



WELCOME TO ECDE7013
CROESO I ECDE7013

04/10/25



INTRODUCTIONS

and overview of the module

MODULE HANDBOOK



Prifysgol Cymru
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Trinity Saint David

MODULE HANDBOOK

ECDE7013

Exploring Contemporary Issues in Education
*2: applying critical skills, contributing to
knowledge: leading improvement*

Doctorate in Education (Ed D)

LEVEL 7

Institute of Education and Humanities

2025-26

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Component 1 – 25%

PRESENTATION DATE: 24/01/26

Individual seminar presentation (25 minutes)

Present your small-scale research project design, include your research questions, offer a critical justification for your methodological choices, the research tools and the ethical processes adopted. You should also include an outline of the intended approach to data analysis.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Component 2 – 75%

SUBMISSION DATE: 21/03/26

Written research report (12,000 words)

Present a research report of your small-scale research project. The report should include a literature review, research questions, justification of methodology and research tools employed, description of method and data analysis, findings, critical discussion of the implications of the findings for practice or future research and an evaluation of the research process.

ESSAY STRUCTURE

Strwythur Traethawd Posib' ECDE7013 Possible Essay Structure

Suggested Content	Approximate Word Counts (+/- 10%)
Chapter 1 – Introduction Including: - Rationale – why was it important that this research was carried out? - Institutional and/or Local Context – where was it carried out? - Position – what was your role in the context of this research? (particularly if your research was undertaken within your place of work)	700
Chapter 2 – Literature Review As you write, read your RQ(s) often . Consider: - Does the information that you are writing about refer directly to your RQ(s)? If not, delete it! - Are you giving the reader enough background information through the literature <u>in order for</u> them to understand the study that follows? - Is there a logical order to the information that you are writing? - Are you being critical in your approach to the literature or is your writing descriptive? This section could end with: - Your research question(s) - Significance of the study in relation to the literature; i.e. the gap that you were trying to fill	3000
Chapter 3 – Research Design and Methodology (or could be separated into two chapters if you prefer) The Research Design section could include: - Epistemology / Ontology / Theoretical Framework - Researcher positionality The Methodology section could include: - Your sampling strategy - Your data collection methods (interview, questionnaires etc.) - Your data analysis methods (Thematic Analysis, Content Analysis etc.) - Specific ethical considerations (Only a brief discussion is needed here, perhaps referring to elements relating to ethics	3000 You may find that you need more words in this section.

that are particularly relevant to your context; e.g. consent/assent, confidentiality. You could also refer to your ethics form and include it in an appendix.)	
Chapter 4 – Findings Here, you should present your data. This could include: - Quotations from interview transcripts - Graphs/charts to show questionnaire responses	3000
You may prefer to merge Chapters 4 and 5 together into one long chapter.	
Chapter 5 – Discussion This section could include: - A drawing together of ideas/themes; e.g. by using Thematic Analysis or other analytical approach - Links to the literature that has been discussed in Chapter 2 If you find that you want to make links to several pieces of literature that you have not included in Chapter 2, you might want to revise the literature review!	2000
Chapter 6 – Conclusions and Recommendations This section could include: - Limitations of, and reflections on, your data collection approach and processes – given your time again, what might you do differently? - Your possible contribution to the field Implications for future research - Final reflections	300
References Please use the UWTSd Harvard Referencing Guide	
Appendices These should be labelled A, B, C... or 1, 2, 3... Please do not include: * <u>whole</u> transcripts of interviews (though you can include a section of a transcript if you need to) * <u>copies</u> of every questionnaire response that you received (though you could include one <u>as long as</u> it has been anonymised) * <u>long</u> sections of important writing because you have run out of words!	



TODAY'S SESSION |

TASK

Review your proposal for a research project created at the end of Year 2.

Consider the following:

- Is this a project you want to take forward?
- If so, what alterations might you make?
- If not, identify an area of research interest that you want to explore in this coming year. [Choosing an enquiry related to your work setting would probably be helpful for time management.]

KEY QUESTIONS

- What is/are the gap(s) in knowledge or understanding that the research project seeks to fill?
- What is/are the research question(s) that will address these gaps?
- What is the nature of the knowledge or understanding to be generated?

