

DISSERTATION - ORGANISATIONS SYSTEMS AND PEOPLE M34060

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Introduction to the Dissertation Module

It is essential you read and follow the requirements and guidance in this document. It sets out the specification for the three types of dissertations. Failure to comply with this specification will result in loss of marks.

This handbook is of benefit to you. It reduces the time spent working out what is required and hence increases the amount of time you spend adding value to your dissertation.

Key information

All assessment tasks must be completed by students individually.

Assessment 1: Research Proposal	Due date: Wednesday 15 January 2025, 13:00 GMT. Weighting: 30%. Word limit: No more than 2,000 words excluding a reference list. Monday 2nd December 2024 is a soft deadline for students to submit a research proposal draft to their supervisor for verbal feedback. The feedback will be provided by Friday 20 th December if handed in by the soft deadline.
Assessment 2: Dissertation	Due date: Wednesday 14 May 2025, 13:00 GMT. Weighting: 70%. Word limit: No more than 6,000 words excluding reference list, appendices, the cover page, abstract, glossary and lists of; tables, figures, charts, and abbreviations. Friday 11 April 2025 is a soft deadline for students to submit a dissertation draft to their supervisor for final feedback. The feedback will be provided by 2 May if handed in by the soft deadline.
Ethics Approval Form (for primary research only)	For primary research the ethics form must be agreed by the supervisor and the reviewer by Monday 24 February 2025. The ethics form must be authorised before any data collection begins.

Word Count

The word count limits are maximums and must not be exceeded. The reference list, appendices, the cover page, abstract, glossary and lists of; tables, figures, charts, and abbreviations are excluded from the word count.

Therefore, **all** words in the body of the assessment are counted. This includes all words in tables and all words in figures. Although software such as Word may not be able to count words in diagrams, the words within diagrams are included in the word count.

Format/layout instructions

Your proposal and dissertation submissions must:

- be in "Times New Roman" or "Calibri", size 12 font
- have 1.5 line spacing, and have margins of 2.5 cm top and bottom, and both sides
- have clear line spaces between paragraphs
- be fully 'blocked' (i.e., paragraphs should not be indented)
- be justified to the left-hand margin only
- have all pages numbered except the cover page

Choice of Topic

Students should choose a topic from the Human Resource Management or the Operations and Systems Management list.

Human Resource Management (HRM) Topic

If you are registered in the HRM group there are many suitable topics such as:

Recruitment & Selection Performance Management Reward Management	Talent Management Flexible Working Leadership in Organisations	Cross Cultural Management Managing Diversity/Equality Work Psychology
Learning, Training &	Motivation & Engagement	Business Ethics
Development	Turnover & Retention	Corporate Social Responsibility
Employee Wellbeing	Employee Voice & Employee	Change Management
Organisational Behaviour	Relations	
	Organisational Structure	

Operations and Systems Management (OSM) Topic

If you are registered in the OSM group, there are many suitable topics such as:

Operations Management	Supply Chain Management	Knowledge Management
Process Management	Supply Chain Sustainability	Customer Relationship Management
Operational Excellence	Logistics & Distribution	Systems Management
Quality Management	Inventory	Enterprise Resource Planning
Performance Management	Automation	Information Systems
Business Improvement	Risk Management	Business Intelligence
Lean & Six Sigma	Project Management	Business Analytics
Capacity Management		

It is helpful if the topic and research question are of personal interest and develop knowledge of relevance to your career plans.

Ethics

Your dissertation must go through the ethics review process and will be given a unique reference number when approved. A final dissertation submitted that has not been through the ethics approval or has contravened the ethics rules or collected data beyond the scope of approval, is given zero marks automatically.

Of the three types of dissertations, the Primary Research Dissertation has the highest ethical risks. No primary data can be collected before the full ethics form (Parts 1 and 2) have been completed and approved. Any primary data collected before ethics approval is given cannot be used in the dissertation.

A Secondary Research Dissertation can use only data that is in the public domain. Only Part 1 of the ethics form must be completed and approved. The unique reference number will be provided by your supervisor.

The documented literature review only needs Part 1 of the ethics form to be completed and approved. The unique reference number will be provided by your supervisor.

For the Primary Research Dissertation, Ethics review and approval should be completed by Monday 24 February 2025.

All the information and relevant forms you need with regards to ethics, including guidance on how to complete the ethical approval form, can be found on the Moodle site. See the dissertation Moodle site for details, including the ethical review process, templates that can be adapted to write invitation letters/emails to potential participants, participant information sheets, sheets to document respondent consent, and information assisting you in filling out the ethical approval form.

Choice of Dissertation Type

There are three types of dissertations.

Documented Literature Review (DLR): It is expected that the DLR will be a popular choice of dissertation. A DLR is a qualitative research study only.

Primary Research Dissertation: This type of dissertation should be embarked on only by students who have ethical access to participants and their permission for data collection, typically those with strong links to a business or a specific business community.

Secondary Research Dissertation: This type of dissertation should be based on data that is in the public domain and it is usually a qualitative research study.

It is possible to switch to a different type of dissertation after the submission of the proposal, but it is not recommended.

Anyone interested in doing a primary or secondary research dissertation should evaluate at a very early stage whether they can get sufficient data of suitable quality. If there are uncertainties or doubts about access or availability of primary or secondary data, it is advisable to choose a different type of dissertation from the outset. It is also necessary for primary data (from interviews etc) to be transcribed in order to be coded as part of Thematic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Participants must be willing for interviews / focus groups to be audio recorded and transcribed. If there are uncertainties or doubts about the ability to record and transcribe primary data, a different type of dissertation should be chosen from the outset.

English Language Data Only

All data is to be in English. All academic papers analysed in a DLR are to be in English. All secondary data collected in a Secondary Research Dissertation are to be in English. All data collected in a Primary Research Dissertation are to be in English or be translated to English.

Inclusion of Data in Appendices

It is mandatory to include all data (anonymous) and the analysis of the data in the appendices. A major part of the dissertation is to learn how to collect and analyse data and its inclusion in the appendices provides evidence of your achievement.

The omission of data and analysis from the appendices will result in a substantial reduction in marks.

Only in a Primary Research Dissertation might confidentiality of data be a concern to the contributing participants / business. The approach to assuring confidentiality should be discussed with the teaching team / supervisor but confidentiality cannot be used as a reason for not including data and analysis.

