

SECTION 3

- DR SIMON ●K. welcome back to the new term. Hope you've had a good break and that you're looking forward to writing your dissertation... What I'd like to do in this session is give you the opportunity to ask questions on writing the dissertation... requirements, milestones... who to see when you need help. It's very informal... it may all be written on paper, but it's nice to get it confirmed. So anything you'd like to ask?
- ANDY Dr Simon, is there a fixed hand-in date yet?
- DR SIMON Right. I can confirm that that's 21 May, not 20 as we first stated. Q21
OK? ... Jane?
- JANE What about the word limit?
- DR SIMON Well we try to be pretty flexible on this, but in broad terms it's 18 – 20,000. Q22
- JANE Ah...
- DR SIMON And you can choose your topics ... anything from Years 2 and 3 ... Yes?
- JANE I still haven't got any idea what I want to do it on. Who...?
- DR SIMON Well, you should see your course tutor to agree on your final title and you should also be aware that there's a special programme running on research methods for anyone who wants some extra help on that. Q23
- JANE Can I just check on the deadlines for everything?
- DR SIMON Yes, sure. Look, let me write it on the board... when the different stages have to be completed. First of all you've got to work on your basic bibliography, and that's due in to your course tutor by 31 January... which is just two weeks away, so you'd better get a move on on that.
- ANDY Do we have to have our own draft plan by then?
- DR SIMON No, your draft plan is due on 7 February, which is a week later, so Q24
that should give you plenty of time.
- JANE And when do we have to be doing the research? Q25
- DR SIMON That's over a one-month period... essentially February to March.
- ANDY And the write up?
- DR SIMON Well, you can't really get going on your writing until you've got quite a bit of the research done, so that's really March to May, with the hand in date on 21st. Any more questions? Q26

- ANDY Well, sir, just some advice really. It's about computers...would you advise us to buy one?
- DR SIMON What can I say, Andy? I know it's a massive expense, but I really feel that it will be of great benefit...you can always look in the Student Union adverts for second hand ones. Yes? Q27
- JANE I've been looking at some of last year's dissertations.
- ANDY Is that a good idea, sir? I heard...
- DR SIMON Well, I don't think you should read them in detail too early or you might end up taking more of their ideas than you realise. But yes...it really is the best guide you can have to the expectations of the...of what's expected when you write a dissertation. Q28
- ANDY Sorry, Jane, I interrupted you.
- JANE That's OK. It's just that they did a lot of research using questionnaires...is that a good idea?
- DR SIMON I think questionnaires are very good at telling you how people fill in questionnaires, but to be frank they tell you very little else. Avoid them! Q29
- ANDY About interviews...is it OK if we interview you?
- DR SIMON The tutors? I don't see why not; they don't have any special contribution to make, but you can if you want. There's a whole section on this issue in the Research Guide. I'm afraid it's slightly out of date, and you're probably better talking to the tutor on the Research Methods course, but you might find it useful to start there. Q30
- ANDY/JANE OK, thanks.
- DR SIMON OK...well, great, I hope that sorted a few things out. You can always come and see me or drop me a note if you've got any more queries.
- ANDY/JANE Fine.
- DR SIMON OK, Thanks...