

**Project Module
XXSE60108
Workshop**

Steps

When choosing a research topic:

- **What you are interested in**
- **Your award**
- **The discipline you would like to work in**
- **The size of the topic**
- **The time you have available**
- **The resources you have available**
- **Access issues**

Topic generation techniques:

- 1. Brainstorming**
- 2. Mind maps**
- 3. Relevance trees**
- 4. Reading relevant publications**
- 5. Communication with module leader/supervisor**

Step one: Choose a topic

- The topic should be SMART which means:**
 - 1. Specific**
 - 2. Measurable**
 - 3. Achievable**
 - 4. Realistic**
 - 5. Timed**

- **Step Two: Introduction**

- **The introduction must include:**

1. **Brief information about your topic.**
2. **Write your question.**
3. **Tie between your question & the information**

- **Step Three: Write a question, or objective**

- **The question should be;**

1. **One only**
2. **SMART**
3. **Clear**
4. **Simple**

● **Step Four: Examples of secondary data sources:**

1. **Selecting References:**

- Textbooks
- Articles in academic publications
- Conference papers
- Reports
- Published statistics
- Annual reports and accounts
- Popular media e.g. newspapers, broadcasts
- Electronic databases
- Internet

Step FourCont.

2. **You need at least 20 sufficient references**

3. **You must use Harvard Referencing system within the assignment text and at the end of the assignment.**

4. **Arrange them Alphabetically**

- **Start with:**
 - Books.
 - Articles
 - Websites

First: Conducting a literature review:

- Start as soon as possible
- Decide on the scope e.g. timescales or geography
- Key word identification
- Identify quality research articles i.e. discuss the methodology, results and conclusions
- Use the references to guide to other sources

Second: When writing up:

- Define terms
- Select only relevant material
- Group material into categories
- Draw out important features
- Make comparisons of results
- Be critical

Third Writing the literature review

The literature review should:

- **Summarise the main ideas, issues & debates**
- **Link these to your assignment's question.**
- **Link these to your findings.**

Fourth: Writing style

1. **Use a consistent style of writing throughout the your project.**
2. **Tie the ideas you are reviewing to your own work.**
3. **Discuss how your research extends ideas that you are reviewing.**
4. **Compare your work to that of others.**

Fifth: Ask yourself:

- **Have I critically analysed the literature – comparing and assessing not just describing and summarizing?**
- **Have I cited and discussed studies contrary to my perspective?**
- **Will the reader find my literature review informative, relevant, appropriate and useful?**

Step Five: Start Reading the literature review:

First: Critical Reading:

- **Keep your purpose in mind when you read**
- **Don't let the arguments in the book distract you from your reading agenda.**
- **Skim the headings and the abstract of the piece; perhaps look at the first line of each paragraph and the conclusion**
- **You don't need to read everything with equal attention.**
 - A. For the Articles focus on the abstracts**
 - B. For the books, check the index & the contents, introduction & conclusion.**

Second: Check Your Skills

- 1. Research**
- 2. Analysis**
- 3. Prioritisation**
- 4. Concise writing**
- 5. Organisation**
- 6. Time management**
- 7. Consistency**
- 8. Spelling**

Step Six: Conclusions

Should include:

- Findings**
- Results**
- Recommendations**

Step Seven: Avoid Common Mistakes

1. **Never write comma after that**
2. **(At) always after aim**
3. **Poor subject choice – not enough research**
4. **Un-SMART objectives**
5. **Poor presentation**
6. **Little theoretical foundation**
7. **Descriptive and repetitive**
8. **Little effort**
9. **PLAGIARISM = Zerooooooooooooo**

Step Eight: Make sure that you have successful Project:

Characteristics of successful project:

- **Evidence of depth and breadth of relevant and contemporary research**
- **Ability to analyse, evaluate and argue**
- **Clear and logical structure**
- **Appropriate application of theoretical concepts and models**
- **Professional presentation**

Do Not...!

