**Individual Essay Report**

You are asked to write an essay on an eHealth topic that is agreed with the course teachers.  This assignment contributes 85% of the final mark for the course. I suggest that essays are broadly based on one of three approaches (which I outline below), although you may suggest other formats that are broadly academic. Note that those approaches are overlapping and the distinctions between them are not categorical.

The essay should be of a **maximum** length of 4,000 words (+ 10% leeway but make sure extra words add extra value). **This word limit will be enforced**. I’m very content to receive shorter essays from 3,000 words. Abstract, references (i.e. bibliography at the end) and appendices **do not count** towards the word limit. However, there is a word limit for the abstract, which is 150 words (plus 10%). Anything in the main body of the essay (including tables, diagrams and in-text citations) counts towards the word limit. Appendices should be *well judged* – i.e. only included if they contain important subsidiary materials or relevant data.

A full bibliography is required, and referencing should be done in text in the APA style – as Author, Date e.g. (Cornford and Klecun, 2013).

The essay must have an abstract of around 150 words, be properly referenced and include a full bibliography. A citation in the text should look like this (Teece, 2010), rather than being in a footnote[[1]](#footnote-1) or using a numbered format [10]. Using the (author, date) method in the text means that the reader becomes aware of the names of authors and dates of publication as they read, not having to shift to footnotes or the back of the essay. The Department’s preferred referencing style is APA (7th edition or earlier), however any similar style is accepted too. APA 7th is widely available as a default style for most bibliographic software packages (Endnote, Mendeley, Zotero, Word). For further details on referencing see ‘Department of Management: Academic referencing’ document on Moodle.

**Three approaches/formats suggested for the essay:**

1. **A theory-informed /theory-development study** that addresses conceptual development or analysis frameworks. For example, a study of the development of measures of IT penetration in health care sector, or evaluation of a framework for AI development, or an application of a particular theory in the literature on a topic of …. More general essays considering a particular topic (e.g. ethics of AI in medical interventions) are accepted but you should aim to go beyond a literature review to develop theoretical and/or practical contributions.

2. **A field based study**, or one that draws upon available relevant data sources (e.g. empirical studies). For example, a study of the adoption of a technology within a health facility.

3. **A policy focused study** that addresses the development of policy for eHealth. For example, a study of the development of some aspects of eHealth infrastructures or standards.

In addition, structured literature reviews on a specific topic (following methods for constructing such reviews) are also welcome (e.g. a literature review assessing the evidence for a particular application of eHealth, e.g. AI in dermatology, etc.).

Your essay might emphasise social, political, organizational or technical issues relating to health information systems. However, remember that these dimensions are normally linked; in other words, what appears to be a technical problem, with a technical solution, may have considerable social, business or organisational implications and vice versa. It is not always a good idea to study your own country/hospital/department. You may learn more, and have more available material, by venturing further afield, and you may be able to be a bit more objective too.

As you think about your choice of essay topic you need to do the work to understand what question you will be addressing (your *research question*) and what kind of answers you might offer that will be of interest to a reader (your *contribution*). Remember that any particular topic will almost certainly allow alternative questions and issues to be addressed and thus provide different contributions. You must also ask yourself what perspective you will be taking (what *theory* or *framework of analysis* you will be using), as well as what *data* or *evidenc*e you will use.

Finally, you should think about who you reader is, your audience. In a narrow sense of course it is the course teachers, but beyond them it may be an academic audience, an audience of practitioners, or an audience of policy makers and politicians. If you are clear who the reader is, then you should be able to better organise your material and present it – noting all the time that you need to retain the academic voice.

## Essay Structure

There is no hard and fast structure for this essay, but what follows is intended as a guide to good practice and may help you to organise your essay – based on the IMRAD format used in many Health Informatics and science journals - Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion. Of course, social science does allow for other structures.

#### Introduction and Context

In the introduction you need to be specific about what you will write about, and how it fits into a bigger picture, setting out the topic and signposting the approach that you will take.

#### Literature review

You need to contextualise the problem within the specific literature of health information systems and probably some other fields (organisation theory, information systems, epidemiology etc.). From this should emerge an opportunity, gap or conflict in the literature that can form the basis for your research question. In general, we would expect about 500-700 words of literature review containing a preponderance of academic material. However, the extent of the literature review will depend on the format of your essay.

#### Theory/Conceptual framework

Whatever topic you choose, there must be a section that describes the theory/conceptual framework/approach chosen, probably based on (or related to) your literature review but developed further. You need to briefly justify your choice of theory or framework here with reference to the problem/context and to prior work. The ‘framework’ does not have to be in the form of diagram, you can describe relevant concepts from the literature that have informed your analysis of your chosen topic. The exception is the structured review format, where you do not have to (although you can) refer to a particular theory / framework.