The appendices will be large. For example, the appendices of a DLR must have 20 full papers and can be over 300 pages in length. Guidance on how to prepare the appendices for submission is on the Moodle site.

Table 1: Data to be included in the appendices

Dissertation type	Proposal	Final Dissertation		
Documented Literature Review	 5 academic papers, with highlighted text and codes written in the margins. Codebook for 5 academic articles Profiling table of 5 academic articles 	 20 papers, with highlighted text and codes written in the margins. Codebook for 20 academic articles Profiling table of 20 academic articles A copy of section 1 ethics form 		
Primary Research Dissertation	 The first draft of: The ethics form Participation information sheet Consent form A copy of suggested questions for the interview or questionnaire 	 A Copy of signed ethics form (sections 1 & 2) All anonymised transcripts of qualitative data with highlighted text and codes written in the margins. Codebook All quantitative data and its analysis to be included. Participation information sheet One copy of Consent form A copy of questions asked for the data gathering or link to the online questionnaire 		
Secondary Research Dissertation	 Qualitative: A 20% sample of the data that you plan to collect, with highlighted text, codebook and codes written in the margins. Quantitative: A 20% sample of the data that you plan to collect along with its analysis. 	 Qualitative: All secondary data with highlighted text, codebook and codes written in the margins. Quantitative: All quantitative data and its analysis with a copy of section 1 ethics form. 		

Expected effort to complete the proposal and final dissertation

The dissertation module is 40 credits and therefore expect it to take at least 400 hours of your time (including lecture and seminar attendance and self-study).

Supervision

The seminar tutors are your supervisors, and you will have the opportunity to meet with them during the seminar sessions. Attending these seminars is very important, as your supervisors will be monitoring attendance.

It's essential to attend in order to fully understand the dissertation requirements and to ask any questions you may have directly to your supervisors during the seminars. You can expect your supervisor to read each chapter of your dissertation (only once) and provide feedback. A suggested pattern of discussion with your supervisors is as follow:

- Review the choice of dissertation type, topic, issue, research question and data during the seminar sessions.
- Review the test analysis and progress on the draft proposal.
- Review the proposal mark and feedback. Review the final dissertation type and ethics during the seminar sessions.
- Review the data and progress on the analysis, results, and conclusions.
- Review the draft dissertation prior to submission.

Reading on research methods and analysis techniques

To produce high quality research, it is necessary to read and cite texts on research methods and analysis techniques. The reading lists on the Moodle site link to books and articles but it will be necessary to search for (and cite) additional sources.

Marking

Both the proposal and the final dissertation are marked by the supervisor and a second academic. They read the submission independently and discuss the work to agree on the mark.

The central module guide provides information about the marking criteria. The markers evaluate the quality of the submission against the specification given in this document and the amount of work that has been done.

Offences

The standard University of Portsmouth rules apply to the dissertation. Note: it is an offence for a person to reuse an item of their own work from another module. Within this module, it is permissible to reuse the text from the proposal in the final submission, but advisable to revise it.

Documented Literature Review

This method is qualitative review of data taken from academic papers.

- Create your specific research question.
- Collect relevant academic journal papers from the databases accessible through the UoP library.
- Analyse the data using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
- Use your analysis to synthesise guidance for business.

The DLR requires you to read enough academic papers to select 20 appropriate ones for your dissertation.

For the DLR, you will:

- Read the abstracts of papers to decide whether to include or exclude them from your selection.
- Read the introductions and methodology sections in order to 'profile' the papers.
- Read (and re-read) the results and discussion sections as you code them for your analysis.

Systematic Searching and filtering of academic journal papers

In a DLR the requirement is to analyse exactly 20 studies. Marks are deducted for analysing fewer but additional marks are not awarded for analysing more. Each of the 20 journal papers you select should be reporting the results of a study. You are to exclude journal papers that do not include a study. Hence, pure Literature Review papers, opinion papers, and editorials are to be excluded (and any other paper you come across that is not presenting a study).

In order to compile the final set of 20 journal papers you need to go through a systematic search and filtering process.

Systematic Search for academic journal papers

GOOGLE SCHOLAR has limitations, and you should use one or two of the databases dedicated to academic journals.

<u>Business Source Complete</u> is the default database you access through the library. It is a database of academic peer-reviewed journal articles, professional publications and more across all business topics. It gives you fine control over the search terms and can limit the search to peer-reviewed scholarly journals and to ones that have full text access.

<u>Scopus</u> is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature: scientific journals, books, and conference proceedings. Scopus features smart tools to track, analyse and visualise research. Be aware that UoP doesn't subscribe to all journals so some papers you find through Scopus won't be available to you.

<u>Emerald Insight</u> has the full-text of thousands of articles from more than 100 peer-reviewed journals published by Emerald.

<u>ScienceDirect</u> is a full text database covering authoritative titles from the core scientific literature, published by Elsevier. More than 2,500 journals and more than nine million full-text articles are available in ScienceDirect.

Filtering academic journal papers

It is likely your initial searches will find more than 20 papers and it's common to find 100+ papers. The next step is to filter them and there are several approaches to doing so, including: exclusion criteria, ranking by research quality and ranking by relevance.

Profiling the academic papers

The answer to your research question depends on the 20 papers. You should present a tabulated profile of these papers (which should be in an appendix and/or the Methodology chapter). Profile the papers according to factors such as year of publication, source journal, type of study etc. Use dimensions / categories that add greater insight to your study.

Table 2: Example of Profiling table of papers:

Cite	Research Aims/ Research Questions	Theories	Methods	Sample	Key findings

Discuss with your supervisor the final format of your table.

