/en-us/outlook>)
- Mindtools (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_HTE.htm)
- Gantt (<http://www.ganttproject.biz/>)
- MS Excel (<http://www.vertex42.com/ExcelTemplates/excel-gantt-chart.html>).

Manage the client

Some students will choose to do their research in a company outside the university. This means the student takes on the role of being a consultant. The company and person that they deal with at the company are called the client.

This film shows the first meeting between a consultant and their new client.

- What is on the consultant's paper?
- What questions does the consultant ask?
- Which of the questions ask for further explanation?
- At the end of the meeting, does the consultant have enough information to get started on the project?

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

Skills development

The ability to ask questions, take notes and ask follow-up questions is not only useful for careers in consultancy, but also in any job where there is an information gap that you must fill in order to complete a task.

Advice and support

There is a wide variety of advice and support available for students writing dissertations. Here are some links for you to explore.

- [About to start your dissertation? \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MX0m6B5ongM\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MX0m6B5ongM)
- [Undergraduate and Masters writing mentors \(http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/scs/skills/awp/advice/writing_mentors/\)](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/scs/skills/awp/advice/writing_mentors/)
- Introduction to the database lectures - please refer to the section in your 'Academic Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism' module.

Your supervisor and you

WBS supervisors are usually members of the full-time academic team. They expect to have one initial meeting with you and at least two progress meetings. They often hold group meetings at the start of the dissertation journey so that you can meet other students who are exploring similar topics as you. You should prepare questions for all these meetings and be prepared to listen and take notes of what your supervisors (and fellow students) say. When you have begun your dissertation journey, you will need individual contact with your supervisor. This contact can be face-to-face meetings, telephone calls and emails. You must liaise with your supervisor to organise this contact time.

