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Research Methods and Professional Practice: Seminar: 2 Karen Outram

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Research Methods and Professional Practice April 2025 A

Module Participants Grades Reports

Deadline Details

On this page you will find deadline details for when your work needs to be submitted throughout the module. Please note that all deadlines are in UK time.

The units should be completed in order, by the date indicated. These deadlines will also appear in your Learning Platform calendar.

Please Note: All grades are subject to change until they have been agreed by the External Examiner and ratified by the Examination Board.

Submission Guidelines for Assignments

Please review our [Submission and Editorial Guidelines for UoEO Assignments](#) before submitting any assignment.

Unit	Component	Deadline
7	Literature Review	23:55 hrs Monday 16th June 2025
10	Research Proposal Presentation	23:55 hrs Monday 7th July 2025
12	Individual Module e-Portfolio including 1,000 word reflective piece	23:55 hrs Monday 21st July 2025

Formative and e-Portfolio Activities

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E-portfolio and formative:

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Unit(s)	Component	Deadline	e-Portfolio/Formative
1 - 3	Collaborative Discussion 1	End of unit 3	e-Portfolio
1	Reasoning Quiz	End of unit 1	Formative
1	Reflective Activity 1: Ethics in Computing	End of unit 1	e-Portfolio/Formative
2	e-Portfolio Activity: Literature Review and Research Proposal Outlines	End of unit 4	e-Portfolio/Formative
3	e-Portfolio Activity: Research Proposal Review	End of unit 3	e-Portfolio/Formative
3	Seminar 2: Peer Review Activity	End of unit 3	Formative
4	Seminar 3: Case Study on Privacy	End of unit 4	Formative
4	Literature Review Outline Submission	End of unit 4	Formative
5	Reflective Activity 2: Case Study: Inappropriate Use of Surveys	End of unit 5	Formative
5	Wiki Activity: Questionnaires	End of unit 5	Formative
7 - 9	Collaborative Discussion 2: Case Study on Accuracy of Information	End of unit 9	e-Portfolio
7	Seminar 4: Inferential Statistics Workshop and Statistics Worksheet	End of unit 7	Formative/e-Portfolio (worksheets)

E-portfolio and formative:

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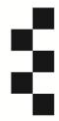
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3	e-Portfolio Activity: Research Proposal Review	End of unit 3	e-Portfolio/Formative
3	Seminar 2: Peer Review Activity	End of unit 3	Formative
4	Seminar 3: Case Study on Privacy	End of unit 4	Formative
4	Literature Review Outline Submission	End of unit 4	Formative
5	Reflective Activity 2: Case Study: Inappropriate Use of Surveys	End of unit 5	Formative
5	Wiki Activity: Questionnaires	End of unit 5	Formative
7 - 9	Collaborative Discussion 2: Case Study on Accuracy of Information	End of unit 9	e-Portfolio
7	Seminar 4: Inferential Statistics Workshop and Statistics Worksheet	End of unit 7	Formative/e-Portfolio (worksheets)
8	e-Portfolio Activity: Research Proposal Outline	End of unit 8	e-Portfolio/Formative
8 - 9	Statistical Worksheet Submissions	End of unit 10	e-Portfolio (compulsory)
9	e-Portfolio Activity: Charts Example Worksheet	End of unit 9	e-Portfolio/Formative
11	Seminar 6: e-Portfolio Preparation	End of unit 11	e-Portfolio/Formative
12	Self Test Quiz	End of unit 12	Formative

Knowledge Base

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Contents:

- **Unit 3: Research methods**
- Engagement with peer review activity
- **Unit 4: Incorporating case studies, observations and focus groups**
- Progressing with the Literature review, [looking forward to formative and summative]

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Unit 3: Methodology and Research Methods

Welcome to week 3 where you will be introduced to methodology in general and an overview of research methods.

It is crucial to understand that any methodology choice is based on some underlying assumptions, which we need to bring awareness to. As Saunders et al. (2023) clearly states, you, the researcher, 'are going to have assumptions about the realities you encounter in your research (ontological assumptions), about human knowledge (epistemological assumptions), and about the extent and ways your own values influence your research process (axiological assumptions). These assumptions inevitably shape how you understand your research questions, the methods you use and how you interpret your findings.'

