



DBA

Module Handbook: LCDB7012

Advancing to Doctoral Research Stage

Autumn 2026

Module Lead: Dr Helen Lee

Module Code	LCDB7012
Title	Advancing to Doctoral Research Stage
Date	14/07/2021
Level	7
Credits	30
Pre-Requisites	n/a

AIM(S)

- To present and defend an advanced research proposal incorporating an introduction and justification for the study, critical engagement with current research at the forefront of business and administration / management studies, a clear and advanced research methodology, and clear contributions on how this research will create new knowledge, advance business/ management theory and management/ organisational practices.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to:

- Develop the systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of business and management studies and organisational/management practice;
- Conceptualise, design and undertake a research project for the generation of new knowledge and understanding at the forefront of business and management studies;
- Write and defend a detailed research proposal that will generate original empirical research and new knowledge to advance business and management studies and organisational/management practice;
- Frame the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research and advanced scholarship; to extend the forefront of business and management studies.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

- Writing a research proposal
- Skills for a Viva Voce
- Research philosophy, method and methodology
- Research tools and techniques
- Critical thinking
- Conceptualising and implementing a qualitative research project
- Generation of new knowledge and presenting qualitative empirical evidence
- Advanced qualitative and quantitative academic enquiry

Study Time Allocation

The study time for the module is divided as follows:

Activity type	Hours	Percentage
Scheduled learning	60	20%
Independent learning	240	80%
Placement learning	0	0%
TOTAL	300	100%

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Component 1

(Tick one)

☐ Written exam ☒ Coursework ☐ Practical

Mode of assessment	Volume	Weighting
Portfolio	4500 words	60%

Assessment Component 2

(Tick one)

☐ Written exam ☐ Coursework ☒ Practical

Mode of assessment	Volume	Weighting
Presentation	18 minutes	40%

Assessment Summary

Activity type	Percentage
Written exam	0%
Coursework	60%
Practical	40%
TOTAL	100%

INDICATIVE READING LIST

Module Code	LCDB7012	
Module Title	Advancing to Doctoral Research Stage	
Classification	Reading List entry	Electronic*
Essential	Bell, J., Waters, S., (2014) Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers, 6th ed., Maidenhead, Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education.	☒
Essential	Walliman, N., (2011) Your Research project: designing and planning your work Sage	☐
Essential	Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A., (2019) Research methods for business students, 8th ed., Harlow: Pearson.	☒
Essential	Denscombe, M., (2009) Ground rules for social research: Guidelines for good practice. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).	☒
Further	Pugh, D., Estelle, P., (2000) How to get a PhD: a handbook for students and their supervisors 3rd ed., rev. and updated., Buckingham: Open University Press.	☐
Further	Metre, M., Rugg, G., (2010) The unwritten rules of PhD research 2nd ed., Maidenhead, England; Open University Press.	☐
Further	Cryer, P., (2006) The research student's guide to success 3rd ed., Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill/Open University Press.	☒
Further	Peters, M., Howard, K., Sharp, A., (2012) The management of a student research project. Gower Publishing, Ltd	☒
Further	Blaxter, L., (2010) How to research. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).	☒
Further	Grix, J., (2010) Demystifying postgraduate research. A&C Black.	☐
Further	Wisker, G., (2007) The postgraduate research handbook: Succeed with your MA, MPhil, EdD and PhD. Macmillan International Higher Education.	☐

LEVEL 7 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:		Student ID number:	
Programme:	Doctor of Business Administration		
Module:	Advancing to Doctoral Research Stage		
Module code:	LCDB7012	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	60%
Lecturer:	Dr Helen Lee	Internal Verifier:	Dr Caroline Jawad
Assignment Title:	Reflective Portfolio Task: Critical Analysis of Your Doctoral Research Journey	Word count (or equivalent):	4500 words
Submission deadline:	29 January 2027 (TBC)	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	26 February 2027 (TBC)
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark: Work which is submitted up to 1 week late will be capped at 50% for the first attempt and will be awarded a mark of 0% for re-assessment. Late submission penalties may be lifted only if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim. Work submitted more than 1 week late will be considered as a non-submission and will not be marked. The work may be considered as a submission for reassessment if offered by an Examining Board or if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim.		
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

Module Learning Outcomes (from module syllabus)
Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to: • Develop the systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of business and management studies and organisational/management practice; • Conceptualise, design and undertake a research project for the generation of new knowledge and understanding at the forefront of business and management studies; • Write and defend a detailed research proposal that will generate original empirical research and new knowledge to advance business and management studies and organisational/management practice; • Frame the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research and advanced scholarship; to extend the forefront of business and management studies.

