

Structured Group Supervision

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Overview

I initially designed this resource to help structure my group supervision sessions, and have now set it up as an online book to share with others. It's written for supervisors as an audience, rather than for students.

Partner book

Dr Holly Neill and I have also developed a joint resource [Group SupervisoR](#), which provides an introduction to supervising in groups and discusses different ways in which this could be done.

How the book is structured

There are a range of different resources contained within this book. In the section below, I give an overview of how I supervise and how my group supervision is structured. In the chapters that follow, I break down, week-by-week, what I cover along with the resources I use.

If you are interested in using any of these resources, please do! Feel free to pick and choose/adapt any of the resources, incorporating what you want into your own supervision practice.

Where there are internal resources that I've used, I've either linked to the original source or have said who the resource has come from. Depending on the source, these may or may not be available if you are external to the University of Glasgow. Saying that, I've made as many available as possible. Where there are external resources, I've provided the original source.

Each chapter (or week) tends to be structured as follows:

- I start with an overview of what I cover in that session
- I give a **rough** estimate of where I would typically expect students to be in their project. This is not set in stone and each project is different. It also is oriented towards projects with primary data collection, so would look different if a student was doing secondary data analysis.
- I break down what I usually discuss with students.

- If there are actions for the following week, I usually note these, to remind me to tell the students during the session
- I will then have a section at the end linking to resources I made up, internal resources (these are resources from other people within School of Psychology and Neuroscience at the University of Glasgow) and/or external resources that I pass on to students.

How I structure my supervision

The way I run my dissertation supervision is:

- Level 4 students have a combination of individual supervision and group supervision (switching between each on a weekly basis). I, personally, like having both types rather than just doing group or individual.
- PGT ODL students have individual supervision (30 mins) on a fortnightly basis (this is because they are part-time and online distance-learning). I also hold a couple of group sessions through the year to get them in touch with each other so they can provide peer support, although many work full-time or in schools etc., which combined with time zones, makes it difficult to find a time to suit everyone. I record these so everyone can benefit.

Therefore, most of these resources apply to my UG dissertation students, but could easily be applied to PGT, especially those studying on campus.

Setting expectations with students

In 23-24, I made up sways to detail the supervision process for both [Level 4 students](#) and [ODL students](#). They were well-received, but the students who went out of their way to tell me that they found it helpful were those who were neurodivergent, as it meant they knew what to expect. I think they would also be quite helpful for international students, as previous supervision experiences at university might have been very different.

I've linked to examples of the sways above (please feel free to duplicate for your own use), but have also included the content in [Appendix A](#)

Joint deadline document

I use a deadline document for each cohort of supervisees. This details deadlines (I keep them as soft deadlines, but others might decide to do hard deadlines) and also notes when each draft was received and when I returned feedback.

It means I can keep on top of a) where each student is in the process, b) the order in which I receive sections (and therefore have to give feedback), and c) allows students to know where their draft is in the 'queue' (which might reduce unrealistic expectations of a return within a short timescale!). I allow students to view the spreadsheet but they are not able to edit it, meaning they can't change a deadline without talking to me about it.

Examples of deadline documents:

- [Level 4 students deadline document](#)
- [PGT ODL students deadline document](#)

'Themed' supervision

I've taken an approach of doing themed sessions in supervision, covering things that everyone will need to know about and also incorporating the dissemination of resources for students. Some of these are resources I made up, some are resources from UoG SPaN staff members and others are from external sources.

Students have said they've found the resources helpful and have applied them to some of their other courses. I used to have the group sessions in the even weeks, but then some students go away for reading week, so I've moved them to the odd weeks.

The below structure is based on a dissertation starting in September (Semester 1 Week 1) and ending in mid-March (Semester 2 Week 10). This is likely to differ based on discipline and University.

Level 4 group supervision is as follows:

- Semester 1 Week 1 - Getting to know each other, topics, proposals
- Semester 1 Week 3 - Ethics, research questions
- Semester 1 Week 5 - Summarising papers, writing, bullet point introductions
- Semester 1 Week 7 - Discussing the bullet point intros (*students to bring bullet point intros*), participant recruitment, reducing perfectionism
- Semester 1 Week 9 - Collecting data, developing evaluation (intro)
- Semester 1 Week 11 - Structure (i.e. reverse outlines), JARS guidelines
- Semester 2 Week 1 - Receiving and applying feedback, presenting work

- Semester 2 Week 3 - Analysis (quant and qual) - *students to bring questions*
- Semester 2 Week 5 - Developing evaluation (discussion), peer review of discussion
- Semester 2 Week 7 - No-stakes presentations - *all students will present a 5 min summary of study findings so far*
- Semester 2 Week 9 - Final group session - *students to bring questions*
- Semester 2 Week 11 - LONGER SESSION - celebration and practice talks for UG conference/BPS. *Students to bring presentation slides*

Although dissertation hand-in is the Friday of Semester 2 Week 10 and so supervision has technically ended, as students were anxious about presenting their research I held an extra group session in Week 11 so they could do practice talks a few days before the UG conference. I will keep this for future years as students reported finding it supportive.