- 1. Leave your research to the last minute – this assignment will take longer than you think**
- 2. Not communicate with your supervisor – they are there to guide you**
- 3. Just summarise your research findings without adding any commentary**
- 4. Expect to write your review once – you need to be prepared to edit and refine**

Meeting

- 1. Agree on a working title**
- 2. Discuss research objectives**
- 3. Evaluate research undertaken to date**
- 4. Any other project related concerns**

PROGRESS REPORT

Student Name : _____
Student ID No. : _____
Supervisor Name : _____
Date of Submission : _____

Project Title: _____

Introduction:

The aim of this project is to _____ in the context
_____ and _____.

This progress report discusses the progress made by the researcher:

Note: the author introduces this by 1) reminding what the project deals with and 2) what the progress report deals with (time period).

Describe the activities, processes, and procedures that were undertaken during the months specified in each phase.

Phase I - (March - April):

Project title conceptualization and approval

Writing of introduction

Student – Adviser Conference: (include date/s when conference/s held)

Phase II - (April - May):

Data identification and gathering (including sources of data)

Writing of literature review

Analysis and interpretation / corroboration of data

Student – Adviser Conference: (include date/s when conference/s held)

Final Phase III - (May - June):

Finalization and submission of the project

Limitation of the Research

Conclusion

Student Signature : _____
Date : _____



In academic
affiliation with



GULF COLLEGE – MUSCAT – SULTANATE OF OMAN

UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS PROGRAMME

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-2017

Second Semester

Assignment

Module Title: Project	
Module Code: XXSE 60108	
Method of Assessment: Assignment and Progress Report	
Weighting: 85% Assignment; 15% Progress Report	Module Credits: 15
Level: 6	Semester/Teaching block: 2
Morning / Evening Session: BOTH	Examiner: Dr. Agustin D. Cortez Jr.
Additional Information (if any): <i>Ethical standards and practices should be taken into account when writing your assignment paper.</i>	

Module Title: Project.

Module Code: XXSE 60108

Module Tutors: Mr. Abdul Rauf; Dr. Agustin; Dr. Benjamin; Dr. Christopher; Mr. Idrees; Mrs. Juliet; Mr. Jawad; Dr. Khalid; Mr. Rashid; Dr. Romeo; Dr. Ravindra; Dr. Tariq; Dr.Venus.

Submission Time and Date: June 2017

You should hand in one copy of your assignment and report by the time and date to the appropriate time specified by your tutor 'hand-in location' at the Gulf College. Fill in the front cover (staple together with your assignment). **MAKE SURE** that you fill in all the relevant details on this form. An acknowledgement will be given to you upon receiving your assignment. This is your receipt, keep it. You can submit work by post, but you must send it recorded delivery, it must be postmarked two days before the deadline date and a copy must be kept by you in case it is lost in the post. **Faxed assignments will not be accepted.**

Assignments must be submitted by the due date. The only circumstance in which assignments can be submitted late is if an extenuating circumstances form is submitted at the same time. In these circumstances work may be submitted up to **5 working days** late only. If the extenuating circumstances are upheld, the assignment will be graded; otherwise a 0 will be awarded.

Maximum Word Length: This is an individual assignment with a length of 2000 words weighted at 85% and a progress report with a length of 500 words weighted at 15%.

State the number of words used at the end of your assignment. You may include diagrams, figures etc. without word penalty. A sliding scale of penalties for excess length will be imposed according to the amount by which the limit has been exceeded.

1-10%	excess	no penalty
11-20%	excess	10% reduction in the mark
21-30%	excess	20% reduction in the mark
31%+	excess	the work will be capped at a pass ex. 40%

NB. None of the above penalties will be used to change a student mark which is above the pass mark, to one that is below the pass mark. Therefore the *maximum penalty* for exceeding the word limit will be a reduction to a pass grade.

Assessment Criteria

To achieve a 'Pass' grade of 40%

In order to achieve a pass grade the student will have demonstrated at least a satisfactory understanding of the concepts, theories and principles of the chosen topic or subject area. The work produced must apply appropriate principles, concepts and frameworks in order to address the areas specified in the assignment. There should be also a clear evidence of research and reading, with reference to appropriate sources.