Before going into the research methods, it is beneficial to understand **Research Design**. Research design refers to having a plan about what you plan to do in order to answer your research question (Saunders et al., 2023). Hence, you will need to be sure of the research strategies and methods you will employ for data collection and your analysis.

There Are Two Types of Research Design:

Exploratory Research: where, as the name suggests, specific aspects of a research area are explored. The problem is not clearly defined, so there cannot be a conclusive result from the research. Instead, there will be a better understanding of the problem or situation. An example of Exploratory Research is where a company wants to carry out an investigation into the effectiveness of Customer Relationship Management in mobile marketing.

Conclusive Research: being the opposite of exploratory research, the focus is more specific – to verify insights and aid in selecting a course of action (BRM, n.d.). One key category of this type of research design is **Descriptive Research**, where the aim is to describe elements or causes in the specified research area. An example of Descriptive Research is a focus on social media where you undertake a critical analysis of this tool as a marketing strategy.

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Resubmission

Lecturecast | 1 hrs

On completion of this unit you will be able to:

Understand how interviews and surveys fit into research and whether either or both of these might be useful for your investigation.

Understand how pre- and post-testing can be used in research.

Interviews and Survey Design

Mark as done

Reading | 4 hrs

The reading this week will help you understand which research method will be more useful to your chosen area of investigation.

Unit 3 Reading

Mark as done

Refresh Your eBook Licence

Mark as done

e-Portfolio Assessment and Formative Activities | 12 hrs

Continue with the Unit 1 Discussion forum. You should now provide a summary post into to the discussion in Unit 1 based on your initial post and the feedback from your peers. Please try to limit your posts to 200-300 words maximum. Your follow-up responses should be labelled as 'Summary Post'. These posts should be included in your e-Portfolio.

Participate in the seminar this week.

Complete the e-Portfolio Activity below.

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Resubmission

Complete the e-Portfolio Activity below.

Prepare for next week's seminar session by attempting the Seminar preparation questions available in Unit 4.

e-Portfolio Activity: Research Proposal Review

Unit 3 Seminar | 1 hr

Title: Peer Review Activity

In this seminar, we will be focusing on LO3: "evaluate critically existing literature, research design and methodology for the chosen topic". One way this is done is by conducting a peer review of existing literature on a particular subject.

In preparation for this week's seminar, you will need to source at least 2 papers in a Computing subject of your choice (AI, Cybersecurity, Data Science, or a general interest topic in Computer Science), provided they utilise two different types of research methods to achieve their goal/research aims. Now answer the following questions (please provide justifications for your answers) and be prepared to discuss them in the session:

- Familiarise yourself with the purpose, problem, objective or research question of each paper. Are they in line with your experience or thoughts on the topic, contributing to the collective body of knowledge in this area?
- Is the research methodology utilised in each paper appropriate for the stated purpose or question?
- In terms of data collection and analysis, is this also appropriate for the stated purpose or question? (We will discuss this further in upcoming units.)
- Does each paper support its claims and conclusions with explicit arguments or evidence?
- How would you enhance the work/paper?

You can set up your responses as a presentation for the group. Remember to record your answers and feedback in your e-Portfolio.

Prepare for next week's seminar session by attempting the preparation questions, available in unit 4.

Prepare for Your Seminar

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Unit 4: Case Studies, Focus Groups and Observations

Welcome to Week 4 where you will be introduced to some data collection methods which are generally used for qualitative research but are sometimes applied in quantitative research.

Case Studies

These involve in-depth research and study of individuals or groups. Case studies lead to a hypothesis and widen a further scope of studying a phenomenon.

However, case studies should not be used to determine cause and effect as they cannot make accurate predictions (due to possible bias on the researcher's part). The other reason why case studies are not a reliable way of conducting descriptive research is that there could be an atypical respondent in the survey. Describing them leads to weak generalisations and a move away from external validity (see unit 7).

Focus Groups

Focus groups are also one of the commonly used qualitative research methods used in data collection. In such a method, a group of people is chosen and allowed to express their insights on the topic that is being studied.

