**Structure of the Dissertation / Research Project**

***Abstract (100 words – not included in the word count)***

A short summary of your entire project including briefly the research objectives of the study, the **organization/industry/country** under investigation, the key strategic focus, as well as main results and conclusions from the study.

***Introduction (approx. 500 - 800 words)***

A Research Project should always begin with an introductory section. This is often the most important component. It introduces the subject area covered and explains why you have concentrated on this topic. It should outline to the reader what you intend to argue, why the argument is so important, and how you intend to move methodically through this argument. It should also introduce the outline of the Research Project.

The introduction plays an important role while you are writing the Research Project. Although you will often re-write and modify it after the whole piece is completed, it is extremely valuable to write at least a summary of the introduction **before**embarking on the main part of the text. This serves two main purposes.

1. First, it provides a way of checking the overall outline structure. If the central argument running through that structure cannot be summarised in a few paragraphs for a draft introduction, then there is something wrong with the argument or the structure (or both). This should be sorted out before setting out to write the main text.
2. Second, together with the outline structure, a draft introduction acts as an excellent 'route map' during writing. Re-reading it at regular intervals helps to keep your eye on the intended central line of argument. It obviously does not preclude modifications, or even additions, to that line of argument as the writing proceeds. However, it does act as a prompt for explicit consideration of the modification. Is this really a necessary development that helps to achieve the main objective? Or, is this just a diversion that merely clouds the main issue, however interesting it may be in its own right?

***Research Objectives (approx. 300 - 500 words)***

This section should focus on the **research objective(s) and research question(s)**that the proposed research project seeks to investigate or achieve as well as on the **motivation and significance** of the study.

* **Clear Objective**s: A good research project has clear, well-defined objectives. These objectives guide the research process and provide a framework for evaluating the outcomes. Clearly defining your research questions is imperative for engaging with your reader and smoothly directing them into your next chapter, the theoretical background.
* **Significance**: The research should address a significant problem or question. It should contribute to filling gaps in existing knowledge, solving a real-world problem, or exploring new areas that could have important implications.

***Theoretical Background (approx. 1500 - 2000 words)***

In this section it is important to explain to your reader about the challenges of the particular international venture you are emphasising upon as identified by the current academic literature. A description of the key concepts and theories, as well as key definitions are expected here, along with a clear understanding of key gaps in the existing discourse and empirical literature. What has the theoretical literature said about this particular links and what do we currently know from empirical studies of the past? The latter is particularly instrumental so that you can convince your reader for the significance and contribution of your research.

***The Case (approx. 500 - 800 words)***

An introduction of the Unit of Analysis of your choice, whether this is an **organization, an entire industry or country**, is required here as well as a discussion why this is an interesting case for addressing the research question(s) and aim(s) that you have explained in the previous sections.

***Methodology (approx. 800 - 1000 words)***

The methods used in the research should be appropriate for the research questions or hypotheses and should be executed rigorously. This includes proper design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Description of the methodology used for the research project explaining the intended design of the research, including a discussion about the advantages, limitations as well as properties of a case study analysis (or any other methodological approach adopted) is expected here.

A detailed description of how data has been collected as well as of the different sources of information that have been used need also to be included here.

Meanwhile, here you need to further acknowledge:

1. **Feasibility of the study**: The research should be practical and achievable within the given constraints, such as time, resources, and available technology. This needs to be acknowledged in this section.
2. **Ethical Consideration**s: Ethical standards must be maintained throughout the research process. This includes obtaining necessary approvals, ensuring confidentiality and privacy, and treating subjects (if any) with respect.

**Please NOTE:**If you want to collect own data, you must apply for research ethics review:[**http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/applyLinks to an external site.**](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/apply)

**References**: For an indicative list of references on how to conduct a good research study check the Reading List of the Module:

<https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/courses/26606/external_tools/8601>

***Results and Discussion (approx. 1500 words)***

This should summarise the main thrust of your argument, the results you have arrived at in your analysis and their implications (e.g., for policy or company strategy). This section also discusses the findings in more detail and reflect and contrast the own findings against previous literature. This section may include:

* a good presentation of the results from your analysis;
* a discussion of the key findings in relation to what we know from the literature;
* a summary review of what others have said on the subject, together with your critical assessment of those views;
* an evaluation of how these findings advances our understanding of the topic under investigation;
* discussion of the implications for theory and practice.

***Conclusion and Practical Recommendations (approx. 800 - 1000 words)***

This part can be split into three key elements:

1. a summary reminding the reader of the issue addressed, and of its importance, as well as how the research links to your postgraduate degree;
2. the key theoretical stances on the topic under investigation along with a presentation of your own views on the subject, with the necessary empirical evidence and arguments (from your results) to support those views;
3. practical recommendations for the future of the company under investigation, including key ethical issues arising from the above discussion and results.

**Further Important points:**

* **Critical Analysis:** Every research should include a thorough and critical analysis of the data, considering various perspectives and potential biases.
* **Clear and Coherent Presentation**: The findings should be presented clearly and coherently, making them accessible to the intended audience. This includes a well-structured narrative, logical argumentation, and clear conclusions.
* **Originality:** Good research should offer original insights, findings, or approaches. It should add something new to the field, whether it's a novel methodology, unexplored area, or new findings.
* **Relevance**: The research should be relevant to your **course** and the **relevant literature**, potentially be beneficial to other researchers, practitioners, or policymakers. It should contribute to the advancement of knowledge or the solution of practical problems. As such, several references from the literature are expected to support your arguments throughout the research study.

**Marking Criteria**

A chart with text and numbers

Description automatically generated with medium confidence