Why this, why now?

What makes you think this?

What else do you need to know / to tell the reader?

KEY LEARNING



We revisit the need to undertake an appropriate literature review.
Some time can be given to making use of the library.



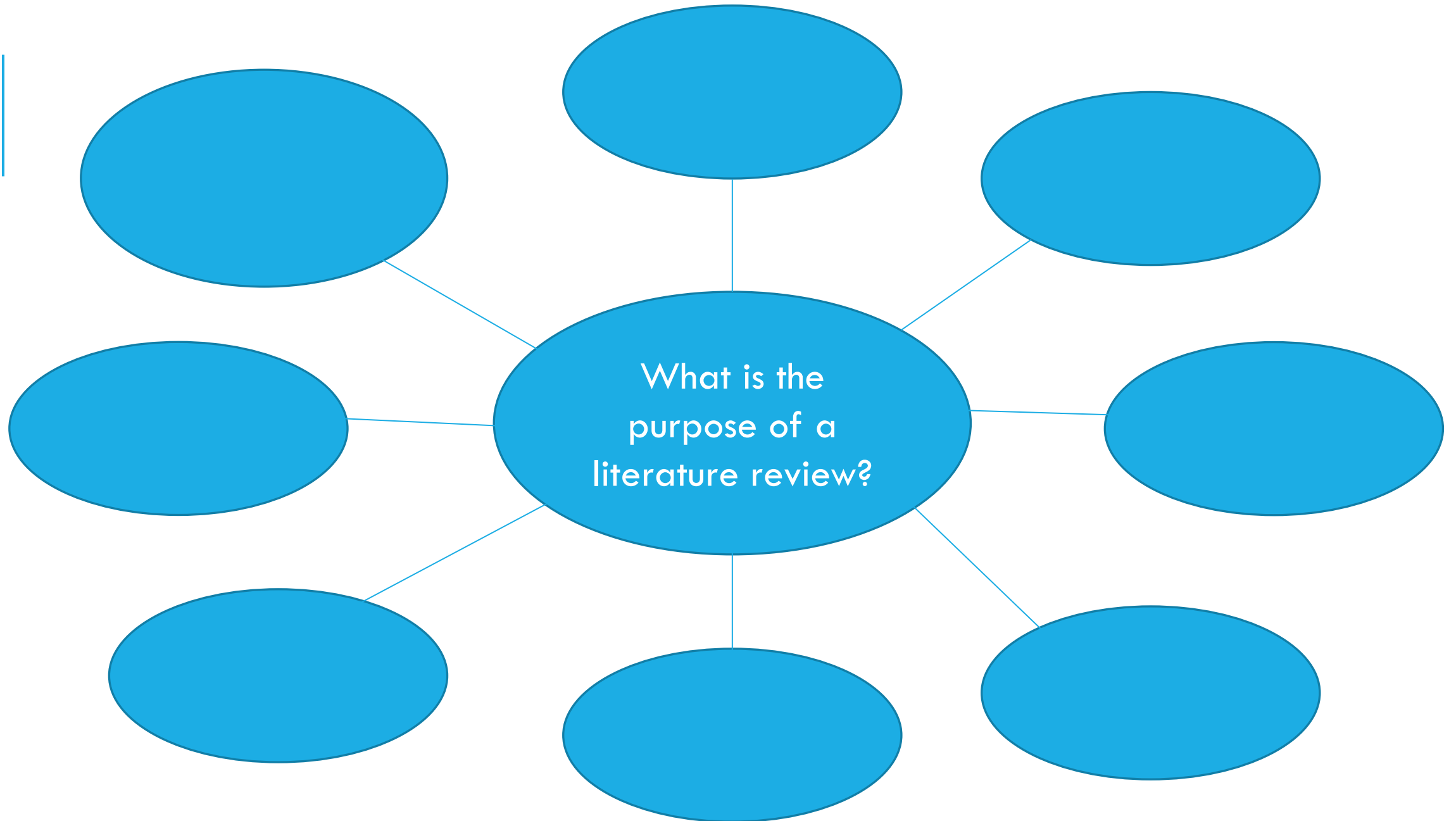
We recognise that some common terminology is contested and requires definition for the purposes of our research.

