



South East Technological University

FACULTY OF LIFELONG LEARNING

ASSIGNMENT BRIEF

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| Programme Title & Programme Code | Masters of Science IT Management [CW_KRITM_M_5] |
| Module Title | Research Methods |
| Assignment Number | 1 |
| Assignment Type | Individual Take Home Project |
| This assignment addresses the following Learning Outcomes: | <p>On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan, design and implement a research report/dissertation from initial problem definition, to the presentation of results. 2. Analyse, appraise, criticize and synthesize professional reports and academic peer-reviewed publications. 3. Choose, compare and analyse primary data, both quantitative and qualitative. 4. Demonstrate the ability to apply the tools of Quantitative and Qualitative research to solve problems and produce valid conclusions and recommendations from relevant research data. 5. Demonstrate an advanced understanding of alternative research methods to the collection and dissemination of relevant data and its analysis. Critically evaluate relevant data / information and draw relevant conclusions. |
| Weighting | 100% |
| Submission Date | 13 th December 2024 |

The Assignment Brief Details:

- **Word Count**

The assignment should be approximately 1,500 words, with a maximum word count of 2,000 words. As conciseness in writing style is an important part of research methods, it will be assessed as part of your overall grade.

- **Font & Sizing**

Times New Roman Size 12

- **Line spacing**

1.5

- **Cover Sheet guidelines**

Include Name, Student Number, Course, Module

- **Referencing guidelines**

Please consult 'Credit Where Credit is Due' for the referencing system used by SETU. Please ensure accuracy and consistency in your referencing.

- **Assignment Brief**

A research proposal is an outline of approximately 1,500 words (including references and bibliography) which gives an insight into the originality, research design and methodology of the proposed project which you are about to undertake as part of your studies. The research proposal is used to gain insight into the quality and originality of your planned research, how you are thinking critically and how well you have an understanding of the relevant literature. This then provides an overview of the perspectives you intend to take on your research area which is helpful when assigning a supervisor.

- **Instructions on how to complete the assignment**

The assignment has 8 questions which should all be attempted in the order they appear. The answers for each question should only address what is specifically being asked in that question. There is no requirement for an executive summary, or introduction, etc and no marks for these will be given if included.

Each question is weighted with varying percentages of the overall total mark. This reflects the effort required for each of the respective questions.

The assignment seeks a critical appraisal of your selected peer-reviewed academic journals. Marks will not be awarded for a descriptive summary of the two selected journals. The output from this appraisal should inform the design of your methodology. This should be clearly evident in your workings.

It is expected that learners will become proficient in academic writing over the course of the module which will be assessed in the assignment. This can only come through practice.

Assignment

| Question | Assessment Component | Details | Learning Outcomes Addressed | % of Total |
|----------|--|---|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1 | RATIONALE: Articulate the rationale for your proposed research study including an explanation of the topic of interest, objective of the research, background and relevance. | Define what the problem / opportunity is that you wish to address, why it is of interest to you and the potential impact that your research project might deliver. | LO 1 | 10 |
| 2 | TITLE: Give the proposed title of dissertation. | Consider the structure, objectives and wording of your title. | LO 1 | 5 |
| 3 | ORGANISATION: Name a client organisation to which the research is applicable. | This sets the context in which your research might be based. Even if you have not identified an organisation yet, propose a suitable company or body to which the research is applicable. | LO 1 | 5 |
| 4 | RESEARCH QUESTIONS: Select FIVE relevant academic journals and discuss why these papers give meaningful impact to your research topic and research question(s). | Review the subject area using five journals articles. State your Research question. Use the journals to provide an insight into the development of your Primary and Secondary Research questions. | LO 1, LO5 | 15 |
| 5 | LITERATURE CRITIQUE: Provide a critical analysis of TWO of the academic journals dealing with a similar topic and research question to yours. The articles you have selected should underpin your literature review and in particular the theoretical framework for your research. The articles should use different research approaches for a similar research question – for example; one author uses a positivist approach and the other an interpretivist approach. | You must critically compare and evaluate the research approach in each article, specifically addressing the articles' engagement with following factors: (1) Management of theoretical assumptions; (2) Ontology and epistemology; and (3) Methodological approach. You must also identify the theoretical paradigm that is guiding the research approach of the articles. You will evaluate the worth and effectiveness of each of the chosen approaches (e.g. positivist and interpretivist) in addressing the subject and the | LO 2, 3, 4 | 35 |

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| | | research question, and their contributions to knowledge. | | |
| 6 | METHODOLOGY: Describe your intended Methodology and explain how you plan to research the topic of interest. Your Methodology should be informed by the critical analysis of the two journals. | Give an overview of your epistemological and ontological position and how it relates to the intended methodology. Critically discuss why your methodology is suited to researching the research question(s). You will need to demonstrate an awareness of the methodological approaches and data collection tools available to you and show some understanding of which would be suitable for your research. How will validity and reliability be managed? Develop a framework of rigour for your research. | LO 3, 4,5 | 20 |
| 7 | EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Discuss what you believe will be the Expected Outcomes | Explain what you believe the results will reveal and how you think these outputs will impact the client organisation. | LO 1, 5 | 5 |
| 8 | DELIMITATIONS: State the Delimitations relevant to your Research. | Detail any assumptions including time horizon and delimitations of scope for your research project. | LO 1, 5 | 5 |

Only your assignment document should be submitted through Turnitin. Please do not include the academic journals.