USE OF GENERATIVE AI IN ASSESSMENT

(Lecturer to indicate Yes or No against each element)

RESEARCH	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to support you in research, including searching for bibliography, using tools to summarise, compare and interrogate materials.	Yes ☐ No ☒
STRUCTURE	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to support you in structuring your submission, including creating a draft argument structure, identifying parts and headings, etc.	Yes ☐ No ☒
PROOFREADING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to check your own text/creation for grammatical and syntactical mistakes, including rephrasing of your own work within specific standards.	Yes ☒ No ☐
WRITING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create text for submission.	Yes ☐ No ☒
CREATIVE	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create creative materials, such as images.	Yes ☐ No ☒
PROGRAMMING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create and check code.	Yes ☐ No ☒
NONE	For this assessment, you are not allowed to use any type of Generative AI support. This includes research support, structure support, writing/proofreading support and creative support.	Yes ☐ No ☒

Academic Integrity and Generative AI Use for this module

Academic integrity is fundamental to your learning and professional development, requiring that you engage authentically with the research process and demonstrate your own critical thinking and analytical skills. For this assessment, whilst you may use generative AI for proofreading to check grammar and syntax, all research, structural decisions, content creation and analysis must be your own original work to ensure you develop the essential research competencies expected at doctoral level.

Recording your use of generative AI: the AI use log

Doctoral research has always required you to be able to show your working. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify the audit trail, a documented record of the decisions made during a study, as central to the dependability of qualitative research, and the same principle of transparency applies to all doctoral work. Recording your use of generative AI extends this established requirement to the tools you use while preparing your submission.

For this assessment, generative AI may be used for proofreading only, as shown in the table above. Your log therefore records each occasion on which you used a tool to check the grammar and syntax of text you had already written yourself. Because the portfolio is a reflective account of your own research journey, the reflection, analysis and structure must be entirely your own. Generative AI must not be used to search for or summarise literature, to plan your portfolio or to generate any of its content.

Your log should record, at minimum, the tool and version used, the date and the purpose of the interaction. It should also summarise what you submitted to the tool and what it returned, together with the verification action you took before accepting or rejecting its suggestions. Table 1 gives a template, with a worked example in the first row.

Tool and version	Date	Purpose of use	Summary of what you submitted and what the tool returned	Verification action taken
<i>Example: Microsoft 365 Copilot in Word</i>	<i>22 January 2027</i>	<i>Proofreading my own draft of section 4 (Positionality, Power and Research Relationships) for grammar and syntax</i>	<i>Submitted my own 750-word draft and asked for grammatical and syntactical corrections only, with no changes to content; the tool returned nine suggested corrections</i>	<i>Checked each suggestion against my original; accepted seven and rejected two that changed the meaning of my reflection; original and corrected versions saved</i>

Table 1. AI use log template for LCDB7012

Keep the log as you work rather than reconstructing it afterwards. Include it as an appendix to your portfolio, where it does not count towards the word limit; screenshots may be included as evidence. If you did not use generative AI at any point, state this in the appendix instead. The module team may ask to see the log and it may be requested as part of an authenticity viva.

The same log continues into Part 2 of the DBA, where it forms part of the audit trail that your supervisory team and examiners will expect to see.

TASK DESCRIPTION

Reflective Portfolio Task: Critical Analysis of Your Doctoral Research Journey

Produce a 4,500-word (or equivalent) reflective portfolio that provides a nuanced, critical analysis of the research journey undertaken thus far in your doctoral studies. The portfolio should synthesise multi-faceted theoretical and empirical evidence to justify and problematise your chosen research theme, literature foundations, objectives, and data collection plans. Throughout the portfolio, demonstrate reflexivity by critically examining your positionality, potential biases, and the strategies you've employed to maintain rigour and objectivity in your research process. This task is designed to be suitable for students using mono quantitative, mono qualitative, or mixed methods approaches.