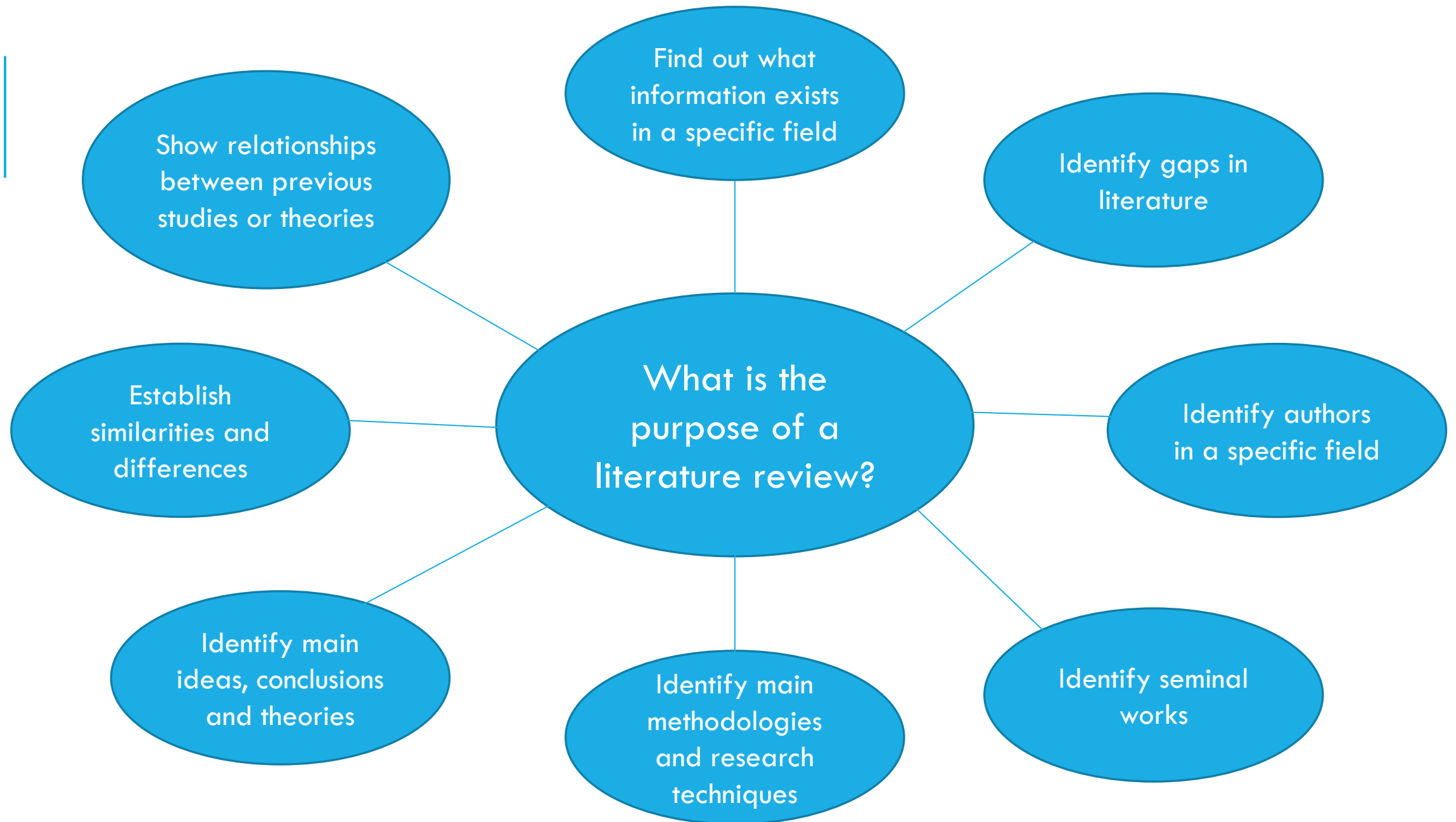


We review how we understand the terms ‘reading critically’ and ‘writing critically’ and what behaviours these ideas require of us as researchers.