It is important to make sure that when choosing the individuals for a focus group (limited to 6-10 people), they should have a common background, comparable experiences, and are representative of your target market. The main aim of the focus group is to find answers to the "why" "what" and "how" questions, then to reach out to those individuals.

It is important to realise that some of this data collection methods can be also used for quantitative research.

Quantitative Observation

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Resubmission

Reading | 4 hrs

The reading this week looks at the various ways of collecting data and how that can be used to answer your questions.

Unit 4 Reading

Mark as done

Formative Activities | 11 hrs

Participate in the seminar this week.

Remember to record your ideas and feedback in your e-Portfolio.

Submit a brief outline of your literature review this week. You will receive formative feedback on this submission to aid your final submission which is due in Unit 7.

Literature Review Outline

Make a submission

Unit 4 Seminar | 1 hr

Title: Case Study on Privacy

This unit has a live seminar. You will be able to see all the seminar times and dates in the menu on the left. View the Lecturecast(s) available and engage with the reading set for the specific unit prior to each seminar. To benefit from the seminar fully, please also view the seminar content available for each seminar in the seminar booklet and prepare answers to any questions posed.

Prepare for Your Seminar

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E-portfolio and formative: Case Study

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to print the entire resource or a specific seminar, click on the cog to start.

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Unit 4 Seminar

Title: Case Study on Privacy

Please read the case below and answer the questions. You need to determine the ethical issues involved with this case.

The Case

Ricardo works for the records department of his local government as a computer records clerk, where he has access to files of property tax records. For a scientific study, a researcher, Beth, has been granted access to the numerical portion "but not the corresponding names" of some records.

Beth finds some information that she would like to use, but she needs the names and addresses corresponding with certain properties. Beth asks Ricardo to retrieve these names and addresses, so she can contact these people for more information and for permission to do further study.

Now consider, what are the ethical issues involved in deciding which of these options to pursue?

- If Ricardo is not responsible for determining allowable access, should he release the names and addresses?
- Suppose Ricardo were responsible for determining allowable access to the files. What ethical issues would be involved in his deciding whether to grant access to Beth?
- Should Beth be allowed to contact the individuals involved? That is, should the Records department release individuals' names to a researcher? What are the ethical issues for the Records department to consider?
- Suppose Beth contacts the individuals to ask their permission, and one-third of them respond giving permission, one-third respond denying permission, and one-third do not respond. Beth claims that at least one-half of the individuals are needed to make a valid study. What options are available to Beth?

Be prepared to discuss your answers during the seminar session.

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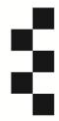
Unit 3: Research methods: This peer review needs to be added to your e-portfolio:

Through the course of this week, when developing your peer review for Unit 3 – ensure that you are sharing your e-portfolio and engage in discussion where you are comfortable doing this:

Unit 3 requires you to source:

At least Two papers in a Computing field of your choice that utilise the two different types of research methods to achieve their goal/research aims. Familiarise yourself with the purpose, problem, objective or research question of each paper.

- Are they in line with your experience or thoughts on the topic, contributing to the collective body of knowledge in this area?
- Is the research methodology utilised in each paper appropriate for the stated purpose or question?
- In terms of data collection and analysis, is this also appropriate for the stated purpose or question?
(We will discuss this further in upcoming units.)
- Does each paper support its claims and conclusions with explicit arguments or evidence?
- **How would you enhance the work/paper? Remember to record your answers and feedback in your e-Portfolio.**



Unit 3: Research design strategy:

Research process:

- Focus on what the area of chosen study is.
- Carefully pin point a research topic.
- What will your research approach be ?
- Careful planning for undertaking research.
- Use deep research to gather information and data.
- Analyse, evaluate and interpret the data and research.
- Apply and present your results and findings.

Research Method Types:

- Exploratory Research: specific aspects of research related to the topic that is explored.
- Conclusive Research: Descriptive Research; describe elements or causes in the specified research area.

