

## **Research Methods and Professional Practice Unit 10 Reflection**

### **Description**

This unit was the tenth unit of the Research Methods and Professional Practise module. This unit focused on research writing, covering key aspects such as structuring a dissertation, writing a research proposal, and effectively presenting research findings.

For this unit we were required to read chapter 8 from the book Projects in Computing and Information Systems (Dawson, 2015), the article on manuscript writing and research integrity (Mayyas & Alzoubi, 2022), the article on using digital media in the classroom for multimodal authoring, publishing and reflecting (Stewart, 2023), the paper on Qualitative Research in educational technology (Heng, 2011), the book on academic writing (Wilson, 2022) and University of Texas's guide on writing research papers (Texas AM University, n.d.). Additionally, the unit featured a lecture cast on research writing. The major assessment for this unit was the research proposal presentation and transcript, while the formative activity involved completing statistical worksheets. However, due to logistical challenges, I was unable to complete the worksheets before the deadline and did not receive feedback on them.

### **Feelings**

The research proposal presentation posed several challenges, making the experience less than ideal despite receiving a good grade. The requirement to record the presentation added unnecessary complexity, and I struggled with technical and time management issues, which led to delays. Fortunately, I was granted a one-week extension to submit the assignment, which alleviated some pressure.

I felt frustrated by inconsistencies in referencing on the learning platform, as they did not align with the module guidelines set by Dr Outram. Additionally, the reading list didn't match up with the learning platform which caused a great deal of confusion about which reading list to follow. Despite these challenges, I recognised the importance of research writing in academic and professional settings, which gave me a sense of accomplishment in completing the unit.

### **Evaluation**

One positive aspect of this unit was the clarity of the lecture materials, which provided valuable insights into research writing. The readings were relevant and enriched my understanding of how to structure academic work effectively. However, the inconsistencies in referencing and the added burden of recording the presentation detracted from the learning experience. Additionally, missing the deadline for the statistical worksheets' formative was a setback, as I lost the opportunity for formative feedback. Getting an extension on the assignment helped me manage my workload better and reinforced the importance of proactive communication when facing difficulties.

## **Analysis**

This unit highlighted both the strengths and weaknesses in my approach to research writing. While I effectively engaged with the readings and lecture content, my time management needed improvement, particularly in balancing the research proposal and statistical worksheets. According to Wilson (Wilson, 2021), structured planning is essential for effective academic writing, and a more organised approach could have helped me meet all deadlines. Additionally, the confusion surrounding referencing suggests that I should rely on official university guidelines rather than conflicting information on the learning platform. Research integrity and clarity in academic writing are fundamental, as emphasized by Mayyas & Alzoubi (Mayyas & Alzoubi, 2022), and ensuring proper citation practices is a key part of this.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, this unit reinforced the importance of research writing skills and academic integrity. While I successfully completed the major assessment, the logistical challenges I faced impacted my ability to complete the formative tasks. I realised that better time management and clearer communication with instructors could have helped me navigate these difficulties more effectively. Moving forward, I need to develop a more structured approach to research assignments and seek clarification on discrepancies in course materials sooner rather than later.

## **Action plan**

To improve my research writing and overall academic performance, I will implement several strategies. Firstly, I will enhance my time management skills by creating a detailed study schedule. This will involve breaking down larger tasks into smaller, more manageable steps with specific deadlines. To track my progress, I will use project management tools such as Trello. By setting realistic goals and allocating dedicated time slots for research, writing, and review, I aim to complete assignments well before the deadlines, reducing last-minute stress.

Secondly, I will seek clarity on course materials and referencing guidelines at the beginning of each unit. Instead of relying solely on the learning platform, I will cross-reference official university guidelines for referencing and formatting. If discrepancies arise, I will seek clarification from my instructors early in the unit to avoid confusion when preparing assignments.

Additionally, I will make a concerted effort to complete all formative assessments on time to receive valuable feedback. Engaging with these formative exercises will allow me to refine my understanding and improve my final submissions. If I encounter difficulties, I will reach out to my instructors or peers for support rather than waiting until the final deadline approaches.

To improve my presentation skills, I will allocate additional preparation time for recorded presentations. This includes testing technical equipment, rehearsing multiple times, and ensuring my slides and script are well-structured and concise. By practicing ahead of time, I will reduce technical difficulties and present my research findings more confidently.

Lastly, I will actively seek to enhance my research writing skills by engaging with additional academic resources. I will consult writing guides to aim to improve my academic writing so I will be better prepared for future research assignments and my final dissertation.

## **References**

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