Structure and Guideline Contents of the DLR Proposal and Final Dissertation

Table 3: DLR Proposal Structure and Guideline Contents (maximum 2000 words in the body)

	•
Title Page	University Name, Course, Title, Author Name & Student Number, Supervisor Name, Date of Submission, Word Count.
Statement of Originality	The required text is in the central module handbook.
Introduction	Set the scene for the intended audience. Explain the issue and context being studied. Explain the motivation for the study in terms of the business or social benefits that can come from the study.
Research Question	State and explain the <i>proposed</i> research question. (Suggested word count - 300)
Proposed Methodology	Explain how the DLR process will be undertaken to answer the research question with relevant citations. In this section you need to explain: The process of a systematic search for relevant academic Papers. The process of inclusion and exclusion of articles. The analysis procedure (e.g., thematic analysis). (Suggested word count - 700)
Trial Literature Search and Analysis	 The purpose of this section is to demonstrate: That suitable literature can be found and filtered. The trial analysis of a sample of 5 academic papers using the proposed approach. That guidance for business will emerge from the study. Based on the experience of the trial, this section should discuss the type of practical guidance that can be expected from the final DLR. For example, the guidance to business might be in the form of one or more of: A priority list of guidance to business. A list of do's and don'ts. Conditional guidance (If a business is in situation A, then do X). (Suggested word count - 800)
Closing statement	Describe the lessons you have learnt from doing a DLR. For example, explain if and how the research question and methodology (e.g., the search terms) have been modified during the course of producing the proposal. (Suggested word count - 200)
Reference List	Full APA 7 referencing of all cited material.
Appendices (in a separate document)	Profiling table of the 5 academic papers in the trial analysis. Initial codes / themes, Initial codebook, 5 coded papers (with highlighted text and codes in margins) submitted in the Appendixes drop box.

Table 4: DLR **Proposal** marking criteria

University of Portsmouth Classifications	Marking Scale	Introduction	Research aim, and research questions	Methodology	Trial Literature Search and Analysis	Referencing and writing structure including appendices	
Near publishable standard	100 95	An outstanding introduction that identifies the main issues to be addressed,	introduction that explanation of research and justification for to identifies the main issues aim and research searching process, in	Outstanding explanation of, and justification for the searching process, including exemplary detailing of search	An outstanding thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) of five academic papers. Demonstrates excellent understanding of themes and codes, with clear evidence and examples. Strengths and	Outstanding use of APA 7th edition for all references. Writing is academic and highly structured. Appendices include all required elements,	
Exceptional 1 st	88	establishes the context of the study, and explains the rationale.		strategy, terms, limits, and screening methods.			
Outstanding 1st	85	the rationale.		Exceptional clarity in data analysis strategy.	weaknesses are analysed and discussed.	meticulously coded.	
Excellent 1 st	82						
Very good 1st	78	An excellent introduction	An excellent	Excellent explanation of, and	An excellent thematic analysis of	Excellent use of APA 7th	
Clear 1 st	75	that identifies the main issues to be addressed,	issues to be addressed,	explanation of research aim, and research	justification for the search process. Good detailing of	five academic papers. Themes and codes are well-identified and	edition for most references. Writing is mostly academic
Just about a 1 st	72	establishes the context of the study, and explains the rationale.	questions.	search strategy, terms, and limits. Well-explained data analysis strategy.	supported with evidence. Strengths and weaknesses are discussed.	and well-structured. Appendices include all required elements, with adequate coding.	
Very good 2:1	68	A very good introduction	A very good	Adequate explanation of, and	A very good thematic analysis of	Very good use of APA 7th	
Clear 2:1	65	that identifies the main issues to be addressed,	explanation of research aim, and research	justification for the search process. Some details on	five academic papers. Themes and codes are mostly well-identified,	edition for many references. Writing is academic but	
Just about a 2:1	62	establishes the context of the study, and explains the rationale.	questions.	search strategy and terms could be improved. Data analysis strategy is mostly clear.	with some evidence provided. Some discussion of strengths and weaknesses.	could be more structured. Appendices include all required elements but inadequately coded.	
Very good 2:2	58						

Clear 2:2 Just about a 2:2	55	A satisfactory introduction that identifies the main issues to be addressed, establishes the context of the study, and explains the rationale.	A satisfactory explanation of research aim, and research questions.	Minimal explanation of, and justification for the search process. Lacking detail in search strategy, terms, and limits. Data analysis strategy is vague.	A satisfactory thematic analysis of five academic papers. Themes and codes are identified but lack thorough evidence and discussion. Minimal discussion of strengths and weaknesses.	Satisfactory use of APA 7th edition for some references. Writing is somewhat academic but lacks structure. Appendices are incomplete.	
Very good 3 rd	48	An adequate introduction	An adequate	Insufficient explanation of,	A poor thematic analysis lacking in-	Poor use of APA 7th edition	
Clear 3 rd	45	that identifies the main issues to be addressed,	explanation of research aim, and research	and justification for the search process. Poor detailing	depth identification of themes and codes. Limited evidence and	for few references. Writing lacks academic style and	
Just about a pass	42	establishes the context of the study, and explains the rationale.	questions.	of search strategy, terms, and limits. Unclear data analysis strategy.	minimal discussion of strengths and weaknesses.	structure. Appendices are incomplete.	
Not quite a pass / Marginal fail	38	Some attempt to identify issues to be addressed,	Some attempt to explain research aim	Some attempt to explain basic aspects of the research search	Some attempt to do a thematic analysis with very limited	Very poor use of APA 7th edition with numerous	
Marginal fail	35	but substantially incomplete and deficient.	and research questions, but substantially	process, lack of attention to the detailing of search	identification of themes and codes. Scant evidence and almost no	errors. Writing lacks academic rigour.	
Mid-range fail	32		incomplete and deficient.	strategy and terms. Unclear data analysis strategy.	discussion of strengths and weaknesses.	Appendices are scant and poorly organised.	
Mid-range fail	28	No serious attempt to	No serious attempt to	Completely missing or	A completely inadequate or missing	No use of APA 7th edition.	
Fail	22	identify relevant issues or the context of the study.	explain research aim and research questions.	inappropriate explanation of, and justification for the	thematic analysis. No identification of themes or codes. No evidence or	Writing is entirely unacademic. Appendices	
Fail	15			search process. No discernible search strategy, terms, or limits. Data analysis strategy	discussion provided.	are missing or wholly inadequate.	
Non submission or no adequate attempt	0			is missing or irrelevant.			