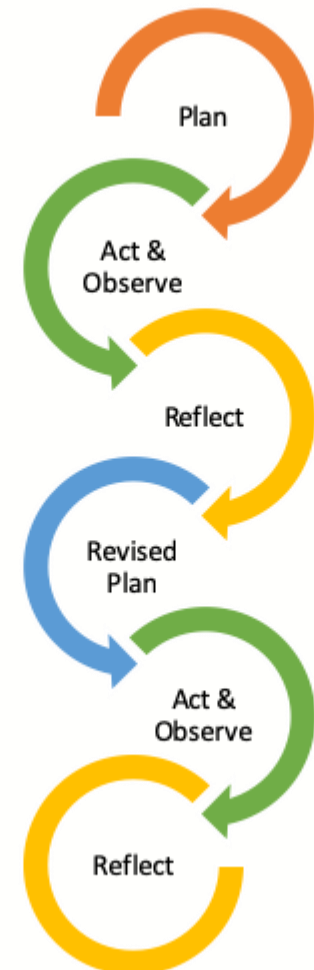
Unit 3: Research methods:

Action research ‘the carefully documented (and monitored) study of an attempt by you to actively solve a problem and/or change a situation’ (Herbert, 1990: 29).

Experiment ‘Involves an investigation of causal relationships using tests controlled by yourself’.

Case study A **case study** is ‘an in-depth exploration of one situation’ (Cornford and Smithson, 2006: 71)

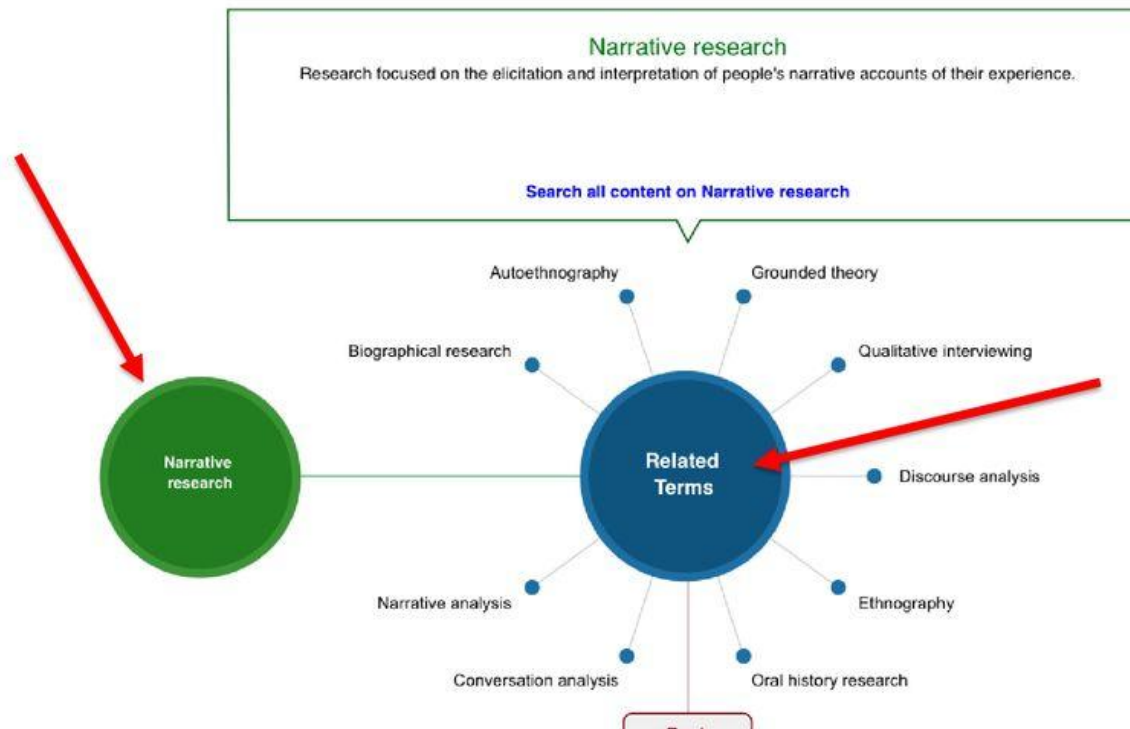
Survey It **allows** ‘the collection of a standardised data from a sizable population in a highly economical way’ (Saunders et al., 2012: 177).