A close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a person's hands holding an open book. The person is wearing a plaid shirt and a tan jacket. In the background, a white coffee cup is visible on a table. The scene is softly lit, creating a warm and focused atmosphere.

WRITING A LITERATURE REVIEW







LITERATURE REVIEW AT LEVEL 8 — IS IT DIFFERENT?

LEVEL 7

- Summarise and understand pre-existing literature
- Focuses on a narrower range of key literature – overview
- Shorter – 3,000 words
- Marked by internal marker

LEVEL 8

- Identify gaps in order to locate own original research
- Broader range of literature - deeper analysis
- Long - 10,000 words (or more)
- Examined by expert in the field = high expectations

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. *There should be a clear question that focuses and guides the literature review*

- Everything you think, do & write should be focused on your RQ

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Conduct a literature search and find articles relevant to the focus.

How will you do this?

LITERATURE REVIEW

3. Read each piece of literature.

What will you write down about them?

Note:

- *the type of research carried out;*
- *number of participants - possibly age, gender etc.;*
- *key themes identified.*

LITERATURE REVIEW

4. Signpost your arguments.

For example: The literature identifies a number of key claims when discussing effective form tutors including a tutor being approachable, well informed and non-judgmental.

LITERATURE REVIEW

5. Then unpick each claim in turn.

For example:

A number of studies report that pupils perceive an effective form tutor to be approachable. For example, Childs (1999), in her small-scale interview study of twenty pupils in a secondary school in England, reported that all the pupils identified that an effective tutor should be approachable so that they could discuss things that were worrying them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

6. Finally bring it all together. For example:

This finding is supported by Cooper (1989)'s questionnaire study. However, Jackson's (2010) more recent small-scale focus group study of thirty KS3 pupils found that, although approachability was important, there were some differences with older pupils in that they appreciated a tutor who could also give effective career advice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As you write, try to:

Summarise and synthesise: give an overview of the main points of each source and combine them into a coherent whole.

Analyse and interpret: don't just paraphrase other researchers – add your own interpretations (though not opinion!), discussing the significance of findings in relation to the literature as a whole.

Critically evaluate: where relevant, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your sources.

Write in well-structured paragraphs: use transitions and topic sentences to draw connections, comparisons and contrasts.

CRITICALLY EVALUATE

“Do I think that everybody you talk to is lying? No I do not. Only a moron would think that. But do I think you should approach any spokesman for a vested interest with a degree of scepticism, asking ‘why are they saying this’ and ‘is it likely to be true’? Yes of course I do.”

Jeremy Paxman

Slant?