Table 5: DLR Final Dissertation Structure and Guideline Contents (maximum 6000 words in the body)

Title Page	University Name, Course, Title, Author Name & Student Number, Supervisor Name, Date of Submission, Word Count.
Statement of Originality	The required text is in the central module handbook.
Acknowledgments	An opportunity to share thanks and appreciation.
Abstract	A concise summary of the context, aim, approach, results, and main conclusions of the study. (Not part of overall word count but must not be more than 200 words)
Table of Contents	A clear and concise table of contents with accurate page numbers.
Table of Figures (if appropriate)	A clear and concise table of figures with accurate page numbers.
Introduction	Set the scene for the intended audience. Explain the issues and context being studied. Explain the motivation for the study in terms of the business or social benefits that can come from the study.
Research Question	State and explain the research question(s) (Suggested word count - 500)
Methodology	Students need to provide a full explanation of, and justification for the search process. Justification must be stated for the search strategy, search terms/string and limits used, inclusion/exclusion criteria and, how studies were screened (e.g., abstract screening). The strategy for data analysis needs to be explained. (Suggested word count - 1500)
Analysis	Apply the analysis procedure to synthesise and critically appraise insights that can be drawn from the 20 papers. The insights should be clearly drawn and evidenced from the method of analysis. Describe the themes and codes. Include examples of how your insights were derived from coded text in papers. Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the insights. (Suggested word count - 2500)
Implications for Practice	Present and explain practical guidance for business. Do not just repeat the insights from the analysis. Instead, you should reflect on your insights and combine them with the knowledge you have acquired about business and management during your degree, to translate the findings into practical advice for business. Advise the audience on the strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the guidance. This section should be written for the business audience (whereas the other sections in the dissertation are written for an academic audience). (Suggested word count - 1000)
Recommendation s and Reflection	Make recommendations for further research that would lead to practical / stronger/more complete guidance. Reflect on the experience of doing the study. (Suggested word count - 500)
Reference List	Full APA 7 referencing of all cited material.

Appendices (in a separate document)	Appendices cover-page with your name, student number and title of the dissertation. Authorised ethics form (signed and numbered). Profiling table of the 20 academic papers. Final codes / themes. Final codebook. All 20 coded papers (with highlighted text and codes in margins) attached IN FULL.
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Table 6: DLR Final **Dissertation** marking criteria

University of Portsmouth Classifications	Marking Scale	Introduction	Methodology	Analysis and Discussion	Implications for Practice	Recommendations and Reflection	Referencing and writing structure including appendices		
Publishable standard Near publishable standard	100 95	An outstanding introduction that identifies the main issues to be addressed	An outstanding methodology that confidently explains how relevant papers are located, evaluated, and	An outstanding literature review that demonstrates extensive research and a	An outstanding presentation of how the findings of the documented literature	An outstanding conclusion that confidently demonstrates the contribution of the	Outstanding use of APA 7th edition for all references. Writing is academic and highly		
Exceptional 1st	88	and convincingly establishes the context	selected, and convincingly justifies the criteria for	confident critical approach to identify	review will be used in practice, and confidently	dissertation and considers limitations, opportunities	structured. Appendices include all required		
Outstanding 1st	85	of the study.	selection of papers.	answers to research question(s) through	builds on work cited in the literature review.	for further research and recommendations for	elements, meticulously coded.		
Excellent 1st	82			academic paper analysis and synthesis.		practice.	coucu.		
Very good 1st	78	An excellent	An excellent methodology	An excellent literature	An excellent presentation	An excellent conclusion	Excellent use of APA		
Clear 1 st	75	introduction that identifies the main issues to be addressed	that explains how relevant papers are located, evaluated and selected, and	review that demonstrates extensive research and a sound	of how the findings of the documented literature review will be	that convincingly demonstrates the contribution of the	7th edition for most references. Writing is mostly academic and		
Just about a 1 st	72	and establishes the context of the study.	convincingly justifies the criteria for selection of papers.	critical approach to identify answers to research question(s) through academic paper analysis and synthesis.	used in practice and builds on work cited in the literature review.	dissertation and considers limitations, opportunities for further research and recommendations for practice.	well-structured. Appendices include all required elements, with adequate coding.		
Very good 2:1	68	A very good	A very good methodology	A very good literature	A very good presentation	A very good conclusion	Very good use of APA		
Clear 2:1	65	introduction that identifies the main	that explains how relevant papers are located,	review that demonstrates detailed	of how the findings of the documented	that accurately demonstrates the	7th edition for many references. Writing is		
Just about a 2:1	62	issues to be addressed and accurately introduces the context of the study.	evaluated and selected, and accurately justifies the criteria for selection of papers.	research and a critical approach to identify answers to research question(s) through academic paper analysis and synthesis.	literature review will be used in practice and refers to work cited in the literature review.	contribution of the dissertation and considers limitations, opportunities for further research and recommendations for practice.	academic but could be more structured. Appendices include all required elements but inadequately coded.		
Very good 2:2	58	A satisfactory	A satisfactory methodology	A satisfactory literature	A satisfactory	A satisfactory conclusion	Satisfactory use of APA		
Clear 2:2	55	introduction that	introduction that	introduction that	that explains some aspects	review that	presentation of how the	that considers the	7th edition for some

Just about a 2:2	52	identifies some of the issues to be addressed and begins to introduce context of the study.	of how relevant papers are located, evaluated and selected, and discusses the criteria for selection of papers.	demonstrates some areas of detailed research and discusses the procedures of academic paper analysis and synthesis to answer research question(s).	findings of the documented literature review will be used in practice and refers to some work cited in the literature review.	contribution of the dissertation and briefly mentions the limitations, opportunities for further research and recommendations for practice.	references. Writing is somewhat academic but lacks structure. Appendices are incomplete.		
Very good 3 rd	48	An adequate	An adequate methodology	An adequate literature	An adequate	An adequate conclusion	Poor use of APA 7th edition for few references. Writing		
Clear 3 rd	45	introduction that attempts to identify	that attempts to explain some aspects of how	review that attempts to research the subject	presentation of how the findings of the	that begins to consider the contribution of the			
Just about a pass	42	issues to be addressed and shows a limited understanding of the context of the study.	and shows a limited understanding of the	and shows a limited understanding of the	relevant papers are located, evaluated and selected, and shows a limited understanding of the criteria for selection of papers.	area and shows a limited understanding of relevant academic papers.	documented literature review will be used in practice and shows a limited understanding of work cited in the literature review.	dissertation and shows a limited understanding of research limitations, opportunities for further research and recommendations.	lacks academic style and structure. Appendices are incomplete.
Not quite a pass / Marginal fail	38	Some attempt to identify issues to be	Some attempt to explain basic aspects of how relevant papers are located, evaluated and selected, but	Some attempt to research the subject area, but substantially incomplete and	Some attempt to present how the findings of the documented literature review will be used in	Some attempt to present the main conclusions, but substantially incomplete and deficient.	Very poor use of APA 7th edition with numerous errors. Writing lacks academic		
Marginal fail	35	addressed, but substantially incomplete and deficient.							
Mid-range fail	32		substantially incomplete and deficient.	deficient.	practice, but substantially incomplete and deficient.		rigour. Appendices are scant and poorly organised.		
Mid-range fail	28	No serious attempt to	An outstanding methodology	No serious attempt to	No serious attempt to	No serious attempt to	No use of APA 7th		
Fail	22	identify relevant issues or the context of the	that confidently explains how relevant papers are	research the subject area or academic paper	present how the findings of the documented literature review will be used in practice. Does	present conclusions. Does not consider limitations, opportunities for further research or	edition. Writing is entirely unacademic. Appendices are missing or wholly inadequate.		
Fail	15	study.	located, evaluated and selected, and convincingly	analysis.					
Non submission or no adequate attempt	0		justifies the criteria for selection of papers.		not link to work cited in the literature review.	recommendations for practice.			