Unit 3: Research methods: Unit 3: SAGE (2021) Research Method Maps:

SAGE Research Methods

- Methods Map example:





Unit 3: Research methods: Unit 3: E-Portfolio Activity: Research Proposal

In Units 1 and 2 we discussed that you should chose a research topic:

We also discussed looking forward for unit 3 [during seminar 1]

- Thinking now about the area/topic of interest you have chosen for your area, [and looking forward to the Literature Review formative and summative]:
- Consider which methods of research discussed in unit 3 [reading materials] would suit your research methodology
- Consider which methods of data collection that you want to use for your research
- Consider both qualitative and quantitative research methods



Unit 4: Case Studies, Focus Groups and Observations :


Data collection methods

- Case studies involve in-depth research and study of individuals or groups.
- 1:1 interviews tend to elicit specific research for a topic
- focus groups then are useful for a 'deeper dive' into research after initial investigation
- Surveys are a good method of gathering data which can be converted into Quantitative research.
- Quantitative observation refers observing numerical values.
- Qualitative observation refers to the monitoring of characteristics.
- Readings

Fuelcycle (2019) The Three Most Common Observation Research Methods.

Unit 4: Week commencing : Please submit formative Literature Review





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RMPP_PCOM7E April 2025 A / Literature Review Outline

Literature Review Outline

Assignment

Make a submission

Due: Monday, 26 May 2025, 11:55 PM

You can submit a brief outline of your review by the end of this unit to receive formative feedback from your tutor. Your submission should only highlight your plan for the Literature Review.

See Unit 7 submission portal for full assignment details.

This assignment is formative and not graded.

This submission is not blind marked.

[View all submissions](#) [Grade](#)

Grading summary

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Unit 4: Week commencing : formative Literature Review

Submit a brief outline of your literature review via upload in Unit 4

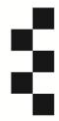
- To provide an overview of current knowledge on the chosen topic.
- To demonstrate an awareness of relevant, current literature.
- To highlight similar and contrasting views on your chosen topic.
- To showcase your research and writing skills.
- Learning Outcomes
- Appraise the principles of academic investigation, applying them to a research topic in the applicable computing field.
- Evaluate critically existing literature, research design and methodology for the chosen topic, including data analysis processes.



Unit 4: Developing a Literature Review

An effective Literature Review incorporates:

- A focused approach to research
- The ability to identify cross-sectional research [for example: mixing the old with the new]
- Contemporary literature should come from publications ideally within the last 6 years and no older than 10-15yrs [maximum]
- Literature review must be based in deep research and not opinion
- You must be able to dissect your research and analyse and evaluate that research
- Remember that academic writing is grounded in debate and discussion, [looking at the pros and cons of discussion]
- Keep writing academic, concise, logical and focused, [don't indulge in wordy and emotive writing styles]
- Your writing should show a good and intrinsic knowledge of your subject



Unit 4: Week commencing : Developing a Literature Review

A Literature review should:

- Show clarity when looking at and answering the research problem
- Develop your research methodology
- Develop your existing knowledge of a topic
- Fully contextualise your research findings



Unit 4: Week commencing : Developing a Literature Review: Academic conventions

- Please complete the Literature Review on a word document and consider academically appropriate professional presentation when completing this, for example:
- Putting your name, student number, where you are studying, the module your are studying on a title page and the unit you are responding to
- Use Arial font size 12
- Double line spacing
- Margin indentations should be approx. 2.5cm on either side
- Use regular citation
- Apply a list of references at the end of your Literature Review
- Ensure paragraphs are evenly weighted
- Ensure that syntax is academic and concise [use word count wisely]
- Take a critical approach to content [don't be overly descriptive or subjective in your opinion]
- Ensure that all research is paraphrased away from the original source – consider Turnitin content matches



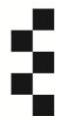
Literature Review Grading Grid:

