

The Ultimate A-Grade

Dissertation Checklist

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## Title Page

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Included all the necessary elements (e.g., name, university, date, supervisor, etc.)
* Formatted the title page according to my university’s requirements
* Updated any outdated information that has changed since I started the project
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the page to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

## Abstract/Executive Summary

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Provided a clear, concise summary covering what my study was about (research aims), how I approached it (methodology) and what I found (discussion and conclusion)
* Used objective, straightforward language that a non-expect could understand
* Not included any citations or references
* Included a list of the most relevant keywords
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

If you’d like, you can learn more about how to write an abstract here: <https://gradcoach.com/what-is-a-dissertation-abstract/>

## 

## Acknowledgements

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Ordered my acknowledgements from most formal support (research advisor/supervisor) to least formal (family and friends)
* Used a sincere personal but professional tone
* Kept it brief and to the point
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

If you’d like, you can learn more about how to write the acknowledgements section here: <https://gradcoach.com/thesis-acknowledgements/>

## 

## Table of contents, lists of figures and tables

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Included a detailed table of contents, list of figures and list of tables according to my institution’s specific formatting requirements or norms
* Provided a suitable level of depth in terms of which sections are included (not too much or too little detail)
* Used heading levels consistently throughout the document
* Updated all tables and lists with the most recent information

## Introduction Chapter

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Provided a clear context for my study
* Discussed any background information that’s essential for the reader to understand
* Explained what I will be investigating, how it’s unique and why it’s important/valuable
* Described my research aims, objectives and research questions (alternatively, this might be positioned in the literature review)
* Ensure my aims, objective and research questions are all aligned with each other
* Clearly stated the scope of my study (what I will explore and what I won’t)
* Provided some indication of how my document will be structured
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

## Literature Review Chapter

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Included a comprehensive base of literature including seminal and current literature
* Covered both the theoretical and empirical (evidence-based) literature
* Ensured that my key resources are high-quality and credible
* Clearly linked the literature to my research aims, objectives and research questions
* Structured my discussion in a logical, easy-to-folow way
* Provided an integrated, critical synthesis of the literature that (not just a description of what each paper said)
* Clearly illustrated and articulated the research gap that my study will aim to address
* Provided clear conclusions regarding key points that will underpin my study
* Presented a well-designed, easy to understand conceptual framework (if applicable)
* Stayed on-topic and avoided any unnecessary digressions into unrelated areas
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Cited all the relevant sources, using the correct referencing style
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

If you’d like to learn more about the literature review, have a look at these resources:

* Finding high-quality sources: <https://gradcoach.com/literature-review-sourcing/>
* Essential components: <https://gradcoach.com/literature-review-components/>
* Structuring your literature review: <https://gradcoach.com/literature-review-structure/>
* Example of a literature review: <https://gradcoach.com/literature-review-example/>

## 

## Methodology Chapter

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Chosen my methodological approach in alignment with my research aims and research questions, as well as the existing literature in my field
* Clearly detailed the key methodological choices, including my research paradigm/philosophy, approach (qual, quant or mixed), research design, sampling method, data collection method(s) and data analysis technique(s)
* Provided strong justifications for each methodological choice, backed by references to quality academic sources
* Made use of well-established, tried and tested scales/measures (if applicable)
* Clearly acknowledged the limitations and shortcomings of my methodological approach
* Presented the results of my pilot study and explained what actions were taken in response to this (if applicable)
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

If you’d like to learn more about research methodology, have a look at these resources:

* Choosing a suitable approach - <https://gradcoach.com/choose-research-methodology/>
* Research design 101 - <https://gradcoach.com/research-design/>
* Saunders’ research onion - <https://gradcoach.com/saunders-research-onion/>
* Writing the chapter - <https://gradcoach.com/how-to-write-the-methodology-chapter/>

## Results Chapter

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Provided a detailed discussion regarding the results from my data analysis
* Have drilled down to an appropriate level of detail to explore key insights within the dataset
* Provided suitable tables, charts and graphs to visualise the results in an intuitive way
* Captioned all figures and tables according the the required style
* Adapted my analysis techniques where necessary to deal with unexpected results
* Structured the chapter in a logical, intuitive way that is easy to understand and that provides clear links to the broader research aims and objectives
* Avoided interpreting the results in relation to my research questions (and have instead saved this for the discussion chapter)
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

## Discussion Chapter

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Provided a rich interpretation of the analysis results in relation to my original research aims, objectives and research questions
* Discussed how my findings compare to the existing literature and explored potential reasons for this
* Have structured the chapter in a logical, intuitive way that is easy to understand and that provides clear links to the research aims and questions
* Have clearly highlighted the key takeaways and conclusions so that they are front of mind for the reader
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

## Conclusion Chapter

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Clearly addressed (answered) my original research questions and drawn conclusions regarding key questions that emerged during the study.
* Discussed the implications of my findings, both on theory and practice
* Acknowledged the limitations of the conclusions I’ve drawn
* Provided practical, realistic recommendations for future research
* Adhered to any word count and formatting requirements required by my university
* Thoroughly [edited and proofread](https://gradcoach.com/dissertation-thesis-editing-services/) the section to ensure correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

## Reference List

I’m confident that:

* My reference list lists all resources that I cited throughout my document
* The reference data is 100% accurate for all sources
* The reference data is complete (includes all the necessary fields) for every source
* The list is formatted according to my university’s style requirements (e.g., APA, Harvard, etc.)
* I’ve included citations throughout my document whenever making a statement that is not common knowledge

If you’d like, you can learn more about how to use reference management software here:

* How to use Mendeley - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJXnfBSq4Lg>
* How to use Zotero - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnbwKj6-pD8&>

## Appendix

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Included any supporting documentation specifically required/specified by my university (e.g., raw data sets, analysis outputs, etc.)
* Excluded any supporting document that is not directly relevant to my project
* Clearly referred to all appendices in the body of the document (e.g., see Appendix A)
* Have clearly labeled and provided an explanatory introductory paragraph for all appendices
* Followed any formatting requirements provided by my university.

## General Issues

I’m confident that I’ve:

* Avoided excessive jargon and complex terminology
* Presented clear, well-structured arguments (e.g. clear premises and logical conclusions)
* Implemented an intuitive heading structure
* Created clear links between sentences, paragraphs and chapters
* Leaned toward critical analytical writing (as opposed to descriptive writing)
* Written as concisely as possible and avoided rambling
* Hot overused direct quotations
* Cited all my sources
* Used a consistent language and tone throughout my document
* Used a consistent tense (past/present/future) as suitable within each chapter