Primary Research Dissertation

About the Primary Research Dissertation

Primary Research Dissertation involves the first-hand collection of data. If there are uncertainties or doubts about access or availability of participants for the full course of the dissertation, or, in the case of qualitative research, their willingness to have audio recordings made, it is advisable to choose either a secondary research dissertation or a DLR from the outset.

Do not underestimate the time and effort to communicate and coordinate with participants. A Primary Research Dissertation is the most demanding of the three dissertation types in regard to planning and project management skills.

Ethics

Ethics is particularly important for a Primary Research Dissertation. Both parts 1 and 2 of the ethics form must be completed for a Primary Research Dissertation, including an information sheet and consent form. No data can be collected until ethical approval has been given. Data collection must be in accordance with the ethics form.

Primary Data

Interviews, focus groups and surveys (using questionnaires) etc., are common forms of primary data. The researcher designs and administers the data collection protocol for the purpose of their specific study.

Restrictions on Questionnaire Surveys

Questionnaire surveys are permitted ONLY when they are to be completed by a specific group of people when the characteristics of the population are clear, and an appropriate quantitative sampling strategy can be used (the appropriateness of this approach must be discussed with your supervisor). Or, when in a specific business, the management has agreed that their employees can participate. Other types of survey are not permitted, such as:

- Surveys on social media platforms or bulletin boards such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn, Reddit, WeChat
- Surveys of family or friends

There are two reasons for the restrictions on surveys:

- They seldom are successful in getting many respondents
- There is little knowledge / control of the population and sample

Inclusion of primary data in dissertation appendices

All primary data must be included in the appendices. Interviews, focus groups and such like must be fully transcribed (anonymised).

Research Question

The Primary Research Dissertation should have a maximum of two research questions. The dissertation is 6000 words which means you do not have time to explain, investigate and answer more than two questions.

Structure and Guideline Contents of the Primary Research Proposal

Table 7: Primary Research Proposal Structure and Guideline Contents (maximum 2000 words in the body)

Title Page	University Name, Course, Title, Author Name & Student Number, Supervisor Name, Date of Submission, Word Count.
Statement of Originality	The required text is in the central module handbook.
Introduction Research Question(s) and Objectives	Set the scene for the intended audience. Explain the issues and context being studied. Explain the motivation for the study in terms of the business or social benefits that can come from the study. Introduce and state the proposed research question(s) and objective. (Suggested word count - 300)
Initial Literature Review	This section should provide you with the theoretical concepts and ideas that can be used to set and refine the research question(s) you want to address. Enables you to discuss and evaluate the findings of previous (relevant) studies. Summarising is not enough. You should restrict the sources in the literature review to peer-reviewed literature found through the university library. (Suggested word count - 800)
Proposed Methodology	 This section should summarise the methodology and explain / justify the key aspects of the study design, data collection and data analysis. This section should: Describe the proposed primary data. Describe the population of data from which the data set is drawn. Explain the sampling strategy used to select the data set. Discuss how the data set and your sampling strategy strengthen or weaken the credibility, reliability and validity of the study (i.e. is it the right data and sample to answer the research question?) Describe and explain the data collection and data analysis methods. Draw on several academic books and research articles to demonstrate you have an advanced understanding of data collection and analysis methods, their strengths and weaknesses. Describe the Ethics process. (Suggested word count - 700)
Closing statement	Describe the lessons you have learnt from planning the primary research study, developing the data collection instruments and the way you decide which data analysis technique you are going to use. For example, explain if and how the research question(s) and methodology have been modified as you have developed the proposal. (Suggested word count - 200)
Reference List	Full APA 7 referencing of all cited material.
Appendices	A draft copy of all required ethics forms including, but not limited to, part 2 of your ethics form, the participant information sheet, the consent form, and a draft of your interview or survey questions.

Table 8: Final Primary Research Dissertation Structure and Guideline Contents (maximum 6000 words in the body)

Title Page	University Name, Course, Title, Author Name & Student Number, Supervisor Name, Date of Submission, Word Count.
Statement of Originality	The required text is in the central module handbook.
Acknowledgments	An opportunity to share thanks and appreciation.
Abstract	A concise summary of the context, aim, approach, results, and main conclusion of the study. (Not part of overall word count but must not be more than 200 words)
Table of Contents	A clear and concise table of contents with accurate page numbers.
Table of Figures (if appropriate)	A clear and concise table of figures with accurate page numbers.
Introduction Research Question(s) and Objectives	Set the scene for the intended audience. Explain the issues and context being studied. Explain the motivation for the study in terms of the business or social benefits that can come from the study. Introduce and state the research question(s). The question(s) must include a theory. Explain the question(s) and explain why the specific theory has been chosen. State the objective. (Suggested word count - 600)
Literature review	This section should provide you with the theoretical concepts and ideas that can be used to set and refine the research questions you want to address. Enables you to discuss and evaluate the findings of previous (relevant) studies. Summarising is not enough. You should restrict the sources in the literature review to peer-reviewed literature found through the university library. (Suggested word count - 2000)
Methodology	 This section should summarise the methodology and explain / justify the key aspects of the study design, data collection and data analysis. This section should include: Describe in detail the data that has been analysed. Describe the population of data from which the data set is drawn. Explain the sampling strategy used to select the data (interviews etc). Discuss how the data and the sampling strategy strengthens or weakens the credibility, reliability and validity of the study (i.e. is it the right data and sample to answer the research question?) Describe and explain the data collection and analysis methods. Draw on several academic books and research articles to demonstrate you have an advanced understanding of the collection and analysis methods, their strengths and weaknesses The methodology section should make use of and cite at least ELEVEN papers/books on research methods (covering aspects such as research design, data collection methods, data analysis methods)