I do individual supervision in the even weeks, and do 30 mins per person. Other models that supervisors use is to do group supervision every week or some do one week group supervision, one week drop-in.

1 Semester 1 Week 1

1.1 Getting to know each other, topics, proposals

In the first session, the purpose is mainly to get to know each other - what topics are students interested in? We also have a look over what is required for the dissertation proposal and discuss what they can expect as part of supervision.

1.1.1 Introductions and topics

- Everyone introduces themselves and the general topic/s that they are interested in. Do they have a fixed idea or are they still deciding? Do they know what approach they want to take, methodologically? Do they have any questions?

1.1.2 Format of supervision

- I then discuss the general process of supervision
 - Expectations I have (stated in the sway) and what students can expect from me
 - Individual vs. group sessions (including how these differ, what the function of each is)
 - Explain the importance of getting ethics done at an early stage in the process
 - Discuss a general timeline of the project (everyone's will look a bit different though)
 - * Typically, intros are sent in December/early Jan, methods in Jan/Feb and Results or Analysis in Feb.
 - * Sections can be sent together or separately.
 - * Everyone should choose deadlines for each section and it will be added to the deadline spreadsheet.
 - * I have a cut off for accepting drafts. This is usually two weeks before the deadline, so students should keep this in mind when setting deadlines (they should give themselves some wiggle room).

- Show the students the folder with dissertation resources I've gathered together. This will be everything covered in the group sessions, plus anything else that's useful
- Show students the spreadsheet to track drafts etc. We'll discuss possible deadlines in individual supervision
- They will have to juggle the dissertation alongside other courses, so will need to work consistently on it but also take advantage of the quieter periods to work on it.
- Some things I cover, in terms of project management:
 - It's worth setting up a reference manager now if they don't already use one (e.g. [Zotero](#))
 - Project management will be very important - there's information on using [Planner](#) in the Moodle

1.1.3 Writing a proposal

Different supervisors have different ways of approaching the proposal - as most of the students working with me tend to do somewhat sensitive topics, I am very mindful of not delaying ethics too much and therefore ask them to work on the proposal and also make a start on ethics pretty soon after. But, they would need to have a very clear idea of the project and how they were going to set it up in this case.

Some things I discuss with students and ask them to think about:

- Why are they conducting the study?
- What do they want to find out? - What data will they need?
- Who are they going to recruit? From where?
- What would your RQ/hypotheses be?
- If quant, what analysis would you do for each hypothesis?
- If qual, how are you planning to analyse your data and why?

I also direct the students to the information on proposal writing on the Moodle (Level 4 Undergraduate)

1.1.4 Other things to cover

- I show the students where the Level 4 moodle is (usually there are at least a few who aren't aware of this)
- I introduce the idea of deciding between College vs. intranet for ethics (will depend on their project)
- Mention that one things I'm doing is building up a bank of data that future students can use. Ideally, I would like all projects that collect data to have an option in it for storage of the data and keeping it so students can analyse it in the future.

1.2 Internal resources

Specific to School of Psychology & Neuroscience: In the Level 4 moodle for the dissertation, Chiara has included a section called 'Project Management & Time Saving Tools'. In this, there is information about the proposal, a proforma and also an example research proposal.

2 Semester 1 Week 3

2.1 Ethics, research questions

In this session, we talk about ethics and research questions. Most people working with me tend to submit their projects through College Ethics rather than the intranet, and so I focus on the importance of getting ethics submitted quickly as delays can hold projects up. There is more wiggle room if supervisors are supervising low-risk/secondary projects.

2.1.1 Expected progress

- In Week 3, I would expect that students are firming up their research questions and what their data collection/analysis will look like and have made progress in the proposal.

2.1.2 Research Questions

- I usually talk through some tips for developing a Research Question (quant and qual) as well as hypotheses (quant only), using resources from RM1 and RM2 (MSc Conversion courses) *see internal resources below*.

2.1.3 Ethics

- Generally I will aim for ethics to be submitted around Week 6 (final submission, not submission to supervisor)
 - Given this, when will we set as a deadline to get an initial first draft of ethics to supervisor? This date is then added to the spreadsheet for each student. Need to allow time for supervisor comments and student time to act on feedback.
 - * May need multiple drafts before ready to submit.
 - What concerns do students have about ethics?

- Discuss whether each project is likely to be secondary ethics, intranet ethics (low-risk option for Level 4 only) or College ethics (higher-risk/potential to publish for Level 4, all primary data collection for PGT) so students are clear on what they are expected to do.
- I will then ask students to make sure that they use the resources linked on the moodle for their ethics (templates and examples are available) and show them where this is.
- There is one final resource available to them: commented versions of ethics applications from previous student projects (one quant and one qual).

2.2 Internal resources

2.2.1 Developing a research question

[Research Methods 1](#) has some tips for students on how to construct Research Questions and hypotheses for quantitative research

[Research Methods 2](#) has some tips for students on how to construct Research Questions for qualitative research

2.2.2 Ethics

Specific to School of Psychology & Neuroscience: The Moodle (Level 4, PGT) has a folder with templates and exemplars for ethics that should be used

3 Semester 1 Week 5

3.1 Summarising papers, writing, bullet point introductions

In this session, we cover summarising papers as well as general writing advice before specifically covering bullet point introductions. I then ask students to bring a bullet point introduction with them into the Semester 1 Week 7 session.