To achieve a grade of 70% or above

In order to achieve a grade of 70% or above, as well as satisfying all of the outlined criteria for a 'pass', the student must demonstrate a detailed understanding and application of the concepts, theories and principles in the chosen topic or subject area. The submission will be well organised and contain all relevant data. It will show evidence of appropriate investigation including research from a range of academic literature and other secondary sources of information. Detailed answers will be given to each of the questions with appendices where appropriate. There will be an evidence of wider reading through appropriate supporting references.

Learning Outcomes

This assignment will assess the following learning outcomes:

1. DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE OF, ANALYSE AND CRITICALLY ASSESS THE LITERATURE IN A GIVEN BUSINESS - RELATED SUBJECT AREA.
2. IN CONJUNCTION WITH A SUPERVISOR/ADVISER, FORMULATE RESEARCH QUESTIONS OR OBJECTIVES IN THE GIVEN SUBJECT AREA.
3. CONSTRUCT AN ARGUMENT EMPLOYING RELEVANT AND VALID EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF A CONCLUSION THAT DIRECTLY ADDRESSES THE PROBLEM POSED BY THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS OR OBJECTIVES.
4. DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCE IN INDEPENDENT LEARNING.
5. DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCE IN THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS NEEDED TO GENERATE THE REQUIRED FORMAT OF WRITTEN PRESENTATION.

The Task:

This is an individual Assignment (85%) and Progress Report (15%).

1. You are required to conduct, and critically analyse the literature in a given business related in your area of specialisation and interest. Develop the research questions or formulate the research objectives of your chosen topic upon consultation and agreement with your supervisor/advisor in the given subject area. Develop arguments that are supported by valid and relevant evidences in relation to the topic and objectives or those directly answer the research questions. Draw the conclusion that directly addresses the problem posed by the research questions or objectives. Use proper citation and standard referencing – Harvard Style. Use separate sheet/s for the list of references. (85%)
2. Prepare a detailed Progress Report following the standard format specifying the processes, procedures, and activities that were undertaken while conducting the study. (15%)

Project Assessment Criteria/Marking Scheme:

Criteria	Weighting
SMART topic with a comprehensive introduction supported by authorities and experts which contains a statement of research question or objective in the given subject area.	15%
Level of analysis and interpretations of related and relevant literature presented from various sources that address the research problem or research objective. Logical organisation of literature and materials relating to the topic, problem, or objectives that shows a wide range of appropriate readings in the selected subject area.	55%
Construct an argument employing relevant and valid evidence in support of a conclusion that directly addresses the problem posed by the research questions or objectives.	15%
Presentation – Accurate referencing, structure and language proficiency.	15%
Total	100%

The main purpose of this assessment is to enable the students to extend and deepen their knowledge of an aspect of a business - related subject area appropriate to their award. They will apply a range of secondary research skills covered in the Research Methods subject.

Literature: The term literature is being used here in the academic sense to refer not only to the text books but also to the wide range of other available information sources such as papers in the academic publication, database, and university websites and so on. Although in a few subjects it may be acceptable to draw upon a limited number of non-academic resources, in an analysis of this type, students are expected to refer to academic resources such text books, academic on university web-sites and the like.

The analysis should be written using formal, academic English, and recommended referencing format.

How to write a Literature Review?

In writing a critical Literature Review you will need to:

- a. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of previous work including omissions or biases and take these into account in your arguments
- b. Justify your arguments by referencing previous research

- c. Through clear and consistent referencing, enable those reading your critical review to find the original work cited.

In addition, by fully acknowledging the work of others you will avoid charges of plagiarism and associated penalties. Information concerning referencing can be found at www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/inforservices/library/learn/skills.php

The critical Literature Review should be a description and critical analysis of what other authors have written. When drafting your review you need to focus on your research question(s) or objective(s). Although there is no single structure that your critical review should take, you may find it helpful to think of the review using a funneling technique:

1. Start at more general level before moving to the specific;
2. Provide a brief overview of key ideas;
3. Summaries in brief, compare and contrast the work of the key writers;
4. Narrow down to highlight the work most relevant to your research; and
5. Provide a detailed account of the findings of this work.