	(Suggested word count - 1200)
	,
Results and Discussion	Present the results of the analysis. The results should be clearly drawn and evidenced from the method of analysis (e.g., thematic/ statistical). Note: details and workings of the analysis must be in the Appendix. Discuss the results in terms of the current knowledge (that is summarised in the literature review section). Discuss if the study is consistent or in conflict with current knowledge. (Suggested word count - 1200)
Implications for management Recommendations and reflection	Present and explain the practical managerial implications of the study. Do not just repeat the findings from the analysis. Instead, you should reflect on your findings and combine them with the knowledge you have acquired about business and management during your degree, to translate the findings into practical implications for business. This section should be written for the business audience (whereas the other sections in the dissertation are written for an academic audience). Make recommendations for further research. Reflect on the experience of doing the study. (Suggested word count - 1000)
Reference List	Full APA 7 referencing of all cited material.
Appendices	Authorised ethics form (signed and numbered). All Primary qualitative data and analysis (with highlighted text and codes in margins). Final codes / themes. Final codebook. All primary data must be anonymised and included in the appendices.

Secondary Research Dissertation (SRD)

About the Secondary Research Dissertation

Any data that was created / collected by someone else not for the purpose of the researcher's current study, is secondary data. For example, interviews that were designed and written up by someone else for a different purpose, are secondary data. Reports written by third parties (such as journalists, government committees, consultants, companies) are secondary data.

Academic journal articles and papers are NOT secondary data

Journal papers are NOT sources of secondary data for the dissertation module. There are two reasons:

- Very few Business and Management journal papers include anything more than a summary and analysis of their data. Some present only a summary of their analysis.
- If you wish to analyse journal papers, you should do a Documented Literature Review.

Where to get secondary data

All secondary data used in a Secondary Research Dissertation must be in the public domain. The library and internet provide access to a huge amount of public domain secondary data such as:

- Newspaper articles (via the <u>UoP library</u> you have access to the archives of specific newspapers Financial Times, New York Times - and to other news aggregation apps - PressReader, UKPressonline, Nexis)
- Reports by companies, consultancies, non-governmental organisations etc.
- Government and Regulatory reports and publications (such as verbatim transcripts of government committee hearings)
- Transcripts of speeches
- Transcripts from radio or tv programmes (including news programmes)

There is a lot of poor quality, biassed, ill-informed, and erroneous material on the web. In your dissertation you will need to argue that the data you are using is relevant, valid, and credible.

Searching for secondary data

The search for secondary data should be methodical and systematic. You should include sufficient details in your dissertation to enable the reader to recreate your search process. You should:

- Define the type of data you are looking for. This can include defining inclusion and exclusion criteria
- Specify the search process. State the search engines / databases and the keywords / search terms / filters you are using
- Record how you found each item of data (i.e., from which database and search term was each item of data identified) and the location of the data (i.e., URL / DOI).

Research Question

The Secondary Research Dissertation has a maximum of two research questions (RQ). The dissertation is 6000 words which means you do not have time to explain, investigate and answer more than two questions.

Structure and Guideline Contents of the Secondary Research Dissertation Proposal

Table 9: Secondary Research Dissertation **Proposal** Structure and Guideline Contents (maximum 2000 words in the body)

Title Page	University Name, Course, Title, Author Name & Student Number, Supervisor Name, Date of Submission, Word Count.
Statement of Originality	The required text is in the central module handbook.
Introduction Research Question(s) and Objectives	Set the scene for the intended audience. Explain the issues and context being studied. Explain the motivation for the study in terms of the business or social benefits that can come from the study. Introduce and state the proposed research question(s) and objectives. (Suggested word count - 300)
Initial Literature Review	This section should provide you with the theoretical concepts and ideas that can be used to set and refine the research question(s) you want to address. Enables you to discuss and evaluate the findings of previous (relevant) studies Summarising is not enough. You should restrict the sources in the literature review to peer-reviewed literature found through the university library. (Suggested word count - 800)
Proposed Methodology and trial analysis	This section should summarise the methodology and explain / justify the key aspects of the study design, data collection and data analysis. Write about the data, analysis method and trial analysis as follows: Describe the data sets to be analysed and the search process. Explain the strategy used to select the secondary data. Discuss the reliability, and validity of the study (i.e., is it the right data and sample to answer the research question(s)?) Describe and explain the data analysis method. Summarise the results of the trial analysis of 20% of the data sets. Discuss the suitability of data in terms of addressing the RQ(s) (e.g., will the full analysis provide a definitive and complete answer, an incomplete and partial answer, a weak answer?) (Suggested word count - 700)
Closing statement	Describe the lessons you have learnt from planning the secondary research study and doing the trial analysis. For example, explain if and how the research question and methodology have been modified during the course of reading the literature, searching for data, doing the trial analysis and producing the proposal. (Suggested word count - 200)
Reference List and appendices	Full APA 7 referencing of all cited material.
Appendices (in a separate document)	Sample of secondary qualitative data and full analysis (with highlighted text and codes in margins). The sample is to be equivalent to 20% of the anticipated final data set. Initial codes and themes and initial codebook. Sample of secondary quantitative data and analysis (descriptive and inferential statistics) if relevant.