I've made some [notes for this session](#). Feel free to use/adapt etc. as you wish.

3.1.1 Expected progress

- By now, I would be expecting to see some ethics drafts coming in and all projects should be firmed up. Rationales should all be submitted.

3.1.2 Summarising papers

- I cover some suggestions that I have on how to summarise papers
 - Summarise with intent (what is the purpose?)
 - Pull out the key details (remember can go back for further detail)
 - Take notes for the Discussion, even when reading for the Introduction
 - Further details are linked in the document in *Internal Resources*

3.1.3 General writing advice

- Writing advice will likely differ from supervisor to supervisor. Here are some of my suggestions (rest are in the document linked previously):
 - It's better to write something than nothing
 - Know what works for you (e.g. timing, accountability, blocking time out)
 - Small goals can be helpful
 - Split out **generation** and **editing**
 - * This can help get over the hurdle of the 'perfect' sentence

3.1.4 Bullet point introductions

- I discuss that I would like everyone to write a bullet point introduction for the next session. I tell students that I do not expect this to be perfect, and that it can change down the line
- We go through some of the suggestions I have for writing this.
- I ask students to post on the Teams channel before the next group meeting (in two weeks time) but others may choose a different process
- I signpost them to [Wil's resource](#) on developing a rationale for their introduction.

3.2 Internal resources

[My suggestions](#) on summarising papers, writing in general, and developing a bullet point intro

[Wil's resource](#) on developing a rationale

[General writing tips for quantitative research](#) (from the RM1 team): (Chapters 11-20)

[General writing tips for qualitative research](#) (from the RM2 team)

3.3 External resources

Here's an example of a template for summarising a paper, which can be helpful for students if they want some guidance on where to start.

[Document link](#)

4 Semester 1 Week 7

4.1 Discussing the bullet point intros, participant recruitment, reducing perfectionism

In this session, we go through everyone's bullet point intros. These are usually between half a page and a full page of A4, and don't need to be concrete.

We'll then cover participant recruitment. If we have time, we'll look at reducing perfectionism and discuss this as a group. If the bullet point intros take longer than expected, I'll pass the resources on to the students to review outside the session.

4.1.1 Expected progress

- Around now, I would expect most ethics applications to be submitted (or in the final stages of draft) (especially if it's going through College rather than the intranet)
- Students will have made a rough outline of their introduction and will have done background reading
- I will usually ask students to pick a deadline for their Introduction around now, adding it to the shared deadlines spreadsheet

4.1.2 Bullet point introductions

- We then spend most of the session discussing the bullet point introductions.
 - Each person talks about their project and what they currently think about for their introduction in terms of structure
 - I will then give some feedback on these and students can also ask questions etc.
 - It's quite a good opportunity for the whole group to understand what everyone is doing for their project

4.1.3 Participant recruitment

- If we have time, I will cover participant recruitment first, then reducing perfectionism
 - What are students' plans for recruitment?
 - Do they foresee any difficulties? If so, is there anything we can put in place now to mitigate these?
 - Things to think about:
 - * What are the backup plans? What if the students need to recruit more people?
 - * Are any gatekeepers needed?

4.1.4 Reducing perfectionism

- I talk about perfectionism and how it can be quite a big barrier in terms of not wanting to 'let go' of things
 - Remind students that a draft is just that: a draft. It's not the final version and doesn't need to be seen by anyone else.
- I talk about my own experiences of it as a student and what I found helped me:
 - Breaking things into small chunks
 - Reminding myself that feedback will help make it stronger in the end
- I tend to add the below external resources to Teams and let students engage with them if they want

4.2 External resources

Dr Carolina Kuepper-Tetzel found these resources on [Perfection Paralysis](#) on the [Hidden Curriculum website](#) (contains lots of useful resources)

5 Semester 1 Week 9

5.1 Collecting data, developing evaluation for the introduction

In this session, I tend to cover data collection (i.e. trying to pre-empt any issues before they happen) and also developing evaluation of the Introduction section. I usually have both quant and qual projects so cover both types of data collection - I would only cover one though, if students were only doing one type. We then cover evaluation in Intros using some resources that Wil and I developed for our Research Methods 2 course. (Discussions are covered in [Semester 2 Week 5](#))

Although I cover data collection in Week 7 (if I have time), that was an initial discussion to put it at the forefront of their minds and this is more in-depth, as they should be close to having ethics approved if they don't already.