Portfolio Elements

1. Research Context and Personal Journey (600 words)

Guiding question(s):

Who You Were When You Started? Given your current research question: what assumptions about knowledge and evidence did you bring to it before Part 1? Which of those assumptions have been disrupted and which have not?

2. Engaging with Literature and Theory (900 words)

Your Relationship with Theory and Literature

Guiding question(s):

- Which theoretical frameworks felt natural and convincing?
- Which felt strange?
- What does that pattern reveal about your starting assumptions and how has it shaped how you think about the theory underpinning your research question?

3. The Evolution of Your Research Focus (750 words)

Guiding question(s):

- How has your research question changed since you started Part 1?
- Have the changes made the relationship between your question and your paradigm more coherent?
- What drove each shift: the literature, your background, methodological understanding or something more personal?

4. Positionality, Power and Research Relationships (750 words)

Guiding question(s):

- Your positionality matters because of your relationship to the people and contexts your research question concerns. Who are you in relation to your likely participants?
- Where do you hold power, where are you constrained and what might participants tell you or withhold because of who you are?

5. Ethical Tensions in Your Study (750 words)

Guiding Question(s):

- Ethical tensions often arise from the gap between what your research question requires (candid accounts, sensitive data, access to vulnerable participants) and what ethical responsibility demands.
- Identify genuine conflicts specific to your question and context.

6. You as a Developing Researcher (250 words)

Guiding Question(s):

- What are you not yet ready to do well as a researcher, specifically in relation to what your research question requires?
- Gaps that matter are those that would affect your ability to answer your question rigorously and honestly.

Remarks: Word counts are given as guidance, not rigid limits. If a section genuinely requires more or fewer words to say what needs to be said, use your judgement. The activities do not have time limits: take as long as you need. The goal of each activity is to generate useful material for your draft, not to perform under pressure.

Please refer to the Assignment guidebook prepared by Dr Caroline Jawad for details and examples.

NOTE: The guidance offered below is linked to the five generic assessment criteria overleaf.

1. Engagement with Literature Skills

Your work must be informed and supported by scholarly material that is *relevant* to and *focused* on the task(s) set; you should make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources, as appropriate (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline). You should provide evidence that you have accessed a wide *range* of sources, which may be academic, governmental and industrial; these sources may include academic journal articles, textbooks, current news articles, organisational documents, and websites. You should consider the *credibility* of your sources; academic journals are normally highly credible sources while websites require careful consideration/selection and should be used sparingly. Any sources you use should be current and up-to-date, mostly published within the last five years or so, though seminal/important works in the field may be older. You must provide *evidence* of your research/own reading throughout your work, using correctly a suitable referencing system, including in-text citations in the main body of your work and a reference list at the end of your work.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

- *Use scholarly material relevant to and focused on the set tasks.*
- *Access a wide range of sources: academic journals, textbooks, current news articles, organisational documents, and websites.*
- *Consider the credibility of sources; academic journals are highly credible, while websites should be used sparingly.*
- *Use current and up-to-date sources, mostly published within the last five years.*
- *Provide evidence of research throughout your work using the UWTSD Harvard referencing system.*
- *Include in-text citations and a reference list at the end.*
- *Cite a minimum of 80 credible and relevant sources across the portfolio and presentation.*

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills

At level 7, you should be able to demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of your academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice, with a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to your own research or advanced scholarship. Your work must demonstrate your growing mastery of these concepts, principles, current challenges, innovation and insights associated with the subject area. *Knowledge* relates to the facts, information and skills you have acquired through your learning. You demonstrate your *understanding* by interpreting the meaning of the facts and information (knowledge). This means that you need to select and include in your work the contemporary concepts, techniques, models, theories, etc. appropriate to the task(s) set. You should be able to explain the theories, concepts, etc. meaningfully to show your understanding. Your mark/grade will also depend upon the *extent* to which you demonstrate your knowledge and understanding; ideally each should be complete and detailed, with comprehensive coverage.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

Please refer to the Assignment guidebook prepared by Dr Caroline Jawad for details and examples.