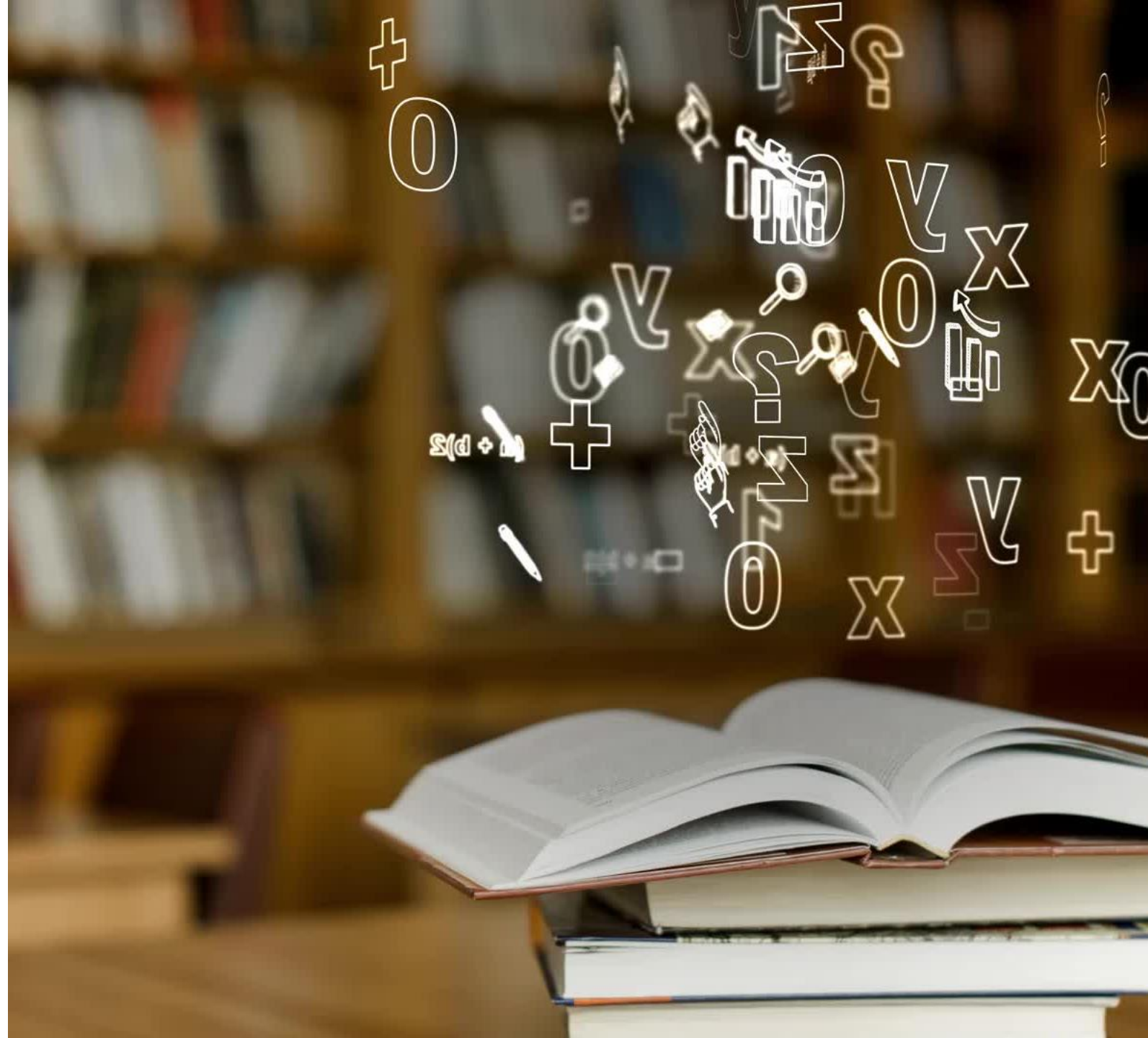
Sponsorship?

Neutral?

Bias?

7 LITERATURE REVIEW MISTAKES!

Source: gradcoach.com/literature-review-mistakes/



#1 OVER-RELIANCE ON LOW-QUALITY SOURCES

This includes a broad collection of non-academic sources like blog posts, opinion pieces, publications by advocacy groups and daily news articles.



#2: LACK OF LANDMARK/SEMINAL LITERATURE

The reason for the absence of landmark literature in poor literature reviews is:

- ***either** that the student is not aware of the literature

(perhaps because they haven't sufficiently immersed themselves in the existing research)

- ***or** that they feel that they should only present the most up-to-date studies

#3: A LACK OF CURRENT LITERATURE

However, a strong literature review should also incorporate the **current literature**.

It should, ideally, **compare and contrast** the “classics” with the more up to date research, and briefly comment on the evolution.

#4: DESCRIPTION INSTEAD OF INTEGRATION AND SYNTHESIS 1

Often, students think that a literature review is simply a summary of what each researcher has said - a lengthy, detailed “he said, she said”.

This is not correct.

A good literature review should also highlight what areas **do not fit together** and **which pieces are missing**.

#4: DESCRIPTION INSTEAD OF INTEGRATION AND SYNTHESIS 2

By the end of this process of critical review and synthesis of the existing literature, it should be **clear what is missing** – in other words, the gaps that exist in the current research.

These gaps then form the foundation for your proposed study.

Your study will attempt to contribute a missing puzzle piece.



#5: IRRELEVANT OR UNFOCUSED CONTENT

To ensure you stay on-topic and focus, you need to revisit your:

- **research aims**
- **objectives**
- **research questions**

- Everything you think, do & write should be focused on your RQ

#6: POOR CHAPTER STRUCTURE AND LAYOUT 1

Result = disjointed, poorly-flowing arguments that are difficult for the reader (i.e. the marker...) to follow.

