



Assignment Brief

Academic Year 2022-23

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| Module code and title: | BM634 Dissertation | Module leader: | Festus Louis |
| Assignment No. and type: | CW1: Dissertation | Assessment weighting: | 100% |
| Submission time and date: | 16th June 2023 before 2pm | Target feedback time and date: | 3 weeks after submission deadline. |

Assignment task

Your task is to conduct an empirical research project during semester two on a topic that relates directly to your chosen degree area and to write a 10,000 - 12,000-word report, +/-10%, on the research project you have undertaken. The report must include the following elements:

Title

Abstract

Introduction

Presentation of the problem that you have identified

Rationale for conducting the research, who could benefit from it and how

Research aim and objectives

Literature review

Explain where your investigation fits in the wider body of literature and perhaps informs a current debate in that literature.

Critically evaluate carefully selected concepts, theories and ideas which might be useful for investigating your research topic and taking it forward.

Discuss material from a range of relevant academic journal articles, as well as appropriate secondary research.

All sources must be referenced using the Harvard system.

Methodology

Approach and design

Methods used and rationale for these. Presentation of the instruments for data collection

Participants and Sampling (for quantitative research)

Participants and criteria for selecting the participants (for qualitative research)

Ethical considerations – (what ethical issues you have identified and what you did to address them)

Validity and reliability (for quantitative research)

Internal approval: Suzanne Doria, Sept 2022

Credibility and reflexive analysis – (for qualitative research)

Results (graphs, charts, results of statistical analysis-without interpretation)

Discussion (interpretation of statistical analysis of the elements presented in Results section)

Results and discussion (For qualitative research these two sections could merge into one)

Conclusions and limitations of the research

References (Using Harvard style)

Appendices

-Table of results for quantitative research

-Transcripts of interviews, interview notes for qualitative research.

-Ethics checklist accompanied by the relevant supporting documents such as;

participant information sheet, participant consent form and other relevant evidence.

-Reflective career skill development summary

-Supervisor meeting notes

-Research project Gantt chart

- 'Keep all work in progress and raw data until you receive your degree certificate

This assignment has been designed to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your achievement of the following module learning outcomes:

LO1-Critically review and analyse literature pertaining to the topic area selected for the overall research aim and objectives of the Dissertation

LO2-Critically evaluate the performance of the primary research tool and identify weaknesses in the design, execution and findings produced by the research tool and make recommendations for future research opportunities

LO3-Critically analyse the primary research findings in relation to theories and concepts to arrive at a set of evaluative conclusions and recommendations, where appropriate

LO4-Demonstrate transferable skills including time management, project management, listening, negotiation, written communication skills, independent learning and advanced research skills

Referencing and presentational requirements

Please reference your work using the Harvard style as defined in *Cite Them Right Online* (<http://www.citethemrightonline.com>).

- Please read this carefully and comply fully:
- Follow the course guidelines regarding submitting work, as below (e.g. electronic or paper copies).
- Pages should be numbered.
- All work to be submitted as Arial 12 font with 1.5 line spacing.
- All writing should be in the third person passive.
- Written work must be word-processed
- The module title and code number must be clearly marked on the front cover.

- Work you submit for assessment must be properly referenced – a guide to the Harvard system of referencing can be found on the Bucks website at bucks.ac.uk/referencing.
- You may seek clarification from the module tutor at any time.
- There is no excuse for failing to submit your work in accordance with the guidance, work that does not meet the necessary standards in that respect will be marked accordingly.
- No collaboration is allowed.

Submission details

- You are required to submit your work electronically. Please use the relevant submission point in the **Upload My assignment** area on LSST Connect before the time and date specified.
- Please ensure that your work has been saved in an appropriate file format. Turnitin will only accept the following file types: Microsoft Word, Excel or PowerPoint, PDF. Your file must also contain at least 20 words of text, consist of fewer than 400 pages and be less than 40MB in size.
- You can submit your file as many times as you like before the submission date. If you do submit your file more than once, your earlier submission will be replaced by the most recent version.

Once you have submitted your file, you will receive a digital receipt as proof of submission, which will be sent to your LSST e-mail address. Please keep this receipt for future reference, along with the original electronic copy of the file.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity means taking responsibility for your own work.