5.1.1 Expected progress

- By now, ethics approvals should be imminent or through already
- Some students may have already started data collection, or might be getting materials together in anticipation of starting
- If doing secondary data analysis, the timeline is a bit less pressured
- Students should be working on introductions

5.1.2 Data Collection (Quant projects)

(N.B. I only supervise survey-based quant projects, so my notes refer to this only)

- How is data going to be collected (e.g. Qualtrics, experimentum?). Student should use university email, not personal email for account.
 - Even if ethics isn't through yet, can still familiarise themselves with it.
- Are students clear on how to present their study on whichever system they are using?
- Test, test and test again

- It's important to make sure that scales are presented correctly. I've had one student have to start from scratch before because they put Strongly Agree - Disagree - neither agree nor disagree - Agree - Strongly Disagree and only noticed mid-way through data collection
 - We also had one project where the participants saw a picture and it wasn't clear from the data which picture was presented (and it was the between subjects condition) and she had to start data collection again.
 - I emphasise to students that they should not start data collection without extensive testing and I reiterate to let me know when it is ready for me to look over. Other supervisors may differ on this, but it's caused issues in the past (see examples above).
- Students need Emily's [extended debrief](#) if going to recruit Level 1 students
 - SONA is used to recruit Level 1 students (students should see [Emily's sway](#) on how to do this)

5.1.3 Data Collection (Qual projects)

- How are students collecting data?
 - If online, must use GDPR-approved system (e.g. Zoom or Teams)
 - If in person, will need a) appropriate recording equipment, b) a quiet space
- Some supervisors differ on their opinions on this, but I ask students to send out questions in advance for all participants, as it can be more accessible for certain people (e.g. those who are neurodivergent or who don't speak English as a first language)
- I ask students how they are feeling about collecting data. Typically, they can be a bit nervous
 - Important to practise setting things up/recording etc.
 - Good to pilot things (e.g. with a friend). I'm also happy to help in office hours etc.
 - Can practise with each other (i.e. others in the group) to help get comfortable
 - Can be helpful to write a list of everything need to cover at the start and end so that they don't forget anything

5.1.4 Evaluation in introductions

In RM2, Wil and I have made some excerpts from intros and discussions for our labs. In today's session, I only cover intros and do discussions in a later session.

Here, I show the students the poor and stronger versions and we then have a discussion about it ([slides with notes](#)).

This resource has ‘not so good’ examples, then ‘stronger’ examples and then notes for things to look out for and finally some tips.

The three things we look at are:

- Synthesising evidence
- Focused criticism
- Why is your study worth doing?

5.2 Internal resources

Guidance from Dr Emily Nordmann on [extended debriefs for Level 1 students](#) and [how to recruit on SONA](#)

Excerpts plus notes and tips on [Developing Evaluation in Introductions](#) by Dr Wil Toivo and I

5.3 External resources

[Guidance on SONA](#)

6 Semester 1 Week 11

6.1 Structure (i.e. reverse outlines) and JARS guidelines

This is the final group session I run in Semester 1. It's good to touch base and see where everyone is at in their projects, as things tend to start winding down (especially recruitment-wise) for the festive period.

In this session, I cover structure (specifically thinking about reverse outlines, so that larger structure of a document) and we also discuss the Journal Article Reporting Standards (JARS).

I tend to reiterate to the students how important it is to get some rest over Christmas, and what they are looking forward to in Semester 2. I also mention the BPS conference and ask them to have a think about presenting there next semester.

6.1.1 Expected progress

- I may have seen a few intros at this point, but it's likely students are still working on these.
- Some students will usually have started data collection.
- Hopefully all ethical approvals should be back by now

6.1.2 Structure

- I mainly cover structure between paragraphs rather than within them here, but if you wanted to cover structure in a paragraph, there are some useful resources on [PEEL in Chapter 20.2](#) of the Research Methods 1 book.
- I use the [Reverse Outlines resource](#) to discuss reviewing structure of a particular section (e.g. the Introduction)
- Some things we discuss:
 - a broad → narrow structure can be helpful for the introduction (and the reverse for the discussion)
 - are you covering one main point per paragraph or trying to squeeze too many in?
 - try to think about the reader when writing - what do they know at each point?

- does your reverse outline make sense? For example, does it jump around between topics or does the structure flow clearly?
- if covering quite disjointed topics in the intro, it might be worth considering using sub-headings

6.1.3 Journal Article Reporting Standards (JARS) and other resources

- In the second half of the session, we cover JARS guidelines. These are very useful, particularly for the methods sections and often results too (there tends to be less guidance on intro/discussion).
- The guidelines give some insight into what students might want to include, and has some suggestions for people who would be reviewing an article (i.e. what might they look for) which are useful to know
 - [Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Qual\)](#)
 - [Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Quant\)](#)
 - [Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Mixed Methods\)](#)
- In addition, there have been Journal Article Reporting Standards for Race, Ethnicity, and Culture released
 - [Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Race, Ethnicity and Culture\)](#)
- As most of my research has been in autism, if I have any students working on this topic, I share a resource by Bottema-Beutel et al (2021) on [avoiding ableist language](#)

6.2 Internal resources

[Structuring paragraphs \(PEEL\) \(Research Methods 1 team\)](#)

6.3 External resources

[Reverse outlines](#)

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Qual\)](#)

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Quant\)](#)

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Mixed Methods\)](#)

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Race, Ethnicity and Culture\)](#)

[Bottema-Beutel et al \(2021\)](#)

7 Semester 2 Week 1

7.1 Receiving and applying feedback, presenting work

In this session, we see where everyone is now that we are back for Semester 2 (and the deadline will suddenly be just over two months away!). I cover receiving and applying feedback in this session, as well as presentation research.