#6: POOR CHAPTER STRUCTURE AND LAYOUT 2

Quick overview:

The introduction section – where you outline your topic, introduce any definitions and jargon and define the **scope** of your literature review.

The body section – where you sink your teeth into the existing research. This can be arranged in various ways (e.g. thematically, chronologically or methodologically).

The conclusion section – where you present the key takeaways and highlight the research gap (or gaps), which lays the foundation for your study.

#7: PLAGIARISM AND POOR REFERENCING

This carries a **heavy penalty**.

You need to **put things into your own words**.

Remember: if you can't explain something simply (in your own words), you don't really understand it.

YOUR LITERATURE REVIEW

Consider the 'common terminology': what are the underpinning ideas and concepts that you are exploring?

Can you define these clearly for the reader and for the project?

What else do you need to read in order to make this robust and relevant in your field?

YOUR RESEARCH STUDY — FOLLOW UP TASK 1

Follow up task:

- Review the literature pertaining to your area of enquiry.
- Scope out the shape of your literature review. This can be one side of A4, ensuring that you lead the reader towards a clear identification of the gap(s) in knowledge or understanding that you seek to fill.
- Building your literature review from week one onwards will significantly help you with your research project and your assignment.

LITERATURE REVIEW SECTION

⊕ Chapter 2 – Literature Review As you write, read your RQ(s) often. Consider: • Does the information that you are writing about refer directly to your RQ(s)? If not, delete it! • Are you giving the reader enough background information through the literature <u>in order for</u> them to understand the study that follows? • Is there a logical order to the information that you are writing? • Are you being critical in your approach to the literature or is your writing descriptive? This section could end with: • Your research question(s) • Significance of the study in relation to the literature; i.e. the gap that you were trying to fill	3000
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YOUR RESEARCH STUDY — FOLLOW UP TASK 2

Follow up thinking task:

- How will you respond to your research questions?
- Consider your research design and create a draft project plan.
- This should articulate:
 - Your participants
 - Your research tools
 - Your timeline
- Draft a justification for your research tools; outline the research decisions you have made in your choice of these tools, making reference to researchers who are expert in the use of these tools (and **avoiding over-reliance on the generic research texts**).



We maintain a focus on coherence in our approach to research intentions and design;



We consider research project methodology as the frame through which we understand what it is we are seeking to do;



We aim to have designed our draft research question(s) by the end of the session.

