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Start with your dissertation

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



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- CHOOSING YOUR TOPIC – *READ FIRST!!!*
- START WRITING **AS YOU GO ALONG**
- DON'T PUT WRITING OFF TO THE END
- MAKE COMPREHENSIVE NOTES AS YOU READ – NOT JUST STICKING IN COLOURED PAPER BOOKMARKS!
- RE-WRITE AND EDIT **AS YOUR ARGUMENTS DEVELOP**, NOT JUST AT THE END
- TRY TO KEEP TO A CLEAR, GENERIC PLAN AND STRUCTURE

Thinking about your dissertation

1. Make certain that your topic is workable and that you will be able to complete the project to a high standard
2. Do you need to narrow it down? (most people will)
3. Do you need to broaden it out? (this happens sometimes)
4. Do you need a different take on the subject or topic? Discuss with your supervisor

How to get started

- Get as much bibliographical information as you can on your chosen subject
 - Library catalogue
 - JSTOR searches
 - Google scholar
- “The breadcrumb trail”
 - Use references from these articles & books to find other relevant articles & books
 - Follow the footnotes!

See your supervisor!

- Discuss the topic with your supervisor and arrange meetings with your supervisor on a regular basis.
- You will agree targets between you, but your writing should be well underway long before block 6
- It's a good idea to arrange specific times to see them, or make sure you go during their office hours

Outlines

- ❖ Always be thinking about the structure
- ❖ Create an outline, and develop it
- ❖ But keep in mind that this is not written in stone but it will help you to develop your project

First assignment for the dissertation

- A 1000 word reflective report:
- An explanation of the rational and research questions underpinning your project
- Progress made so far
- Discussion of the types of materials and evidence you will be using
- Include a detailed outline of your dissertation
- A bibliography
- But we will discuss it in more detail later

Proposal

- An initial title (it can be changed later)
- It should capture the topic you are going to address
- It could be a question that you are going to address or title which captures your area of study.

And what exactly should I do?

1. Write a brief summary of your proposed research.
2. Make sure that you include your main argument (or what you expect your main argument to be)
3. You might want to include your position in scholarship on the subject of your research.
4. It should not be more than **250 words long**.
(we have used 61 words on this slide...)

Context

- Set the context of your research
- Give an overview of the debate you will be exploring.
- Highlight key positions and arguments.

Focus of Research

- What specific problems you aim to address
- What direction you think your argument will take

Significance of your project

- What will your project offer to the current debate.

Bibliography

- What sources you will be initially looking at
- Will you use primary resources?

But how do I know what I am going to use?

- What are the primary sources (literary, epigraphical, papyrological, iconographical, archaeological) that you have already identified?
- What are the main pieces of scholarship that you have already read or identified as necessary reading?

Some Tips

- **DON'T PANIC!!!**

- Allow yourself plenty of time
- Arrange a meeting with your supervisor ASAP
- Start writing now!
- Some people write their introduction last. You should certainly expect to rewrite it, and ensure that your original aims are revisited in your discussion and conclusions.
- Keep your introduction & conclusion reasonably brief
- Remember & keep to the deadline