At the end of the session, I tell students that the next group session is on analysis and ask them to bring any questions they have in for the session so we can cover them together.

7.1.1 Expected progress

- Students should have submitted or be not too far off submitting a draft of the Introduction for feedback. They should also be working on their Methods.
- Students should be recruiting participants by now

7.1.2 Receiving and applying feedback

- As part of the group session, I talk about [the type of feedback I give](#) (i.e. what students can expect when they receive feedback from me).
- I also tell them how they can get the most out of the feedback that I give (e.g. asking questions after receiving it, leaving comments in their work for me to respond to)
- This will be individual to each supervisor, but I've provided a summary of what I discuss with the students below. I don't give them this, but it has the main things I talk about in the discussion.
- I cover a few, select, parts of the external resources linked below and we discuss how they might be able to apply these to their work in semester 2.

7.1.3 Presentations

- I've noticed that quite a few students I supervise are nervous about presenting, so I talk to them about how they feel about it.

- We discuss presenting their dissertation research, and I encourage them to take the opportunity to present when they get it. Although it can be anxiety provoking, it helps equip them with useful employability skills
- I then highlight the Level 4 conference at the end of the semester, and the BPS conference that is usually at the end of March/beginning of April. I tell students that to support these, we will a) practice running through findings in the group (week 7) and we will b) book out a room to do a proper practice with slides (week 11). Both of these are no stakes and the purpose is to help students practice communicating their research in a safe environment.
- We then discuss [some of my tips](#) for this (caveat: others may disagree) and together we plan out some concrete actions of what they could do to improve their experiences of presenting.

7.2 Internal resources

[Guidance on the type of feedback I tend to give for dissertations](#)

[Guidance on presentations](#)

[Useful resources on feedback](#) in the Psychology & Neuroscience General Information moodle, including a [Feedback and Study Guide](#).

7.3 External resources

There are a few useful resources targeted at helping students get the most from feedback. We can't cover it all, so I tend to show students some parts of how to practically apply feedback in group supervision and we discuss it (e.g. SNOB analysis in the Salford document, Action Planning in the 'AdvanceHE Student Guide).

I always highlight that they are in fourth year and so will be used to applying feedback, but that it can be useful to consider how they might further improve things.

[Hepplestone et al., 2010](#)

[HEAdvance resource, August 2012](#)

[Salford Uni resource](#)

[Portsmouth Uni](#) have some useful tips on presenting for students

8 Semester 2 Week 3

8.1 Analysis (quant and qual)

In the previous session, I would have ended the group meeting by asking students to bring in their analysis questions. Discussing these questions takes up most of the session.

In the rest of the session, I cover the following: a) if I have some students doing qual, I cover an example of getting depth in analysis, b) I remind students doing quant about the PsyTeachR resources and c) I provide some excerpts of Results/Analysis sections from previous student work (all anonymised) and give these to the students to have a look at. The last one tends to generate a bit of discussion.

8.1.1 Expected progress

- I would be expecting all intros to be submitted by this point, plus to have had a few methods submitted
- Data collection should be wrapping up imminently if not already completed
- Students should be writing up Methods if not yet submitted
- Those doing qual projects should be working on transcripts and have a cut-off for recruitment/data collection
- Those doing quant projects should be working on setting up their .rmd and getting set up for analysis

8.1.2 Questions

Most of today's group session will be answering questions from students on analysis. I think I had a mixture of ones that students had posted on teams (with me saying I'd answer in the group session) and others that were asked only in the session.

The students found it a useful experience, even if they hadn't thought much about it as those who were a bit further behind got answers to questions they hadn't thought of yet.

8.1.3 Qual resource

For any qual students, I give them [Activity 2 from Lab 9 in RM2](#), and ask them what they think about the depth.

8.1.4 Quant resource

For any quant students, I remind them about the [PsyTeachR resources](#). Although they will be aware of the books they had in Levels 1 through 3, they will be less likely to know about the MSc resources. Over the past few years, I've had students find the [MSc Conversion book](#) useful, in particular,

8.1.5 Looking over excerpts of results/analysis

- Before the session, I will have prepared some results/analysis extracts from previous dissertations. I then give these out during the session and we discuss:
 - what they liked/what worked well
 - * what they felt could be improved
 - * one concrete thing that they might take forward when they come to write their own analysis section

I also flag that these are not all A1 examples. The students usually say they are surprised by how different they are, and this leads to a discussion about key things being covered but it's not 'one size fits all'.

8.2 Internal resources

8.2.1 Quantitative resources (PsyTeachR)

[Activity 2 from Lab 9 in RM2](#)

[Level 1 data skills](#)

[Level 2 data skills](#)

[Level 3 data skills](#)

[MSc Conv \(RM1/RM2\)](#)

[MSc RMOPS \(Data Skills for Reproducible Research\)](#)

8.2.2 Qualitative resources (Research Methods 2 (F2F and ODL))

Activity 2 from Lab 9 in RM2

MSc Conv (RM2)

MSc Conv ODL (RM2 ODL)

9 Semester 2 Week 5

9.1 Developing evaluation in the discussion, peer review of discussion

In this session, we concentrate mainly on Discussion sections. I cover evaluation using the resources from the RM2 lab (Introductions were covered in [Semester 1 Week 9](#)). We then use this as jumping off point to talk about their Discussions. We then discuss peer review of Discussing sections.