When you submit an assignment, you are effectively making a declaration that it is your own work and that you have acknowledged the contribution of others and their ideas in its development (for example, by referencing them appropriately).

For further information and guidance, please see the University website: <https://www.bucks.ac.uk/current-students/registry-helpdesk-and-academic-advice/academic-integrity-and-misconduct>

You are also expected to take responsibility for maintaining and managing confidentiality issues in your work. You should maintain and respect confidentiality in relation to the protection of personal, technical and/or commercial information of a sensitive nature in their assessed work, whatever the format.

Confidentiality issues will vary from subject to subject and you are encouraged to seek advice from your course team if you are unclear about requirements in your context. For further information and guidance, please see the University website: <https://www.bucks.ac.uk/academic-confidentiality>



Assessment Criteria

Academic Year 2022-23

| | 0-34 (F) – Fail Not successful | 35-39 E – Marginal fail Below required standard | 40-49 (D) Pass Satisfactory | 50-59 (C) Pass Good | 60-69 (B) Pass Very Good | 70-79 (A) Pass Excellent | 80-100 (A+) Pass Outstanding |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Criterion 1 Defining and contextualising the research problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weighting 10% | The nature of the research problem is not clear and must be largely assumed. Objectives and rationale are absent. Relationship to an appropriate area of business and management is tenuous. | The nature of the research problem is not clear. Objectives and rationale are ill-defined. Relationship to an appropriate area of business and management is weak. | The student is able to define the research problem, although the objectives and rationale lack clarity. Some links are made to an appropriate academic area of business / management, even if contextualisation is limited. Strategic importance of dissertation is stated, but with little substantiation. | Research problem is stated, objectives and rationale are reasonably clear. Related to an appropriate academic area of business / management, and reasonable links are made to the wider overall context. Strategic importance of problem is explicit, although requiring some assumptions by the reader. | Clear definition of research problem, objectives and rationale. Well related to an appropriate academic area of business / management in a wider context. Strategic importance of problem clearly presented. | Very clear definition of research problem, objectives and rationale. Thoroughly related to an appropriate academic area of business / management in a wider context. Strategic importance of problem presented. | Originality in the definition of research problem, objectives and rationale. Thoroughly related to an appropriate academic area of business and management in a wider context. Strategic importance of problem very clearly demonstrated. |
| <p>Criterion 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation and application of theoretical concepts Weighting 20% | Sources are omitted; literature review is descriptive. Material likely to be drawn mainly or entirely from commercial web sites. Literature review bears little relation to the objectives set. | Many key sources are omitted; literature review is largely superficial and descriptive. Material likely to be drawn mainly or entirely from web sites. Literature review bears little relation to the objectives set. | Shows evidence of ability to identify assumptions and to evaluate and critique complex concepts, although much of the literature review borders on the descriptive side. The material selected is partially related to the objectives set. Very limited range of sources consulted; few or no journal articles. | Reasonable range of sources consulted and demonstrates reasonable ability to evaluate and critique complex concepts, with mostly sensible relevance to the argument. Reasonable range of journal articles. A few original insights. Relevance to the objectives is clear, even if not always consistent. | Material selected from a good range of sources, level of evaluation and critique is mainly but not consistently high, some original insights. Good use of journal articles. Generally systematic presentation with a high degree of persuasiveness, generally relevant to objectives. | Material selected from a wide range of appropriate sources; scholarly level of evaluation and critique. Excellent use of journal articles. Material followed logically, systematically with direct relevance to objectives | Material selected from a wide range of appropriate sources; scholarly level of evaluation and critique, many original insights. Excellent use of journal articles. Material followed logically, systematically and persuasively with direct relevance to objectives |
| <p>Criterion 3 Design and execution of research methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weighting 30% | Demonstrates little ability to conduct a major piece of self-managed research. Methodology is ineffective for producing relevant findings. The | Demonstrates limited ability to conduct a major piece of self-managed research. Methodology is ineffective for producing useful findings, or, | Demonstrates a problem-solving orientation in the design of methodology even if the execution of it is weak. Offers some critical reflection on | Likely to show a range of strengths and weaknesses rather than an overall consistent approach e.g. good methodology, evaluation and critique | Methodology is sound and student shows ability to identify limitations and critique own approach. Sampling is appropriate and complete enough | Methodology is very well explained and entirely justifiable in relation to objectives. Sampling is appropriate and very fit for the purpose. Demonstrates | Methodology is well explained and entirely justifiable in relation to objectives, high level of reflection on and critique of own approach. Sampling is |



