

LCDB7009 – Critical Literature Review for Doctoral Research

COURSEWORK

Below is an **8-week coursework preparation plan** for **LCDB7009 – Critical Literature Review for Doctoral Research**, aligned explicitly with:

- The **Module Learning Outcomes** ~ LCDB7009 - Critical Literature Review for Doctoral Research_2025-26_module Guide
- The **Assessment Brief requirements (7,500-word report: Parts 1–3)** ~ Assessment Brief for LCDB7009 - Critical Literature Review for Doctoral Research
- The **Level 8 Generic Assessment Criteria** (Engagement, Knowledge, Cognitive, Practical, Transferable Skills) ~ Assessment Brief for LCDB7009 - Critical Literature Review for Doctoral Research

This plan is structured to help you aim for **Distinction-level (70–84%) or Exceptional (85%)** performance.

Overview of Assessment Structure (Reminder)

Total: 7,500 words

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Part	Task	Word Count
Part 1	Critical exploration of purpose, content & format of a CLR	1,500
Part 2	Annotated bibliography (minimum 100 sources)	2,500
Part 3	Preliminary literature review with gaps & draft research questions	3,500

8-WEEK COURSEWORK PLAN

WEEK 1 – Clarifying Scope & Designing Search Strategy

Focus: Establish intellectual boundaries and search protocol.

Activities:

- Refine research topic and conceptual boundaries.
- Develop key search terms and Boolean combinations.
- Identify databases (Scopus, Web of Science, ABS journals, Google Scholar).
- Draft inclusion/exclusion criteria (years, quality ranking, geography, method).
- Create literature tracking spreadsheet (Excel/Notion/Zotero).

Output:

- Written search protocol (1–2 pages).
- Initial list of 40–50 core articles.

Learning Outcomes Addressed:

- ✓ Advanced and systematic search
- ✓ Identify gaps (early orientation)

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Distinction Tip: Document search strategy transparently (like a mini systematic review).

WEEK 2 – Deep Literature Harvesting & Categorisation

Focus: Build breadth and depth (target: 100+ sources).

Activities:

- Expand to 100+ high-quality sources.
- Separate into:
 - Theoretical foundations
 - Empirical studies
 - Methodological debates
 - Current controversies
- Identify seminal works vs recent (last 5 years).
- Begin short annotation notes (3–5 lines per source).

Output:

- 100-source master bibliography.
- Thematic clustering map.

Learning Outcomes:

✓ Engagement with extensive, credible literature

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✓ Awareness of trends and debates

Distinction Tip: Ensure the majority are peer-reviewed journal articles (ABS-ranked if possible).

WEEK 3 – Writing Part 1 (1,500 words)

Purpose, Content & Format of a Critical Literature Review

Focus: Theoretical meta-analysis of what a CLR is.

Structure:

1. Purpose of a CLR in doctoral research
2. Differences between narrative, systematic, scoping reviews
3. Role in theory-building and gap identification
4. How CLR shapes research questions

Activities:

- Engage Wallace & Wray; Hart; Booth et al. (from reading list).
- Critically compare approaches.
- Avoid descriptive writing — focus on critique.

Output: Draft Part 1 (1,500 words).

Learning Outcomes:

✓ Critical engagement with current debates

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✓ Systematic conceptual understanding

Distinction Tip: Include critique of methodological approaches to reviewing literature.

WEEK 4 – Developing Annotated Bibliography (First 50 Sources)

Focus: High-quality critical annotations (not summaries).

Each annotation should include:

- Core argument
- Methodology
- Key findings
- Contribution
- Limitations
- Relevance to your research

Output: Annotated entries for 50 sources.

Learning Outcomes:

✓ Engagement with literature

✓ Cognitive evaluation

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Distinction Tip: Explicitly identify tensions between authors.

WEEK 5 – Complete Annotated Bibliography (100 Sources)

Focus: Completing Part 2 (2,500 words equivalent).

Activities:

- Finalise remaining annotations.
- Ensure:
 - Majority recent (last 5 years).
 - Balanced theoretical & empirical works.
- Cross-check referencing consistency (Harvard).

Output: Completed Part 2.

Learning Outcomes:

✓ Extensive literature engagement

✓ Academic honesty and referencing

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Distinction Tip: Show trends over time (e.g., “Shift from X to Y after 2018”).

WEEK 6 – Writing Part 3 (Broad Field Overview)

Focus: Start 3,500-word preliminary literature review.

Structure (Suggested):

1. Introduction to Field
2. Key Theoretical Frameworks
3. Dominant Empirical Findings
4. Competing Perspectives
5. Methodological Approaches
6. Emerging Themes

Activities:

- Move from description → synthesis.
- Compare schools of thought.
- Identify contradictions.

Output: ~2,000 words draft.

Learning Outcomes:

✓ Synthesis of literature

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✓ Systematic understanding

Distinction Tip: Use conceptual diagrams or framework model.

WEEK 7 – Identifying Gaps & Drafting Research Questions

Focus: Move from synthesis → contribution.

Activities:

- Identify:
 - Theoretical gaps
 - Methodological weaknesses
 - Contextual limitations
 - Under-researched populations
- Develop 3–5 draft research questions.
- Ensure alignment with DBA practice orientation.

Output: Remaining 1,500 words of Part 3.

Learning Outcomes:

- ✓ Identify gaps
- ✓ Generate and hone research aims

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Distinction Tip: Gaps must be justified — not assumed.

WEEK 8 – Refinement, Coherence & Distinction Polish

Focus: Elevate to distinction level.

Activities:

- Check coherence across Parts 1–3.
- Ensure:
 - No descriptive passages.
 - Strong critical voice.
 - Logical flow.
- Tighten language.
- Cross-check against Level 7 criteria:
 - Critical awareness
 - Originality
 - Systematic structure
- Final proofread (allowed AI support for grammar only)

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Output: Final 7,500-word submission-ready document.

Weekly Time Allocation Suggestion (Aligned to 300 Hours Module)

Module requires **240 hours of independent learning**

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Week	Hours
1–2	35 hrs each
3–5	30 hrs each
6–7	35 hrs each
8	20 hrs
Total	≈240 hrs

Distinction-Level Checklist

Before submission, confirm:

- ✓ Extensive engagement with latest research
- ✓ Clear synthesis (not summary)
- ✓ Strong critical evaluation of methodologies
- ✓ Explicit gap identification
- ✓ Professionally structured and coherent writing
- ✓ Consistent referencing
- ✓ Evidence of originality

(Aligned to Level 8 “Excellent/Exceptional” descriptors)