Table 10: Final **Secondary Research Dissertation** Structure and Guideline Contents (maximum 6000 words in the body)

Title Page	University Name, Course, Title, Author Name & Student Number, Supervisor Name, Date of Submission, Word Count.
Statement of Originality	The required text is in the central module handbook.
Acknowledgmen ts	An opportunity to share thanks and appreciation.
Abstract	A concise summary of the context, aim, approach, results, and main conclusion of the study. (Not part of overall word count but must not be more than 200 words)
Table of Contents	A clear and concise table of contents with accurate page numbers.
Table of Figures (if appropriate)	A clear and concise table of figures with accurate page numbers.
Introduction Research Question and Objectives	Set the scene for the intended audience. Explain the issues and context being studied. Explain the motivation for the study in terms of the business or social benefits that can come from the study. Introduce and state the research question(s). State the objectives of the research. (Suggested word count - 600)
Literature review	This section should provide you with the theoretical concepts and ideas that can be used to set and refine the research question(s) you want to address. Enables you to discuss and evaluate the findings of previous (relevant) studies. Summarising is not enough. You should restrict the sources in the literature review to peer-reviewed literature found through the university library. (Suggested word count - 2000)
Methodology	 This section should explain the methodology and justify the key aspects of the study design, data collection and data analysis. Explain in detail the data that has been analysed and the search process. Describe the population of data from which the data set is drawn. Explain the sampling strategy used to select the data set. Discuss how the data set and your sampling strategy strengthen or weaken the credibility, reliability, and validity of the study (i.e., is it the right data and sample to answer the research question(s)?) Explain the data analysis method. Draw on several academic books and research articles to demonstrate you have an advanced understanding of the analysis method, its strengths, and weaknesses. (Suggested word count - 1200)
Results and Discussion	Present the results of the analysis. The results should be clearly drawn and evidenced from the method of analysis (e.g., thematic/ statistical). Note: details and workings of the analysis must be in the Appendices. Discuss the validity and reliability of the results. Include consideration of whether the sampling strategy and analysis method

	may have introduced biases and weaknesses into the study. Discuss the results in terms of the current knowledge (that is summarised in the literature review section). Discuss if the study is consistent or in conflict with current knowledge. (Suggested word count - 1200)
Implications for management Recommendatio ns and reflection	Present and explain the practical managerial implications of the study. Do not just repeat the findings from the analysis. Instead, you should reflect on your findings and combine them with the knowledge you have acquired about business and management during your degree, to translate the findings into practical implications for business. This section should be written for the business audience (whereas the other sections in the dissertation are written for an academic audience). Make recommendations for further research and reflect on the experience of doing the study. (Suggested word count - 1000)
Reference List	Full APA 7 referencing of all cited material.
Appendices (in a separate document)	Authorised ethics form (signed and numbered). All secondary qualitative data and full analysis (with highlighted text and codes in margins). Codes and themes and Codebook. All secondary quantitative data and analysis (descriptive and inferential statistics) if relevant.

Table 11: Primary and Secondary Research **Proposal** marking criteria.

University of Portsmouth Classifications	Marking Scale	Introduction	Research aim, and research questions	Literature Review	Methodology	Referencing and writing structure including appendices	
Publishable standard	100	An outstanding	An outstanding	An outstanding literature	The methodology thoroughly describes and explains	Outstanding use of APA 7th	
Near publishable standard	95	introduction that identifies the main issues to be addressed, establishes the context of the study, and explains the rationale.	explanation of research aim and research questions.	review that demonstrates extensive research and a sound critical approach to theoretical concepts relevant to the area of research.	the sampling strategy, data analysis method, and research methods. It convincingly justifies the chosen methods and provides a robust discussion of ethics, as well as the reliability and validity of the data. The rationale is fully supported by relevant literature.	edition for all references. Writing is academic and highly structured. Appendices include all required elements.	
Exceptional 1 st	88	explains the fationale.					
Outstanding 1 st	85						
Excellent 1st	82						
Very good 1 st	78	An excellent introduction	An excellent	An excellent literature review that demonstrates extensive research and a sound critical approach to theoretical concepts relevant to the area of research.	The methodology clearly explains the sampling strategy, data analysis method, and research	Excellent use of APA 7th edition for most references. Writing is mostly academic and well-structured. Appendices include all required elements.	
Clear 1 st	75	that identifies the main issues to be addressed, establishes the context of	explanation of research aim, and research questions.		methods. It provides a strong justification for the methods used, with a solid discussion of ethics, reliability, and validity of the data. Most arguments are well-supported by literature.		
Just about a 1 st	72	the study, and explains the rationale.					
Very good 2:1	68	A very good introduction	A very good explanation	A very good literature	The methodology accurately explains the sampling	Very good use of APA 7th	
Clear 2:1	65	that identifies the main issues to be addressed, establishes the context of	of research aim, and research questions.	review that demonstrates detailed research and a critical approach to theoretical concepts relevant to the area of research.	strategy, data analysis method, and research methods. It offers a clear justification for the methods, with a discussion of ethics and the	edition for many references. Writing is academic but could be more structured. Appendices include all required elements.	
Just about a 2:1	62	the study, and explains the rationale.			reliability and validity of data. There is adequate reference to supporting literature.		
Very good 2:2	58	A satisfactory introduction	· ·	A satisfactory literature	The methodology explains key elements of the	Satisfactory use of APA 7th	
Clear 2:2	55	that identifies the main issues to be addressed,	explanation of research	review that demonstrates some areas of detailed	sampling strategy, data analysis method, and research methods. It provides some justification for	edition for some references. Writing is somewhat	

Just about a 2:2	52	establishes the context of the study, and explains the rationale.	aim, and research questions.	research and discusses theoretical concepts relevant to the area of research.	the methods used and discusses ethics and reliability and validity of data, though some aspects may lack depth or clarity. Literature support is limited but present.	academic but lacks structure. Appendices are incomplete.
Very good 3 rd	48	An adequate introduction	An adequate	review that attempts to research the subject area and shows a limited	The methodology attempts to explain the sampling	Poor use of APA 7th edition for few references. Writing lacks academic style and structure. Appendices are
Clear 3 rd	45	that identifies the main issues to be addressed, establishes the context of	explanation of research aim, and research questions.		strategy, data analysis method, and research methods but lacks full clarity or justification. Discussion of ethics, reliability, and validity of data is	
Just about a pass	42	the study, and explains the rationale.			limited, and supporting literature is sparse.	incomplete.
Not quite a pass / Marginal fail	38	Some attempt to identify issues to be addressed, but substantially	essed, explain research aim and research questions,	Some attempt to research the subject area, but substantially incomplete and deficient.	The methodology provides a minimal explanation of the sampling strategy, data analysis method, or research methods. Justifications are weak, and	Very poor use of APA 7th edition with numerous errors. Writing lacks academic rigour. Appendices are scant and poorly organised.
Marginal fail	35	incomplete and deficient.			there is little discussion of ethics, reliability, or validity. There are significant gaps in literature support.	
Mid-range fail	32		dendent.		зиррог.	organiseu.
Mid-range fail	28	No serious attempt to No serious attempt to		No serious attempt to	There is little or no attempt to explain the sampling	No use of APA 7th edition.
Fail	22	identify relevant issues or the context of the study.	explain research aim and research questions.	research the subject area or theoretical concepts.	strategy, data analysis method, or research methods. No meaningful justification is provided, and there is little to no consideration of ethics, reliability, or validity of data. Literature support is absent or negligible.	Writing is entirely unacademic. Appendices are missing or wholly inadequate.
Fail	15					
Non submission or no adequate attempt	0					