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|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| | approach does not take methodology into account. Scanty primary research data gathered, inadequate analysis, overall superficial. | approach taken does not take methodology into account. Scanty primary research data gathered, limited analysis, overall superficial. | research design and execution. The student must have collected both secondary and primary data and made some effort to abstract meaning from it. | of approach but sampling could be improved. Demonstrates reasonable ability to identify, gather, analyse and present authoritative and relevant data. Shows ability to learn from own mistakes. | for the purpose. Demonstrates good ability to identify, gather, analyse and present authoritative and relevant data. | a high level of scholarship in identifying, gathering, analysing and presenting authoritative and relevant data. | appropriate and very fit for the purpose. Demonstrates a high level of scholarship in identifying, gathering, analysing and presenting authoritative and original data. |
| Criterion 4 Integration and argument • 30% | The dissertation lacks focus and comprises several individual elements with little or no integration between them. Conclusions and recommendations unrelated to findings. Organisation of the material and flow of the argument suggest a rushed approach. Objectives are not met, or scope and nature of the work is shallow and show little evidence of in-depth investigation. | The dissertation lacks focus and comprises several individual elements with little integration between them. Conclusions and recommendations largely unrelated to findings. Organisation of the material and flow of the argument suggest a superficial approach. Objectives are partially met, or scope and nature of the work is shallow and show little evidence of in-depth investigation. Argument lacks rigour. | The dissertation begins with a focus and there are some linkages back to the original objectives. There is evidence of an intelligible argument, even if patchy and inconsistent. Some clear attempts are made to integrate theoretical ideas and the findings from secondary and primary research. Some of the conclusions and recommendations follow logically from the foregoing. Objectives are partially met. | The dissertation is mainly focused with a reasonable line of argument, although the reader needs to make a few assumptions as it develops. Theory, secondary and primary evidence are reasonably well integrated, stronger in some areas than others. The conclusions and recommendations are related to the foregoing but the linkages between other chapters are less clear. Objectives are largely met. | The dissertation is clearly focused and there is a clearly discernible line of argument running through the work. Argument shows some originality and is convincing. Some of the linkages in the argument are more explicit than others. Theory, secondary and primary data show a high level of integration, mainly rigorous. Conclusions and recommendations are logically derived from and mainly supported by previous evidence. Objectives are mostly met. | The dissertation is clearly focused, and the line of argument consistently and explicitly reflects this focus. Each chapter builds logically on the foregoing and drives the argument forward. Theory, secondary and primary data are integrated. Conclusions and recommendations are logically derived from and fully supported by previous evidence. Objectives are fully met. | The dissertation is clearly focused, and the line of argument consistently and explicitly reflects this focus. Argument displays much originality and is highly persuasive. Each chapter builds logically on the foregoing and drives the argument forward. Theory, secondary and primary data are carefully rigorously integrated. Conclusions and recommendations are logically derived from and fully supported by previous evidence. Objectives are fully met. |
| Criterion 5 | Very badly written and presented, 'thrown together' with multiple spelling and grammar errors. | Superficially written and presented, with multiple spelling and grammar errors. Meaning often | Some effort to structure appropriately. Meaning can be understood even if use of English is | Within word count +/- 10%. Most sources appropriately cited and referenced. Reasonably | Within word count +/- 10%. Sources appropriately cited and | Within word count +/- 10%. Sources appropriately cited and referenced. Clearly | Within word count +/- 10%. Sources appropriately cited and referenced. Clearly |



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|--|--|---|--|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Written presentation, structure and referencing Weighting 10% | errors. Meaning often obscured through poor use of English. Either far too long or far too short. Incorrect citing and referencing of material, many references missing. Ineffective structuring | obscured through poor use of English. Either far too long or far too short. Incorrect citing and referencing of material, several references missing. Ineffective structuring | poor. Greatly exceeds word count with much largely irrelevant data. Most sources are cited and referenced, although the Harvard system has not been consistently followed. | well written and presented. | referenced. Well written and presented. | written English, very well structured and presented. | written English. Impeccable use of terminology and succinct writing style. Very well structured and presented. |