The Assignment Marking Rubric

| | Exceptional (80-100) | Exceeds standard (60- 79) | Meets standard (50- 69) | Approaches standard (40-49) | Fails to meet standard (0-39) |
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| Content (20%) | Demonstrates exceptional critical insight, evaluation, and synthesis of issues. Shows outstanding understanding of recent topics under investigation. | Provides an effective critical evaluation and synthesis of issues and materials, showing a good understanding of relevant theories. | Accurately describes main issues and materials with some critical evaluation. | Offers limited evaluation and description of main issues and materials. | Omits relevant material and/or includes largely irrelevant content. |
| Application to theory (20%) | Extensive evidence of relevant and perceptive application of theory, and/or empirical results, where applicable | Clear evidence of relevant application of theory and/or empirical results where applicable | Evidence of relevant application of theory and/or empirical results where applicable | Limited evidence of relevant application of theory and/or empirical results | No evidence of relevant application of theory and/or empirical results |
| Knowledge and understanding (20%) | Displays exceptional knowledge and in-depth understanding of principles and concepts. | Exhibits comprehensive knowledge and understanding of principles and concepts. | Demonstrates appropriate knowledge and understanding of principles and concepts. | Has basic knowledge of key principles and concepts. | Demonstrates limited or superficial knowledge of key principles and concepts. |
| Evidence of reading (20%) | Integrates relevant and appropriate supplementary sources that are effectively synthesised throughout. | Shows evidence of integrating both directed reading and a diverse range of supplementary sources. | Demonstrates reading and application of directed material and some relevant supplementary sources. | Shows basic reading only with minimal application of supplemental sources. | Minimal evidence of reading provided. |
| Academic writing, presentation, structure, grammar, and spelling (15%) | Writing style is engaging and fully developed, presentation well organised | Writing style is competent and well-developed, presentation is organised and presented | Writing style is mostly intelligible, acceptable presentation and structure, | Writing style is simplistic and unfocused, presentation evident, but organisation | Writing style demonstrates confusion, presentation, structure, spelling, and |

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| | and presented with logical structure, coherent argumentation, and correct grammar and spelling throughout. | logically with mostly correct spelling and grammar that does not interfere with understanding. | but some parts may be difficult to follow or contain grammar and/or spelling errors. | and/or spelling/grammar could be improved in multiple instances but do not impede understanding. | grammar contain multiple errors that may impede understanding. |
| Referencing (5%) | References are thoroughly researched and correctly written using Harvard referencing conventions with little to no errors in formatting. | References are well-researched and mostly adhere to Harvard referencing conventions with only minor formatting errors. | References are adequately researched and formatted with some errors in Harvard referencing conventions. | References show an attempt at adhering to Harvard referencing conventions but with noticeable errors in formatting. | Citations are missing or incorrect with numerous issues in referencing format and adherence to Harvard conventions. |

Continuous Assessment Submission Guidelines

Artificial Intelligence

As part of the assessment strategy, students may be called upon, at random, to orally defend any piece of work submitted. This would be conducted, not as a punitive measure, but rather as a way of positively supporting the overall assessment process and ensure that it is robust. Work submitted through Turnitin will produce an AI report as well as a Similarity report. Assignments which have copied work from websites, from other authors, from other students or any other sources may receive a grade of 0.

Assignments must be submitted via Turnitin. If assignments are not submitted via Turnitin, this will be regarded as a non-submission. It is the student's responsibility to upload assignments to the correct Turnitin link.

Please observe the suggested word count. Assignments that are too short or too long may be penalised.

Plagiarism

Assignments which have copied work from websites, from other authors, from other students or any other sources may receive a grade of 0. All instances of plagiarism must be reported to the Head of Department who, in turn, is obliged to report them to the Registrar. Students who receive this grade may be asked to justify their actions to the University's plagiarism panel. Students must apply to the examination board at the end of the academic year to re-submit their work in such instances. Please note that copying verbatim from original sources is unacceptable even if you provide references.

Late Submissions

Late submissions will not be excepted more than 24hours outside of the assignment deadline unless an extension has been granted.

Extension Policy

Only in exceptional circumstances will extensions be granted.

Undergraduate and postgraduate extensions cannot be granted by your lecturer. Such extensions can only be granted by the Faculty of Lifelong Learning once a completed extension form and supporting documentation is returned online.

Students can apply for extensions at the following link - [LLL Extension Request Form](#)

Extensions must be sought in advance of the submission date. Extensions will not be granted retrospectively.

The circumstances under which an extension request will be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Serious personal / family / business reasons
- Where a student is representing their country or university

An extension request is **unlikely** to be considered under the following circumstances:

- Minor illnesses such as a common cold
- Holidays during the academic year
- Multiple assignments due at the one time
- Failure to plan study schedule
- Debs / weddings / social events
- IT and /or computer failure

The Faculty of Lifelong Learning reserve the right to request supporting documentation. If you are applying for an extension that exceeds **5 days** you must submit supporting documentation (e.g. letter from a doctor, employer, line manager etc.) so that any prolonged absence can be verified.

To avoid any unnecessary distress, please ensure that you **back up your work** regularly as you undertake your assignment.

Failure to submit a piece of assessment may result in a grade of 0.

Referencing

Correct referencing and citation are very important in academic writing.

Please consult PACE MODULE 3 - [Citations and References](#) for the referencing system used by SETU. Note 'Credit Where Credit is Due' is a supportive tool available in the Summary and Further Resources section.