3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

You should be able to: evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively to make sound judgements in the absence of complete data. Your work must contain evidence of logical, analytical thinking, evaluation and synthesis. For example, to examine and break information down into parts, make inferences, compile, compare and contrast information. This means not just describing what! But also justifying: Why? How? When? Who? Where? At what cost? At all times, you must provide justification for your arguments and judgements.

Evidence that you have reflected upon the ideas of experts within the subject area is crucial to you providing a reasoned and informed debate within your work. Your choice of methodologies to gather data and information must be rigorously defended. Furthermore, you should provide evidence that you are able to make sound judgements and convincing arguments using data and concepts. Sound, valid, persuasive conclusions are necessary and must be derived from the content of your work. Where relevant, alternative solutions and recommendations may be proposed.

Guidance specific to this assessment: Please refer to the Assignment guidebook prepared by Dr Caroline Jawad for details and examples.

4. Practical Skills

At level 7, you should be able to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline. This includes acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, originality in tackling and solving problems, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts or situations.

You should be able to demonstrate mastery of the leading edge subject-related concepts and ideas as they relate to real world situations and/or particular contexts. How do they work in practice? You will deploy models, methods, techniques, and/or theories, in those contexts or circumstances, to assess current situations, perhaps to formulate plans or plausible, justifiable recommendations to solve problems, or to propose new models, or to create artefacts, which may be innovative and creative, thereby demonstrating your understanding of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research and/or application. This is likely to involve, for instance, the use of real world artefacts, examples and cases, the application of a model within an organisation and/or benchmarking one theory or organisation against others.

Guidance specific to this assessment: Please refer to the Assignment guidebook prepared by Dr Caroline Jawad for details and examples.

5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice

Your work must provide evidence of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for postgraduate-level employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments. This includes demonstrating: the independent learning ability for continuing professional development to advance existing skills and acquire new competences of a professional nature that will enable you to assume significant responsibility within organisations; that you can initiate and complete tasks, projects and procedures, whether individually and/or collaboratively, to a professional level; that you can use appropriate media to effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms for a variety of audiences; fluency of expression; clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation. Work should be coherent and well-structured in presentation and organisation.

Guidance specific to this assessment: Please refer to the Assignment guidebook prepared by Dr Caroline Jawad for details and examples.

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

This section details the *extent* to which the assessment criteria are demonstrated by you, which in turn determines your mark. The marks available for each category of skill are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Generic Assessment Criteria		Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills			
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills			
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills			
4. Practical Application Skills			
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice			
Assessment Mark (Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)	Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)		%
	Up to 1 week late (50% maximum)	☐	
	Over 1 week late (0%)	☐	

GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Level 7

In accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, at the end of Level 7 students should be able to demonstrate: a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice; a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship; originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline; conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences. They will demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level. They the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility; decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations/professional environments; and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTOR Y (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONA L (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Engagement with literature (including current research, referencing, academic conventions and academic honesty)	Little or no evidence of reading and/or reliance on inappropriate sources. Views and findings mostly unsupported and non-authoritative. Referencing conventions used incoherently or largely absent.	Poor engagement with essential reading. No evidence of wider reading. Reliance on inappropriate sources, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Heavily reliant on information gained through class contact. Inconsistent and	Engagement with a very limited range of relevant and credible sources. Some omissions and minor errors. Referencing conventions evident though not always applied accurately or consistently.	Engagement with an appropriate range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Some over-reliance on texts. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with a wide range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Selection of relevant and credible sources. Very good use of referencing, with no/very few	Engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. Consistently accurate application of referencing.	Exceptional engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. High-level referencing skills consistently and professionally applied.