Table 12: Final Primary and Secondary Research **Dissertation** Marking criteria

University of Portsmouth Classifications	Marking Scale	Introduction	Literature Review	Methodology	Results & Discussion	Implications for management Recommendations and reflection	Referencing, writing structure including appendices			
Publishable standard Near publishable standard	100 95	An outstanding introduction that identifies the main issues to be addressed and convincingly	An outstanding literature review that demonstrates extensive research and a confident critical approach	The methodology thoroughly describes and explains the sampling strategy, data analysis method, and research methods. It convincingly justifies the chosen methods and provides a robust discussion of ethics,	An outstanding presentation of results and analysis of data that convincingly links to research findings and	contribution of the dissertation and considers limitations, opportunities for further	Outstanding use of APA 7th edition for all references. Writing is academic and highly structured. Appendices include all required elements.			
Exceptional 1st	88	establishes the context of the study.	to theoretical concepts relevant to the area of research.	as well as the reliability and validity of the data. The rationale is fully supported by relevant literature.	objectives, and confidently builds on work cited in the literature review.					
Outstanding 1 st	85									
Excellent 1st	82									
Very good 1 st	78	An excellent introduction that	An excellent literature review that demonstrates	The methodology clearly explains the sampling strategy, data analysis method,	An excellent presentation of results and analysis of	An excellent conclusion that convincingly demonstrates the	Excellent use of APA 7th edition for most			
Clear 1 st	75	identifies the main issues to be addressed and establishes the context of the study.	extensive research and a sound critical approach to theoretical concepts	and research methods. It provides a strong justification for the methods used, with a solid discussion of ethics, reliability, and	data that convincingly links to research findings and objectives and builds on	contribution of the dissertation and considers limitations, opportunities for further	references. Writing is mostly academic and well- structured. Appendices			
Just about a 1 st	72			context of the study.	·	validity of the data. Most arguments are well-supported by literature.	work cited in the literature review.	research and recommendations for practice.	include all required elements.	
Very good 2:1	68	A very good introduction that	A very good literature review that demonstrates	The methodology accurately explains the sampling strategy, data analysis method,	A very good presentation of results and analysis of	A very good conclusion that accurately demonstrates the	Very good use of APA 7th edition for many			
Clear 2:1	65	identifies the main issues to be addressed and accurately introduces the context of the study.	identifies the main issues to be addressed	dentifies the main detailed research and a critical approach to	and research methods. It offers a clear justification for the methods, with a	data that accurately links to research findings and	contribution of the dissertation and considers limitations,	references. Writing is academic but could be		
Just about a 2:1	62		theoretical concepts relevant to the area of research.	discussion of ethics and the reliability and validity of data. There is adequate reference to supporting literature.	objectives and refers to work cited in the literature review.	opportunities for further research and recommendations for practice.	more structured. Appendices include all required elements.			
Very good 2:2	58	A satisfactory	A satisfactory literature	The methodology explains key elements of	A satisfactory presentation	A satisfactory conclusion that	Satisfactory use of APA 7th			
Clear 2:2	55	introduction that identifies some of the						of results and analysis of data that links to research	considers the contribution of the dissertation and briefly	edition for some references. Writing is

Just about a 2:2	52	issues to be addressed and begins to introduce context of the study.	research and discusses theoretical concepts relevant to the area of research.	provides some justification for the methods used and discusses ethics and reliability and validity of data, though some aspects may lack depth or clarity. Literature support is limited but present.	findings and objectives and refers to some work cited in the literature review.	mentions the limitations, opportunities for further research and recommendations for practice.	somewhat academic but lacks structure. Appendices are incomplete.
Very good 3 rd	48	An adequate introduction that	An adequate literature review that attempts to	The methodology attempts to explain the sampling strategy, data analysis method,	An adequate presentation of results and analysis of	An adequate conclusion that begins to consider the contribution of the dissertation and shows a limited understanding of research limitations, opportunities for	Poor use of APA 7th edition for few references. Writing lacks academic style and structure. Appendices are incomplete.
Clear 3 rd	45	attempts to identify issues to be addressed and shows a limited understanding of the	and shows a limited or ju understanding of relevant relia	and research methods but lacks full clarity or justification. Discussion of ethics, reliability, and validity of data is limited, and supporting literature is sparse.	data that attempts to link to research findings and objectives and shows a limited understanding of		
Just about a pass	42	context of the study.			work cited in the literature review.	further research and recommendations.	
Not quite a pass / Marginal fail	38	Some attempt to identify issues to be addressed, but substantially incomplete and deficient.	Some attempt to research the subject area, but substantially incomplete and deficient.	The methodology provides a minimal explanation of the sampling strategy, data analysis method, or research methods. Justifications are weak, and there is little discussion of ethics, reliability, or validity. There are significant gaps in literature support.	Some attempt to present results and an analysis of data, but substantially incomplete and deficient.	Some attempt to present the main conclusions, but substantially incomplete and deficient.	Very poor use of APA 7th edition with numerous errors. Writing lacks academic rigour. Appendices are scant and poorly organised.
Marginal fail	35						
Mid-range fail	32						
Mid-range fail	28	No serious attempt to	No serious attempt to	There is little or no attempt to explain the	No serious attempt to	No serious attempt to present	No use of APA 7th edition.
Fail	22	or the context of the study.	research the subject area or theoretical concepts.	or research methods. No meaningful	present results and an analysis of data. Does not link to work cited in the literature review.	conclusions. Does not consider limitations, opportunities for further research or recommendations for practice.	Writing is entirely unacademic. Appendices are missing or wholly inadequate.
Fail	15						
Non submission or no adequate attempt	0						

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