At the end of the session, I remind students that the next group session will be no-stakes presentations on their initial findings (no need to have completed analysis). There are no slides and they should prepare to talk for 5 mins.

9.1.1 Expected progress

- By week 5, projects should be finished in terms of data collection and analysis ongoing
- I would be expecting Methods sections to be submitted by now (unless the student is submitting it alongside results/analysis)

9.1.2 Evaluation in discussions

- Here, I show the students the poor and stronger versions of [excerpts within Discussions](#) and we then have a chat about what they think. The three things we look at are:
 - Linking findings to the evidence base
 - * i.e. where students link to the evidence base but only say if it agrees/disagrees, rather than going further
 - Limitations
 - * including quantitative limitations,
 - * covering lots of different limitations but not going into depth
 - Implications
 - * not linking to the evidence base in support
 - * over-inflating the importance of the study

- I also (briefly) discuss with students the importance of situating their findings within the wider context (i.e. why is it important/does it link to theory etc.?).

9.1.3 Peer review of the Discussion section

- As students don't get feedback from supervisors on their Discussion sections, I discuss doing peer review with them.
- Either I can organise it or they can organise it within themselves (they usually self-organise along methods in some way (qual reading qual etc.))
- I provide them with a [some guidance for completing feedback](#)

9.2 Internal resources

Staff notes, tips and excerpts on [Developing Evaluation in Discussions](#)

[Guidance on completing peer feedback for the Discussion](#)

[Resources on evaluation in Discussion sections \(from RM2 ODL book\)](#)

9.3 External resources

[Guidance from APA about what to include in a Discussion section](#)

[Phrasebank from Manchester University](#) which students might find helpful as a starter, when discussing their findings

10 Semester 2 Week 7

10.1 No-stakes presentations

In this session, I ask the students to come prepared to present five minutes on their findings. If they have results to present, they can summarise these. If they haven't completed their analysis, then they should present on what they've done so far and are planning to do.

I then ask students to ask questions of each other, so that they can practice asking questions and the student presenting gets practice in responding to questions. This tends to take up the whole session, so I don't plan anything else alongside this.

I will also remind students about the peer review of the Discussion section if they haven't yet mentioned organising this concretely.

10.1.1 Expected progress

- By week 7, students will be around 3-4 weeks away from submitting
- I should have most Analysis/Results sections sent to me for feedback by now and make sure students are aware of the last date they can send me drafts (extenuating circumstances aside)
- If students haven't written up their Analysis sections, they should be well underway with analysis

11 Semester 2 Week 9

11.1 Last-minute questions

This session tends to be left as open for students to bring along questions. By this point, they are nearing the end of the process and they all have niggling questions that is then quite helpful to cover as a whole group.

I don't prepare anything in advance for this, other than reminding the students on teams to come along with their questions. I will also remind them that we are going to do a practice presentation in Week 11 and confirm the details with them (place, day and time).

11.1.1 Expected progress

- By week 9, students will be around 1-2 weeks away from submitting
- All analysis sections should be submitted by now, and - if there are any drafts left outstanding - I will prioritise getting feedback back as quickly as I can, so that they can apply this in time.
- Students should have already done peer review for their Discussion if they are doing this, and should be working on the final edits.

12 Semester 2 Week 11

12.1 Celebration and practice for the Undergraduate conference

This session is longer than usual - I usually book a room for two hours and schedule it for an hour and a half

- Mid-way through Semester 2, I will arrange a time that works for everyone and then book a room (Seminar room, Boyd Orr) to do live run-throughs of the talks for the L4 conference.
- We usually practice whichever format they will do at the conference
 - Some will do 5 min lightning talks, others 10 min scientific talks.
 - If someone has a panel, I will run through some practice questions with them.
 - If someone has opted for the written submission, I ask them to take us through what they've chosen to do
- I then give feedback on slides/pace/delivery etc. so that the students get some additional practice before the L4 conference itself.
- There is also a chance for the students to reflect on how far they've come over the year (I try to bring cakes in so they have a chance to celebrate)

A Setting expectations for dissertation students

I provide some information for students before dissertation supervision starts, so that they know how I work as a supervisor, what they can expect from supervision from me, and also what my expectations are from them as supervisees.

A.1 Overview

Hello, and welcome to your dissertation! As you know, I'm Ashley and I'll be your dissertation supervisor this year.

Every dissertation project is different, and the way I tend to supervise is to focus on us working together (both you and I, and also us as a group with your peers) to support you to develop a range of skills, culminating in your dissertation write up. I tend to be quite structured as a supervisor, and this is one reason I developed this document, as it will outline the process for you in advance, so you know what to expect. If there is something you would like added, let me know and I'll see what I can do.

A.2 Expectations

I have certain expectations in terms of how we will work together over the academic year. I have some below, but in our first group meeting, I will ask you to think about whether there are any you would like to add, or if there is anything you want to amend related to the points below.