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
		weak use of referencing.			inaccuracies or inconsistencies.		
Knowledge and understanding (A systematic, conceptual understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline; a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research)	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of the subject matter is not systematic. Substantial inaccuracies. No awareness of current problems, insights or the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline.	Gaps in knowledge, with only superficial systematic understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material. No critical awareness of current problems, insights, or latest research within the discipline.	Limited knowledge and systematic understanding of the concepts and principles within the subject area, which to some marginal extent, is informed by current research and scholarship. Some critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, but often under-developed.	Knowledge is accurate and reasonably detailed. A systematic understanding of the field of study informed by, to some extent, current research and scholarship. A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights though this may be under-developed occasionally.	Knowledge has a well-defined focus, which is reasonably extensive, coherent and detailed, with a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. Exhibits good understanding of the breadth and depth of contemporary and established views, and the work is, at least in part, well-informed by current research and scholarship.	Excellent mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge. A systematic, excellent understanding of the concepts of the subject informed by current research and scholarship. Highly critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. A critical, awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.	Exceptional mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge. An exceptionally critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. An outstanding understanding of the concepts of the subject, well-informed by current research and scholarship. A critical, sophisticated and nuanced awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.
Cognitive and intellectual skills	Wholly or almost wholly descriptive work.	Largely descriptive work, with superficial	Limited attempt at critical evaluation/	Some critical evaluation/ critique of	Sound critical evaluation/ critique of	Excellent critical evaluation/ critique of	Exceptional critical evaluation/

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
(Critical evaluation of current research and methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; make sound judgements in the absence of complete data.)	Little or no evaluation or critique or attempt at a systematic approach. Failure to develop arguments, leading to illogical or invalid judgements. Unsubstantiated generalisations, made without use of credible evidence.	use of critical evaluation of research and methodologies. Absent or weak development of hypotheses and judgements. Information accepted uncritically, uses generalised statements made with scant evidence and unsubstantiated opinions. Ideas sometimes illogical and contradictory.	critique of current research and methodologies, tending towards description. Limited attempt to propose new hypotheses. Can deal with complex issues but not systematically or creatively. Some evidence to support emerging judgements but these may be underdeveloped or with a little inconsistency / mis-interpretation. May assert rather than argue a case.	current research and methodologies, though slightly underdeveloped in places, Proposes adequate but limited new hypotheses, where relevant. Can deal with complex issues but not fully systematically or creatively. Ability to make judgements based on data (that may be incomplete) but with some tendency to assert/state opinion rather than argue on the basis of reason and evidence.	current research and methodologies, Proposes new hypotheses, where appropriate. Can deal with complex issues systematically and with some creativity. Ability to make sound judgements based on data (that may be incomplete)	current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Can synthesise complex issues systematically and creatively. Ability to investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated judgements.	critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Exemplary systematic and creative synthesis of complex issues. Ability to investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated, nuanced, judgements. Potential for journal publication or doctoral research.
Practical skills (Originality / creativity in the	Limited or no use of methods, materials, tools	Rudimentary application of methods, materials, tools	An awareness and mostly appropriate application of	An appropriate application of standard methods,	A very good application of a range of methods,	An advanced application of knowledge, methods,	Exceptional application skills in complex, unpredictable,

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
application of knowledge, tools and techniques and in tackling and solving problems in complex and unpredictable professional situations; practical use of established techniques of research and enquiry to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.)	and/or techniques. Little or no appreciation of the context of the application. Limited understanding of the application of theory to practice or making appropriate links between the two. Very weak problem-solving skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.	and/or techniques but without consideration and competence. Flawed appreciation of the context of the application. Weak understanding of the application of theory to practice, with only occasional evidence of making appropriate links between the two. Weak problem-solving skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.	well-established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques, with occasional errors. Basic appreciation of the context of the application. Theoretical knowledge and understanding applied in practice, but not always making logical links between the two. Can identify problems and propose basic solutions without fully appreciating the complexity of unpredictable contexts.	materials, tools and/or techniques. Clear appreciation of the context of the application. Mainly consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making appropriate links between the two. Can identify problems and propose mostly appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts, with elements of originality.	materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application, with perceptive insights. Can identify problems and propose appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts. Evidence of originality and creativity.	materials, tools and/or techniques. The context of the application is well considered, and insightful. Can identify complex problems and propose excellent solutions. An excellent grasp of techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.	contexts, drawing skilfully on the latest research within the discipline. Can identify complex problems and propose sophisticated, original solutions. An outstanding application of techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline with assimilation and development of cutting edge