PG Grading Criteria - Standard Written Report or Essay.pdf

1 / 3

100%

Criteria	100-90% (Exceptional-Distinction)	89-80% (Outstanding-Distinction)	79-70% (Excellent-Distinction)	69-60% (Merit)	59-50% (Pass)	49-40% (Marginal Fail)	39-30% (Fail)	29-20% (Fail)	19-0% (Fail)
Knowledge and understanding of the topic/ issues under consideration (30%)	An exceptional and systematic demonstration of knowledge and understanding, which displays originality and presents some challenges to the boundaries of academic schools of thought.	An outstanding demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying originality and an advanced understanding of the topic relevant to the work.	An excellent demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying some originality and in-depth understanding in all key areas of knowledge relevant to the work.	A very good demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying in-depth understanding in all key areas of knowledge relevant to the work.	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying the required understanding in all key areas of knowledge relevant to the work.	A weak demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying limited understanding of some key areas of knowledge relevant to the work.	An unsatisfactory demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying very limited understanding of some key areas of knowledge relevant to the work.	A poor demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying very limited understanding across a substantial proportion of key areas of knowledge relevant to the work.	A very poor demonstration of knowledge and understanding, displaying no familiarity with the course material or work and irrelevant to the key areas of knowledge applicable to the work.
Criticality (30%)	An exceptional and comprehensive demonstration of independent critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	An outstanding demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	An excellent demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	A very good demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	A satisfactory demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	A weak demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	An unsatisfactory demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	A poor demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with regards to linking theory and practice where appropriate.	A very poor demonstration of critical analysis, thought and/or reflection, with no attempt to link theory and practice where appropriate.
Use of relevant sources (20%)	Exceptional evidence of extensive reading/ use of source material (primary sources/ current research at the forefront of the field/ professional practice under consideration), accurately and convincingly in support of their work.	Outstanding evidence of extensive reading/ use of source material (primary sources/ current research), accurately in support of their work.	Excellent evidence of extensive reading/ use of source material (primary sources/ current research), accurately in support of their work.	Very good evidence of a wide range of reading/ use of source material (primary sources/ current research), broadly accurately in support of their work.	Satisfactory evidence of familiar or module reading/ use of source material (primary sources/ current research), adequately used, but with errors, omissions or questionable interpretations, in support of their work.	Weak evidence of familiar or module reading / use of source material (primary sources/ current research), but with errors, omissions or questionable interpretations, in support of their work.	Unsatisfactory evidence of familiar or module reading / use of source material (mainly unreliable/ dated research), with major errors, omissions or misconceptions, in support of their work.	Poor evidence of reading/ use of source material, with very little evidence of reading and views presented are unsupported.	Very poor or no evidence of reading/ use of source material in support of their work and views are unsupported.



Literature Review Grading Grid:

PowerPoint Presentation x RMPP_PCOM7E March 2022: Gra x PG Grading Criteria - Standard W x +

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PG Grading Criteria - Standard Written Report or Essay.pdf 2 / 3 100%