KEY LEARNING

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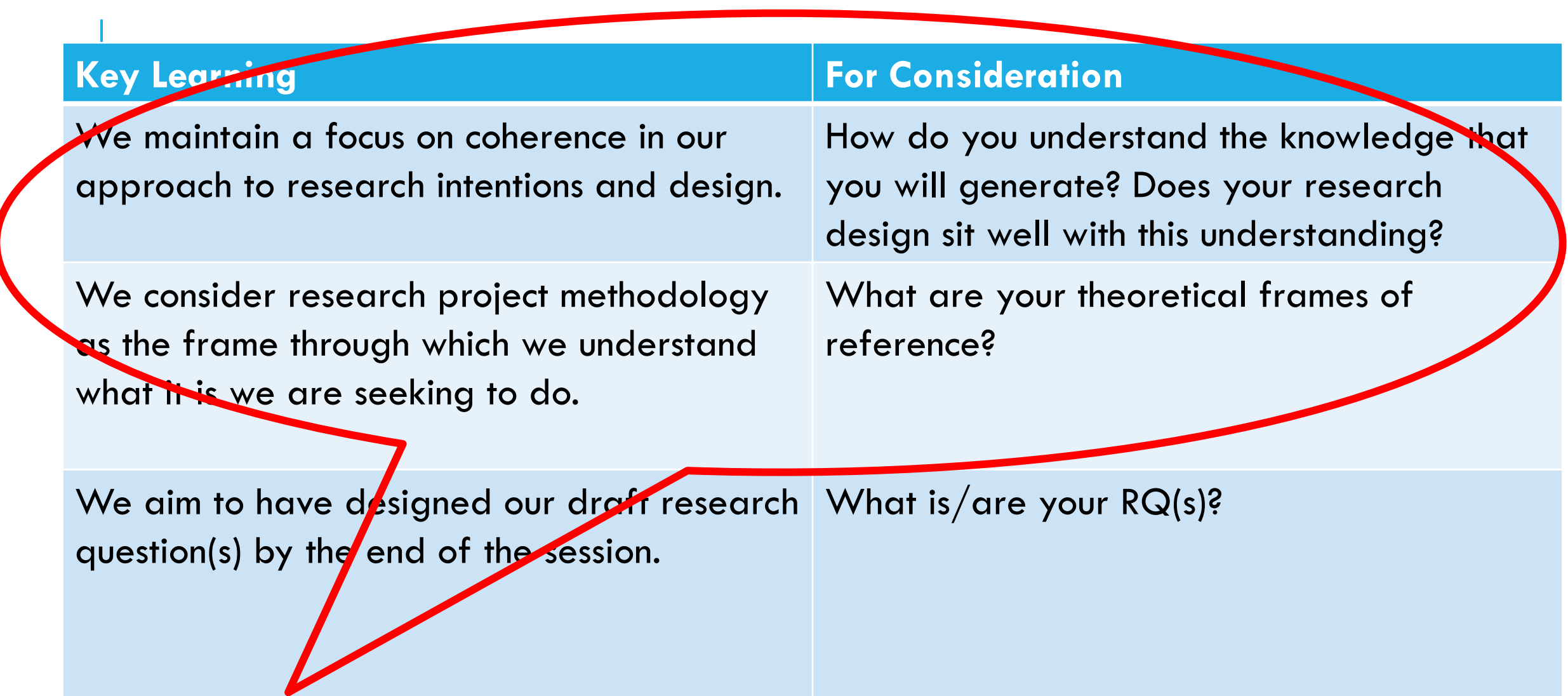
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For Consideration

How do you understand the knowledge that you will generate? Does your research design sit well with this understanding?

What are your theoretical frames of reference?

What is/are your RQ(s)?



Key Learning	For Consideration
We maintain a focus on coherence in our approach to research intentions and design.	How do you understand the knowledge that you will generate? Does your research design sit well with this understanding?
We consider research project methodology as the frame through which we understand what it is we are seeking to do.	What are your theoretical frames of reference?
We aim to have designed our draft research question(s) by the end of the session.	What is/are your RQ(s)?

See preparatory task for the 6th of December

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We aim to have designed our draft research question(s) by the end of the session.	What is/are your RQ(s)?



LOOKING AHEAD

ETHICS FORM

Preparatory task:

Begin completing your ethics form for your proposed research project.

Identify any areas of the form for which you need input or advice from your peers / tutor and any areas for discussion.

Online shared session:

This evening is for discussion and advice in order that you **complete your ethics form as soon as possible**. Hearing about any issues that your peers have will deepen your understanding of the various ethical issues that may arise in education-related research.

*It is recommended that you prepare to submit your ethics form (PG2) to the 27th October Ethics Committee meeting in case your form is required to be resubmitted. The form must be signed by a tutor prior to submission, so you will need to email the final version of your form to Catherine by the 23rd of October **at the latest**.*

*If you are unable to submit by the October date, the final ethics committee taking place this term requires the submission of your form by the 24th November. In order to submit by this date, you will need to email your form to Catherine by the 20th of November **at the latest**.*

The ethics committee meeting dates for 2025/26 are below for reference.

Online
CM

NEW ETHICS FORM

New UWTSD ethics forms: Finally, don't forget that a new Ethics form/approval process is being introduced at University level from October. We will allow old forms to be submitted between now and Christmas

ETHICS COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Submission Deadline 10am	Date of Decision
29 th September 2025	14 th October 2025
27 th October 2025	11 th November 2025
24 th November 2025	9 th December 2025
12 th January 2026	27 th January 2026
23 rd February 2026	10 th March 2026
16 th March 2026	31 st March 2026
13 th April 2026	28 th April 2026
11 th May 2026	26 th May 2026
15 th June 2026	30 th June 2026
13 th July 2026	28 th July 2026
10 th August 2026	25 th August 2026

[illegible]

Research Timeline

[illegible]