A.2.1 Communication

I ask that all students working with me communicate with me, letting me know if they are unable to make a certain deadline or if something gets in the way of a task they had planned for a specific point in time. In return, I will communicate with you regularly, including when you can expect feedback, and will do my best to let you know if I have to delay something beyond what I had previously communicated.

A.2.2 Attendance

I ask that all students attend group sessions unless there is something urgent that has come up. Individual sessions are more flexible and can be cancelled if you feel that you don't need to meet in a particular week (although please let me know in advance if this is the case). Group sessions are held for 1h every fortnight, with individual sessions being 30 mins, held in the weeks that we are not meeting as a group.

A.2.3 Supportive space

I want the dissertation group to be an encouraging, safe, space and the dissertation process to be an enjoyable (albeit challenging at points!) experience for everyone. This means that you should never hesitate to ask any questions (all questions are valid) and I'd like us all to work together to support each other. No one is perfect and we will all make mistakes during the process (including me). I've been supervising for quite a few years now and I haven't yet managed to come across anything that we have been unable to sort after some discussion, so don't worry about talking to me if something has gone wrong :).

A.3 Dissertation meetings

Dissertation meetings will be held every week, with individual meetings and group meetings alternating on a weekly basis.

Semester 1

- Group meetings (1 hour): Weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11
- Individual meetings (30 mins): Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

Semester 2

- Group meetings (1 hour): Weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 (plus a 1.5h session in week 11)
- Individual meetings (30 mins): Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10

All meetings will be held in my office. I will send outlook invitations for all supervisions, so that they are in Outlook calendars.

We will most likely have to select a different time for Semesters 1 and 2, due to changes in timetables/teaching, but can revisit this nearer to the end of Semester 1.

Semester 1 group meeting time: Wednesdays 12-1pm

Semester 2 group meeting time: Wednesdays 11am-12pm

A.4 Deadlines

We will set deadlines for you to submit the following: proposal, ethics, introduction, methods, results/analysis. I will ask you to work with me to set these deadlines so that we agree them together.

A.4.1 Ethics

We will prioritise the ethics application from the very start - the reason for this is that you cannot recruit data unless you have your ethics approved, meaning that delayed applications can bring a project to a halt.

A.4.2 Dissertation

Dissertation section deadlines are not set in stone - I would much rather that you take an extra day or two if you need it rather than sending an unfinished draft (with the caveat that it will never be perfect). If this is the case, let me know and we can discuss options.

Although it is unusual for this to be an issue, there will be a point where I am no longer able to look over drafts before the deadline. We will aim for dates before this, but my cut-off is that **I don't accept drafts once we reach 1st March**. This is because it becomes very unlikely that I will be able to turn around feedback in time for you to be able to make meaningful changes by the submission .deadline in mid-March.

A.5 Communication

I have set up a Teams with a couple of channels that you can access - I have a General one for all of my dissertation students and your Level 4 (24-25) one (which we will use most of the time).

Please direct message me (rather than email) with your ethics documents, proposal, and any draft dissertation sections.

Most questions should be posted in the teams channel - if you have something that is personal and therefore not appropriate to be shared with the whole team, then it is okay to DM. I prefer DM on teams over email, as my email inbox is harder to keep on top of.

A.6 Feedback

A.6.1 When you can expect feedback

For ethics and the proposal, feedback will tend to be returned within a few days or a week. For dissertation section drafts, I will usually aim to provide feedback within two weeks. This is because drafts tend to be in semester 2, when I have most of my teaching. Depending on my teaching/marking commitments, this may take longer, but I will communicate with you about this at the time. You will also be able to see where you are in the 'feedback queue' in the shared deadlines document.

A.6.2 What type of feedback you will receive

I generally provide in-text comments, so that I can show you which part am I referring to in my feedback (where relevant). I will also give a global overview/summary. I will tend to focus on what can be improved, as this is the priority to help your writing develop. However, I will also let you know what you do well too.

A.6.3 How you can ask for specific feedback

If you have specific parts you would like feedback on (e.g. if you are unsure about something), you can leave comments in your document (either at specific points or at the start) and I will respond to them when I am reading through. Try not to put the points you'd like feedback on in the message when you send the file to me, as I put the files elsewhere and don't tend to refer back to messages. This makes it more likely that I'll miss them if they aren't contained in the document when I come to read it.

A.6.4 What format should be sent for the drafts?

All documents (proposal, ethics, Intro, Methods, Results/Analysis) should be in Word. An exception to this is copies of standardised measures (this might be in pdf, which is fine).

A.7 Supervision sessions

A.7.1 Group Sessions

In each session, there will be time for questions and we will also go round the group and see how everyone's project is going. We will also spend time discussing certain aspects of the dissertation, and I will provide resources as appropriate.