#### Research design/Method

Here you should briefly describe and justify the research methodology and the outline design for data gathering (e.g. for interviews: Which (type of) organizations? Which people? Which interview themes? For documentary material: what sources and how searched?)

#### Findings and Analysis

A main section of your essay should present the data in some summary form, and offer your principal findings and your analysis.

#### Discussion and Conclusions

In this final section you need to explain ‘what this all means’, or what contribution you make to the literature and/or for practitioners. You might also want to explore the contrast of what you expected to emerge from the research and what you actually found - the strengths and weaknesses of the combination of theory, context, and research design chosen (sometimes spoken of as limitations).

**Remember that conclusions are important and will often make the difference between an ok and a good essay - take the time to make them substantial and distinctive - conclusions, not a repetition or summary.**

## SUBMISSION DETAILS

We do not provide a coversheet, however the first page of your assignment should include your candidate number, course code and the word count. On submission through Moodle, you will be required to accept a submission statement which confirms that you have read the School’s plagiarism guidelines and the work is your own.

## Penalties for late submission

Late coursework submissions will have 5% deducted from the mark that would have been awarded for every day that the submission is late. Thus, if an essay would have been awarded 70%, but was handed in two days late, it will be awarded a mark of 60%. Occasionally there are genuine reasons for work to be submitted late (illness, family bereavement etc.). In such cases, submit supporting evidence to the teaching coordinator (dom.misdi@lse.ac.uk) and your Personal Tutor and your request will be considered.

Plagiarism

This essay is an ***individual*** assignment. Whilst you may choose to discuss your work with other people to ensure that you have understood it properly you ***may not*** collaborate with other people when it comes to preparing the detail of the assignment and drafting your essay. You may not share, with any other student, any graphics, text or data files that form part of your assignment.

Any quotation or excerpt you take from the published or unpublished works of other persons, **as well as your own prior publications and coursework,** must be clearly identified as such by being placed inside quotation marks and be given with a full reference to the source in a proper form.A series of short quotations from several different sources, if not clearly identified as such, constitutes plagiarism just as much as does a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source.

Plagiarism is an assessment offence for which strong penalties may be applied including not being allowed to graduate. Therefore, when writing your essays you must pay particular attention to the way you use and reference other people’s ideas. Remember, **work submitted by you for assessment must be your own and be expressed in your own words**. You should certainly never, ever, cut and paste text from online sources other than in the smallest sections, and then only for direct quotation, properly referenced.

As a standard procedure the Department submits students work to a plagiarism detection service, an online tool for “detecting textual similarities”.

Please also read the document ***Using Generative AI*.** Using AI tools is not permitted for generating assessment answers.

Marking scheme

The marking scheme shown below is an adaptation for this assignment of the Department of Management MSc Marking Scheme.

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Description automatically generated

Note that empirical work will depend on the format of your essay. It may only consist of reviewing the existing literature. It could also include the review of published case studies and/or primary research.

***You can choose any one topic -***

1. **Essays on privacy and data governance**
2. Consent and public attitudes to sharing health data

You need to link this topic to eHealth (i.e. sharing data electronically). If the papers discuss consent and data privacy in general (not specifically eHealth) than you need to discuss what those attitudes mean for electronic sharing of data. You can do it at the beginning (discussing why your topic is important for eHealth) and then at the end in conclusions. For this topic you could derive your own conceptual framework, i.e. some sort of categories / means of evaluating or categorising the literature/ or more generally understanding consent (i.e. by different groups, in relation to different scenarios), or / and your focus could be on how consent / public attitudes are defined and studied in research and what approaches/methods to this are utilised. You could choose to write how Covid pandemic changed people’s attitudes to privacy (but bear in mind that there is still little research on this).

1. What are privacy implications of the Internet of Things (IoT) devices used by patients and healthcare professionals? You could substitute IoT with different technologies, e.g. or Big Data and data analytics, or AI, etc. What are the short/medium/long-term privacy implications of the changes to the way healthcare is delivered taking place in response to Covid pandemic? Consider implications to our understanding of privacy and informed consent and/or in terms of policies and regulation/ organizational strategies.
2. Governance of AI – choose a particular sector (e.g. radiology) and evaluate the existing information governance framework(s) and/or propose set of recommendations on how it could be improved and / or implemented. You can focus on a particular country to do so. [Policy-focused essay]

Note that the above topics could results in essays which are ‘theory-type essays’ [for the academic audience] or more focused on providing policy recommendations [for an audience of policy makers]

**Suggested theories/models that can inform your essay:**

* ‘Privacy by design’ principles
* Contextual Integrity Framework (Nissenbaum 2004; 2009). The notions of contextual integrity and forms of data governance in healthcare are discussed by Winter & Davidson (2019)
* Privacy calculus