Criteria	100-90% (Exceptional-Distinction)	89-80% (Outstanding-Distinction)	79-70% (Excellent-Distinction)	69-60% (Merit)	59-50% (Pass)	49-40% (Marginal Fail)	39-30% (Fail)	29-20% (Fail)	19-0% (Fail)
Structure and Presentation (as detailed in the assessment guidance) (10%)	An exceptional structure and faultless presentation. Work is of a professional or publishable quality.	An outstanding structure and presentation, working towards a professional or publishable standard of work.	An excellent structure and presentation, which shows elements of presentation and structure at a professional or publishable standard.	A very good structure and presentation but may have some omissions against the guidelines.	A satisfactory structure and presentation that may not entirely follow the set guidelines.	Weakness in structure and presentation, that may not entirely follow the set guidelines.	Unsatisfactory structure and presentation that does not attempt to follow the set guidelines.	Poor structure and presentation that does not attempt to follow the set guidelines.	Very poor or incomplete structure and presentation that does not attempt to follow the set guidelines.
Academic integrity (10%)	An exceptional demonstration of academic writing, including correct use of academic convention, citation and/or referencing. Work shows academic integrity of a professional or publishable standard, fully conforming with institutional guidance.	An outstanding demonstration of academic writing, including correct use of academic convention, citation and/or referencing. Work shows an accurate attempt working towards a professional or publishable standard, with no errors of conforming with institutional guidance.	An excellent demonstration of academic writing, including correct use of academic conventions, citation and/or referencing. Work shows an accurate attempt, which shows elements of working towards a professional or publishable standard, with a very few errors of conforming with institutional guidance.	A very good demonstration of academic writing, including correct use of academic conventions, citation and/or referencing with only minor omissions. Work shows broadly accurate attempt, but with the odd weaknesses of conforming with institutional guidance.	A satisfactory demonstration of academic writing, including some correct use of academic conventions, citation and/or referencing. Work shows satisfactory attempt, but with some weaknesses of conforming with institutional guidance.	A weak demonstration of academic writing, including incorrect use of academic conventions, citation and/or referencing. Work shows some attempt, but with significant weaknesses of conforming with institutional guidance.	An unsatisfactory demonstration of academic writing, including incorrect use of academic conventions, citation and/or referencing. Work shows a largely weak attempt of conforming with institutional guidance.	A poor demonstration of academic writing, including incorrect use of academic conventions, citation and/or referencing. Work shows very little attempt of conforming with institutional guidance.	A very poor demonstration of academic writing, including absent and/or incorrect use of academic conventions, citation and referencing. Work shows no attempt of conforming with institutional guidance.



Literature Review Grading Grid Overview:

Post Graduate Grading Criteria for Standard Written Reports or Essays

Single-Point Rubric to describe full-mark expectations for each assessment criteria. **Please note these expectations should be read along with (in the context of) the assessment task guidance.**

Assessment Criteria	Description of Standard Expectation/Proficiency
Knowledge and understanding of the topic/ issues under consideration (30%)	Does your work show comprehensive insight and understanding of the topic? Would it stimulate constructive dialogue, commentary, or a new understanding among the appropriate audience?
Criticality (30%)	Have you clearly analysed and synthesised appropriate ideas/tasks/reading in this piece of work, creating a critically in-depth argument/discussion/analysis/evaluation of the topic?
Use of relevant sources (20%)	Have you provided evidence of extensive reading on the topic(s) through the quality of references used (not just the number of references), showing how each one supports your work?
Structure and Presentation (as detailed in the assessment guidance) (10%)	Your work should be well-structured with minimal errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. The overall message should be clear.
Academic integrity (10%)	Is there an accurate use of citations and references throughout this piece of work? Have you demonstrated the required integrity in your submission?



Unit 2: Research Questions, the Literature review Guide Questions:

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Writing a Literature Review

Guiding questions to support planning, revising, and refining of a literature review*

1. What is the focus and aim of your review? Who is your audience?
2. Why is there a need for your review? Why is it significant?
3. What is the context of the topic or issue? What perspective do you take? What framework do you use to synthesise the literature?
4. How did you locate and select sources for inclusion in the review?
5. How is your review structured?
6. What are the main findings in the literature on this topic?
7. What are the main strengths and limitations of this literature?
8. Are there any discrepancies in this literature?

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4. How did you locate and select sources for inclusion in the review?

5. How is your review structured?

6. What are the main findings in the literature on this topic?

7. What are the main strengths and limitations of this literature?

8. Are there any discrepancies in this literature?

9. What conclusions do you draw from the review? What do you argue needs to be done as an outcome of the review?

* As with other sets of guiding questions in this book, select those questions that are relevant to your context, add others as appropriate, and decide the order in which you will address them to communicate effectively with your audience.

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QuestionPro (2021). What is research?

Essential Reading

Dawson, C. (2015) *Projects in Computing and Information Systems: A Student's Guide*. Harlow: Pearson.
•Chapter 2 Section 2.3 p 26-27.

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•Chapter 5 p 172-220.

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Dawson, C. (2015) *Projects in Computing and Information Systems: A Student's Guide*. Harlow: Pearson.

- Chapter 2 Section 2.4.2 p 28.
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Questions?