I have planned out the group sessions as follows (although these are subject to change if required):

Semester 1

- Week 1: Getting to know each other, topics, proposals
- Week 3: Ethics, research questions
- Week 5: Summarising papers, bullet point introductions
- Week 7: Discussing the bullet point intros, participant recruitment, reducing perfectionism
- Week 9: Collecting data, developing evaluation (intro)
- Week 11: Structure (i.e. reverse outlines), JARS guidelines

Semester 2

- Week 1: Receiving and applying feedback, presenting work
- Week 3: Analysis (quant and qual)
- Week 5: Developing evaluation (discussion), linking in theory
- Week 7: No-stakes presentations - everyone will present a 5 min summary of study findings so far (these can be very rough and initial if you haven't completed analysis)
- Week 9: Final group session - bring your questions
- Week 11: Longer session: Celebration combined with practice talks for the UG conference/BPS conference

A.7.2 Individual sessions

Individual sessions are dedicated slots each fortnight for you. Here, we will tend to catch up on how your project is going, and you will have the opportunity to ask questions. These may be used more often at certain points in the year (e.g. getting ethics together) than others (e.g. once your data collection is all set up).

Most people come along every week, but if you find one week that you don't need to meet, it's not an issue - just let me know and we can cancel it.

A.8 Peer Review

I am not allowed to look at a draft of the Discussion section, so there will be the opportunity to peer review each others' discussion sections. We will discuss this in Semester 2, in the group sessions.

I will provide some guidelines around peer review, and you can choose whether to take part or not. I am happy to set things up for you if you want, or can take a step back and you can organise within yourselves. Everyone who wants to take part must be included.

A.9 Future aspirations

I realise that some people get a bit nervous when asked the 'what are your plans after graduation?' question, but I will ask you about this at some point during semester 1. I will most likely do this in individual supervision. The reason that I do it is so that I can see if there is anything I/your peers can do throughout the dissertation process to support your future plans.

If you don't know what you want to do, this is also fine, but it is then about seeing if we can maximise development of your employability skills, which will then be helpful in whichever direction you decide to go in :).

B List of all resources

In this chapter, I've included all resources that are included in the book. They are split by theme, as hopefully this makes it easier to identify which resource/s you might want to access.

B.1 Developing a research question

[Research Methods 1](#) has some tips for students on how to construct Research Questions and hypotheses for quantitative research

[Research Methods 2](#) has some tips for students on how to construct Research Questions for qualitative research

B.2 Ethics

Specific to Psychology, School of Psychology & Neuroscience: The Moodle (Level 4, PGT) has a folder with templates and exemplars for ethics that should be used

Guidance from Dr Emily Nordmann on [extended debriefs for Level 1 students](#) and [how to recruit on SONA](#)

[Guidance on SONA](#)

B.3 Summarising a paper

[My suggestions](#) on summarising papers

[Teach Science.org notes on how to take notes on a research paper](#)

B.4 Writing a bullet point intro

[My suggestions](#) on writing a bullet point intro

B.5 Developing a rationale

[Wil's resource](#) on developing a rationale

B.6 Analysis in Quantitative Research

[Activity 2 from Lab 9 in RM2](#)

[Level 1 data skills](#)

[Level 2 data skills](#)

[Level 3 data skills](#)

[MSc Conv \(RM1/RM2\)](#)

[MSc RMOPS \(Data Skills for Reproducible Research\)](#)

B.7 Analysis in Qualitative Research

[MSc Conv \(RM2\)](#)

[MSc Conv ODL \(RM2 ODL\)](#)

[Activity 2 from Lab 9 in RM2](#)

B.8 General writing advice

[My suggestions](#) on writing a dissertation

[General writing tips for quantitative research](#) (from the RM1 team): (Chapters 17-25)

[General writing tips for qualitative research](#) (from the RM2 team)

B.9 Writing structure

[Structuring paragraphs \(PEEL\)](#) (Research Methods 1 team)

[Reverse outlines](#)

B.10 Perfection paralysis

[Perfection Paralysis resource from Hidden Curriculum](#)

B.11 Evaluation

Staff version of the RM2 lab slides on [Developing Evaluation in Introductions](#)

Staff version of the RM2 lab slides on [Developing Evaluation in Discussions](#)

[Resources on evaluation in Discussion sections \(from RM2 ODL book\)](#)

B.12 Writing the Discussion

[Guidance from APA about what to include in a Discussion section](#)

[Phrasebank from Manchester University](#) which students might find helpful as a starter, when discussing their findings

[Guidance on completing peer feedback for the Discussion](#)

B.13 Using and applying feedback

[Guidance on the type of feedback I tend to give for dissertations](#) **Please note, this talks through how I give feedback, so may be different to how you would give feedback on drafts**

[Useful resources on feedback](#) in the Psychology & Neuroscience General Information moodle, including a [Feedback and Study Guide](#). **School of Psychology & Neuroscience only**

[Hepplestone et al., 2010](#)

[HEAdvance resource, August 2012](#)

[Salford Uni resource](#)

B.14 Tips on presenting

[Guidance on presentations](#)

[Portsmouth Uni](#) have some useful tips on presenting for students

B.15 Journal Article Reporting Standards

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Qual\)](#)

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Quant\)](#)

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Mixed Methods\)](#)

[Journal Article Reporting Standards \(Race, Ethnicity and Culture\)](#)

B.16 Guidelines for reporting research with autistic participants

[Bottema-Beutel et al \(2021\)](#)

B.17 All-round useful resource

[Hidden Curriculum website](#) (contains lots of useful resources)