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
							processes and techniques.
Transferable skills for life and professional practice (Exercise of self-direction, autonomy and personal responsibility; plan and implement tasks at a professional level; independent learning; use appropriate media to communicate effectively and professionally to a variety of audiences; fluency of expression; systematic approach; clarity and effectiveness in	Communication medium is inappropriate or misapplied. Work is poorly structured, disorganised and/or confusingly expressed. Very weak use of language and/or very inappropriate style. Little or no evidence of autonomy (or collaboration, where relevant) in the completion of tasks. Little or no evidence of the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.	Communication medium is poorly designed and/or not suitable for the audience. Work is poorly presented in a disjointed manner. It is loosely, and at times incoherently, structured, with information and ideas often poorly expressed. Weak use of language and/or inappropriate style. Weak independent initiative (or collaboration, if relevant). Limited evidence of the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.	Can communicate in a suitable medium but with some room for improvement. Mostly ordered presentation and structure in which relevant ideas / concepts are reasonably expressed. Work may lack coherence in places. Can work as part of a team, but with limited involvement in group activities. Demonstrates some but not all of the basic skills required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of minor weakness.	Can communicate effectively in a suitable format, but may have minor errors. Mostly coherent, organised work, in a suitable structure and is for the most part clearly expressed. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with clear contribution to group activities. Demonstrates the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of strength and some of minor weakness.	Can communicate well, confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, fluent, well-structured and organised. Can work very well autonomously and/or as part of a team, with a good contribution to group activities. Demonstrates comprehensive professional, postgraduate employment skills.	Can communicate professionally confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work autonomously with initiative. Where relevant can work professionally within a team, showing leadership skills as appropriate, managing conflict and meeting obligations. Demonstrates excellent professional, postgraduate employment skills and a	Can communicate with an exceptionally high level of professionalism. Work is remarkably coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work outstandingly well and professionally within a team, showing advanced leadership skills. Demonstrates exemplary professional, postgraduate employment skills and a strong appetite for further development.

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTOR Y (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONA L (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
presentation and organisation.)						strong appetite for further development.	

THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN WELSH

LEVEL 7 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:		Student ID number:	
Programme:	Doctor of Business Administration		
Module:	Advancing to Doctoral Research Stage		
Module code:	LCDB7012	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	40%
Lecturer:	Dr Helen Lee	Internal Verifier:	Dr Caroline Jawad
Assignment Title:	Presentation Task: Why is your research designed the way it is?	Word count (or equivalent):	18 minutes
Submission deadline:	29 January 2027 (TBC)	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	26 February 2027 (TBC)
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark: Work which is submitted up to 1 week late will be capped at 50% for the first attempt and will be awarded a mark of 0% for re-assessment. Late submission penalties may be lifted only if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim. Work submitted more than 1 week late will be considered as a non-submission and will not be marked. The work may be considered as a submission for reassessment if offered by an Examining Board or if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim.		
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

Module Learning Outcomes (from module syllabus)
Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to: • Develop the systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of business and management studies and organisational/management practice; • Conceptualise, design and undertake a research project for the generation of new knowledge and understanding at the forefront of business and management studies; • Write and defend a detailed research proposal that will generate original empirical research and new knowledge to advance business and management studies and organisational/management practice; • Frame the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research and advanced scholarship; to extend the forefront of business and management studies.

USE OF GENERATIVE AI IN ASSESSMENT

(Lecturer to indicate Yes or No against each element)

RESEARCH	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to support you in research, including searching for bibliography, using tools to summarise, compare and interrogate materials.	Yes ☐ No ☒
STRUCTURE	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to support you in structuring your submission, including creating a draft argument structure, identifying parts and headings, etc.	Yes ☐ No ☒
PROOFREADING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to check your own text/creation for grammatical and syntactical mistakes, including rephrasing of your own work within specific standards.	Yes ☒ No ☐
WRITING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create text for submission.	Yes ☐ No ☒
CREATIVE	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create creative materials, such as images.	Yes ☐ No ☒
PROGRAMMING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create and check code.	Yes ☐ No ☒
NONE	For this assessment, you are not allowed to use any type of Generative AI support. This includes research support, structure support, writing/proofreading support and creative support.	Yes ☐ No ☒

Academic Integrity and Generative AI Use for this module

Academic integrity is fundamental to your learning and professional development, requiring that you engage authentically with the research process and demonstrate your own critical thinking and analytical skills. For this assessment, whilst you may use generative AI for proofreading to check grammar and syntax, all research, structural decisions, slide content, speaker notes and analysis must be your own original work to ensure you develop the essential research competencies expected at doctoral level.

