

COMP90044 Research Methods Assignment 2: Research Plan

Deadline for Formative Feedback: Per the LMS

Final Assignment Due: Per the LMS

Value: 60 Marks, 60% of Final Grade

Activities

This assignment is divided into three activities:

- Activity 1: Optional early submission of indicative written research plan. This will receive written feedback only, not a mark
- Activity 2: Submission of final written research plan, 2000 words, 40 marks
- Activity 3: Submission of audio-presentation (video or slides with voiceover), 5 minutes, 20 marks

Activity 1—0 Marks

You will use the research topic from your literature review as the topic for this part of the report. For this activity you should write a sketch of the research plan that you will submit in activity 2. This should cover the following elements:

- What your research question is
- How you plan to investigate the research question
- How you will analyse the results of your investigation

Three hundred words in bullet points outlining your approach are sufficient for this submission. Your methods and investigation should be relevant and appropriate to the field you are working in, and for each of the above elements you should be able to provide at least two or three peer reviewed references.

For this activity, you will receive feedback on:

- The quality of your research question: is it specific, answerable, empirical, and so on
- The appropriateness of your chosen method and analysis approach to your research question

Activity 2—40 Marks

Write a final research plan of not more than 2000 words (excluding references) that addresses the following elements:

1. Motivation for the research question
2. Identification of the research question
3. Proposed investigation method, with a demonstration (by reference to the literature) that it is appropriate for your academic field (what method and steps will you take to gather data or take measurements that allows you to answer your research question)
4. Description of the analysis method, justified by previous literature (how will you analyse and interpret the data you gathered in step 3 above)
5. A description of the likely contribution of the research to scientific knowledge

The proportion of these five items will vary depending on your field. For example, in a novel domain the motivation and context may be shorter, but the method section longer because it must be justified in more detail. In a more established field, the justification of your specific question may be

longer but the method shorter. In general no section should exceed 500 words. The key sections for this assignment are sections 3 and 4, but all sections are important.

The overall word limit should be a guide to the level of detail; excessively long submissions almost certainly represent an overinvestment of time in this activity. Further, the suggested word length is approximately the length of an introduction and method section in a conference publication; this is good practice for any publications you go on to write in the future.

Activity 3—20 Marks

Using the same research question that you have addressed throughout the subject, prepare a 5-minute presentation, including slides (5-7 slides plus a title slide should be sufficient). This presentation should introduce the topic and your method for studying it. You will then make a screen capture with sound or PowerPoint capture of yourself presenting this material. You do NOT need to video record yourself delivering the slides, we ONLY want the talk you would give.

In your presentation you should include the following elements:

- An introduction to the background literature in your research area
- An overview of why the research is worth doing and why it is challenging
- An overview of how you will investigate the question, and what impact your research will have on your field

The assessment criteria for this component of the work will include:

- Clarity of your presentation
- Quality of the slides: do they add to the talk or are you just reading text from them?
- Quality of the argument: do you present a compelling case for doing this research?
- Balance: are the components of the talk of appropriate length?
- Plausibility of the approach: do you make a good case for your method?

You will not be able to present every detail of the literature background or your method in 5 minutes, so you need to design the material carefully to ensure that the main messages are delivered to an appropriate depth and standard.