**Readings:**

Belanger & Crossler (2011) provide a good overview of the IS literature in the area (but see if you can find a more recent paper). Bélanger, F; Crossler, RE. Privacy In The Digital Age: A Review Of Information Privacy Research In Information Systems. *MIS Quarterly*. 35, 4, 1017-A36, Dec. 2011

Cavoukian, Ann Creation of a Global Privacy Standard (November 2006), at [www.ipc.on.ca/images/Resources/gps.pdf](http://www.ipc.on.ca/images/Resources/gps.pdf)

ENISA (2015). Privacy and Data Protection by Design, (available at <http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/identity-and-trust/library/deliverables/privacy-and-data-protection-by-design>)

Nissenbaum, H. (2004). Privacy as Contextual Integrity Symposium—Technology, Values, and the Justice System. *Washington Law Review*, *79*(1), 119–158.

Nissenbaum, H. (2009). *Privacy in Context: Technology, Policy, and the Integrity of Social Life*. Stanford University Press.

Winter, J. S., and Davidson, E. 2019. "Big Data Governance of Personal Health Information and Challenges to Contextual Integrity," *Information Society* (35:1), pp. 36-51.

Look for further readings in MG492 course Data Governance: Privacy, Openness and Transparency

1. **Essays on policies for HIT/HIS implementation**
2. Analysing specific policy initiative – e.g. how meaningful use has been defined and implemented in the US. (e.g. see Blumenathal 2011)
3. Analyse a specific model for implementing integrated IS: top-down, middle-out or bottom-up within a specific country. (See readings for week 4 Coiera 2009; Klecun et al. forthcoming). This is a very broad topic, you could focus it on some aspect, e.g. on policy to include marginalised groups.
4. Analysis aspect of a policy and /or its implications, e.g. from the perspective of (dynamic) capabilities (e.g. see Garmann-Johnsen & Eikebrokk (2017))

**Suggested theories/models that can inform your essay:**

* Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Approach
* 3-I Framework (Shearer et al 2016)
* RE-AIM framework (Jilcott, 2007)
* Critical Race Theory /Critical theory / intersectional feminism (e.g. see a recent View Point article in Lancet Digital Health on intersectional feminism by Figuero et al. 2021), as well as literature in IS on digital exclusion.

**Readings:**

Cairney, P., & Jones, M. (2016). Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Approach: What Is the Empirical Impact of this Universal Theory? *The Policy Studies Journal, 44*(1), 37-58.

Garmann-Johnsen, N. F., & Eikebrokk, T. R. (2017). Dynamic capabilities in e-health innovation: Implications for policies. *Health Policy and Technology*, *6*(3), 292–301. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hlpt.2017.02.003

Jilcott, S., Ammerman, A., Sommers, J., & Glasgow, R. E. (2007). Applying the RE-AIM framework to assess the public health impact of policy change. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, *34*(2), 105-114.

Kingdon, J. (1984). *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies.* New York: Harper Collins.

Sharma, A. (2008). Decriminalising Queer Sexualities in India: A Multiple Streams Analysis. *Social Policy & Society, 7*(4), 419–431. Retrieved from https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/6145DE7136778AD0F8E33D60CF3253E5/S1474746408004399a.pdf/div-class-title-decriminalising-queer-sexualities-in-india-a-multiple-streams-analysis-div.pdf

Shearer, J. et al (2016) Why do policies change? Institutions, interests, ideas and networks in three cases of policy reform. Health Policy and planning, 31(9), 1200-1211.

1. **Essays on digital transformation of a particular sector**

* Macro-analysis of a particular (sub-)sector within eHealth, e.g. considering how the make-up of the sector has changed (who are the new players, their interests, etc)
* Focus on business model for a particular sub-sector within eHealth (e.g. business models for start-ups providing data analytics)

**Readings:**

Geels, F W. (2002). Technological transitions as evolutionary reconfiguration processes: a multi-level perspective and a case-study, *Research Policy*, 31 (8-9), 1257-1274.

*Note that this article offers a very broad, historical analysis – this would be too much for an MG483 essay, but you may find some concepts from it useful.*

**You could also undertake systematic literature review e.g. assessing the research on a particular type of telemedicine, or AI, or robotics, etc.**

For more ideas see Kohli & Tan (2016) (in the reading list) for a discussion of EHR related IS research areas, research questions and theories that inform those questions.

Kohli R. and Tan, S.S.L. (2016). Electronic Fareed, N., Bazzoli, G.J., Mick, S.S.F., & Harless, D.W. (2015). The influence of institutional pressures on hospital electronic health record presence. Social Science & Medicine, 133: 28-35.

1. Please don’t give references in footnotes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)