

# Writing and presenting your project report

# Getting started with writing

## Practical hints

- Create time for your writing
- Write when your mind is fresh
- Find a regular writing place
- Set goals and achieve them
- Use word processing
- Generate a plan for the report
- Finish each writing session on a high point
- Get friends to read and comment on your work

# Structuring your research report

- Abstract
- Introduction (Problem statement: research gap and aim, research objectives, questions and benefits)
- Literature review
- Methodology and Methods – theory and framework (positivism (quantitative) vs. interpretivism (qualitative); data collection procedures: sampling and data collection tool description...)
- Data Analysis Procedures and Expected Results
- Ethical Approach
- Gantt Chart and Limitations
- References
- Appendices (preliminary data collection tool)

# Writing for different audiences

## Key differences between an 'Academic' report and a 'Consultancy' or 'Management' report

### The academic report:

- Tends to be longer
- Will be marked and graded
- Will contain contextual descriptions

### The consultancy report:

- Has less focus on the development of theory
- Contains recommendations relating to the organisation's business

# Report structure (1)

## The abstract

Four short paragraphs addressing the following:

Overarching aim or research gap

1. What is my overarching research question / aim and why is it important?
2. How will I go about answering my research aim?
3. What do I expect / hope to find out in response to my research aim?
4. What would be the value / benefit of the concluded research?

Adapted from Saunders *et al.* (2009)

# Report structure (2 and 3)

## Introduction - include

- The aim, research questions(s) and a clear statement of research objectives
- Brief background and a guide to the storyline

## Literature review - purpose

- To set your study in the wider context
- To show how your study supplements existing work

# Methodology and Methods (4)

- Methodology – the perspective, theory / theoretical relationships, variables if your study is quantitative.
- Methods – the tool(s) you are using for data collection: questionnaire, interviews, observations, case studies, focus groups, etc.

# Report structure (5 and 6)

## Expected Results chapter(s) - purpose

- Data Presentation and Analysis plans.
- To report the facts your research discovered
- To support the facts with quotes from participants

## Ethical Approach and Principles

- Respect for the research subjects, no harm will come to them.
- Anonymity and confidentiality.
- No underage subjects will be used.

# Gantt Chart and Limitations (7)

Gantt Chart or some means of showing when you will achieve important activities (areas mentioned in the previous slides)

A table or chart listing all of the activities / chapters you are expecting in the dissertation along with number of weeks which will be devoted to each.

## Limitations

Discuss some of the expected limitations and areas where you feel there might be challenges.

# Report structure (8 and 9)

## References

- Use a convention that is accepted by your university (e.g. Harvard)
- Cite all sources referred to in the text
- Check all citations to prevent plagiarism

## Appendices

- Include only essential supporting material
- Include copies of interview schedules and questionnaires.
- Keep appendices to a minimum

# Additional Points: Organising the report content

## Main points to consider

- Choosing the title
- Telling a clear story
- Helping the reader by-
  - Dividing your work
  - Previewing and summarising chapters
  - Using suitable tables and graphics
  - Writing in a suitable style

# Writing style

## Key points:

- Clarity and simplicity – avoid jargon
- Checking grammar and spelling
- Preserving anonymity
- Regularly revising each draft

# Practice and present your overall plan to friends

## Three key stages:

- Planning and preparation
- Use of visual aids
- Presenting

# Summary: Chapter 14

- Writing is a creative process and a powerful way to clarifying your thinking
- A project report needs a clear structure that helps to develop the storyline
- All the information should be readily accessible to the reader

# Summary

- Use a clear writing style free and check for spelling and grammatical errors
- Be prepared to rewrite the first draft several times
- Remember to check the assessment criteria

# Summary

## Remember to –

- Tell your reader(s) of the proposal what you're going to say
- Say it
- Tell them what you said