Whichever way you structure your review, you must demonstrate that you have read, fully understood and evaluated the items you have located. The key to writing a critical literature review is therefore to link together the different ideas you find in the literature form with coherent and cohesive argument.

Progress Report Assessment Criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Brief Introduction and statement of purpose of the report	15%
Work completed during the time period of the study (i.e. from March 2017 to June 2017) in terms of topic selection, writing of introduction, literature review and conclusion.	55%
Description of the problems and limitations encountered while conducting the study (8%); Drawing of conclusion (7%)	15%
Presentation, structure and language proficiency of the report.	15%
Total	100%

Progress Report Writing:

Identify and describe in chronological order the activities undertaken during the month specified. At the end of every month make a conference with your advisor to discuss issue/s or problem/s in doing the project. Indicate the dates of the meeting/conference with the advisor/supervisor in each time period.

Plagiarism Warning

Summary

- Plagiarism occurs if you use somebody else's work in an assignment or exam answer, but fail to state where you got the material from. You need to be also very careful about the amount of words you are using from somebody else's work.
- It can happen in any type of assessment where you are given the questions or tasks in advance.
- If another student uses your work in his/her answer(s), both you and he/she will be punished when caught.
- Punishments for committing plagiarism can be very severe.

The details

Plagiarism is a form of cheating in which students use the work of others and present it as their own. Staffordshire University publishes a fully detailed description of what the term 'plagiarism' means on the University's main web-site under the heading 'Procedures for dealing with suspected cases of academic dishonesty. We strongly recommend that you go and read the full document at the above address. Meanwhile, here is an extract of some of the relevant content. You will have committed plagiarism and may be caught, reported and punished (as described below) if you:

- Copy extensively from the work of others (from sources such as books, magazines, journals, web-sites for example) and submit the work as your own. NB It is acceptable to refer to the work of others as long as you do not use too much, and reference your sources properly. If you do not know how to do this, please follow the guidelines given in the document entitled 'Adding quotations and references to your written work' at this web-site address: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/business/bsadmin/staff/s3/jamr.htm>
- Copy another students' work and submit it for assessment under your own name.
- Allow another student to copy your work and they then submit it for assessment under their name

This last item is of particular importance; few students seem to understand what it means. If, for example, you allow another student to borrow your work and they subsequently copy some of that work and present it as their own, you and they will both be punished even though someone else copied your work.

The risks of working with other students

Some assessment tasks are explicitly designed for group work, and it will be made clear that a group answer is expected from you. All other tasks are intended as an

assessment of your individual comprehension and performance, and group answers are not permitted. In individually assessed forms of assessment your work must be different from that of every other student. Plagiarism can occur in assignments and any examination where the questions are issued to students in advance. In both cases it is possible for you to ask other people about how best to answer the questions or complete the necessary tasks.

You should be aware that different modules and subjects may have different requirements. In some subjects, answers to questions may, for example, require every student on a module to employ or refer to the same diagram(s), concepts and the like in order to construct an acceptable answer. You should note, however, that even in these circumstances your explanations of what the diagrams mean, and any other writing referring to any common diagrams and concepts should all be in your own words. Moreover, the situation may be very different on other modules, where the submission of work that has a very similar structure, or the use of very similar materials such as concepts, diagrams, quotations and the like, to that of another student, may lead to you being accused of plagiarism.

The picture is complicated and, unfortunately, it is not possible to give advice that is directly relevant to every module you study. If you are unsure about how to avoid plagiarism in any specific module, then rather than hoping and guessing, you should ask for guidance from the member of staff who delivers that module.

Our overall advice is straightforward; by all means discuss how best to answer questions or complete tasks with your colleagues, but when it comes to actually writing your answers - **DO IT ALONE!**

What happens if you get caught? -

Examination Boards may punish offending students in any manner that they deem fit. Typical punishments Boards may choose range from reducing grades, making students re-sit modules, through to failing students on a module or an entire award. The University regards this form of cheating as a serious offence. Full details of the range of likely punishments can be found on the University's web-site under the heading 'Procedures for dealing with suspected cases of academic dishonesty.'

Please consider yourself warned!