Recording your use of generative AI: the AI use log

Doctoral research has always required you to be able to show your working. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify the audit trail, a documented record of the decisions made during a study, as central to the dependability of qualitative research, and the same principle of transparency applies to all doctoral work. Recording your use of generative AI extends this established requirement to the tools you use while preparing your submission.

For this assessment, generative AI may be used for proofreading only, as shown in the table above. Your log therefore records each occasion on which you used a tool to check the grammar and syntax of slide text or speaker notes that you had already written yourself. Generative AI must not be used to research or structure your presentation, to generate slide content or speaker notes or to create images, diagrams or other visual material for your slides.

Your log should record, at minimum, the tool and version used, the date and the purpose of the interaction. It should also summarise what you submitted to the tool and what it returned, together with the verification action you took before accepting or rejecting its suggestions. Table 1 gives a template, with a worked example in the first row.

Tool and version	Date	Purpose of use	Summary of what you submitted and what the tool returned	Verification action taken
<i>Example: Microsoft 365 Copilot in PowerPoint</i>	<i>20 January 2027</i>	<i>Proofreading my own speaker notes for section 3 (Your Paradigmatic Position) for grammar and syntax</i>	<i>Submitted my own speaker notes and asked for grammatical and syntactical corrections only; the tool returned six suggested corrections</i>	<i>Checked each suggestion against my original; accepted five and rejected one that replaced a key Kuhnian term with a less precise word; original and corrected versions saved</i>

Table 1. AI use log template for LCDB7012

Keep the log as you prepare rather than reconstructing it afterwards. Submit it with your slides, either as a separate document or as a final appendix slide that does not count towards your presentation time; screenshots may be included as evidence. If you did not use generative AI at any point, state this instead. The module team may ask to see the log and it may be requested as part of an authenticity viva.

The same log continues into Part 2 of the DBA, where it forms part of the audit trail that your supervisory team and examiners will expect to see.

TASK DESCRIPTION

Presentation Task: Why is your research designed the way it is?

This presentation asks you to demonstrate that you understand the philosophical foundations of your doctoral research and can justify your design decisions with intellectual coherence. Thomas Kuhn's concept of paradigm provides the analytical lens, but the presentation is not primarily about Kuhn. It is about showing that your research is constructed the way it is for defensible philosophical reasons.

Your presentation should follow this structure.

1. Why Paradigm Matters (3 minutes)

Explain what a paradigm is and why doctoral researchers need to know which one they are working within. Ground your explanation in Kuhn and establish the logical sequence that runs through all good research design: ontology shapes epistemology, epistemology shapes axiology and together these determine methodology.

2. The Paradigmatic Landscape of Your Field (4 minutes)

Identify the dominant assumptions about knowledge, evidence and method that have shaped research in your field. In most applied fields this will mean showing that one tradition has dominated - often quantitative and positivist - while others occupy a smaller or more recent space. Show that you can see and name those assumptions and what your field has consequently left underexplored.

3. Your Paradigmatic Position (4 minutes)

State which paradigm your research operates within and make the intellectual case for that choice. Working through ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology in that order, explain why this constellation of commitments is right for the knowledge your research aims to generate and why you are working within this tradition rather than the alternatives your field offers.

4. Paradigm in Practice (4 minutes)

Using concrete examples from your own study, demonstrate the coherence between your paradigmatic position and your research design. Show how your paradigm determines your methodology, what counts as data, how you will analyse it and by what criteria your work can be judged rigorous.

5. Boundaries and Alternatives (2 minutes)

Identify what your chosen paradigm cannot do in the context of your specific study and explain briefly why the strongest alternative you considered was not the right choice for your research.

6. Conclusions (1 minute)

Summarise the central argument of your presentation. What do you now understand about the relationship between paradigm and research design that you did not understand at the start of Part 1?

NOTE: The guidance offered below is linked to the five generic assessment criteria overleaf.

1. Engagement with Literature Skills

Your work must be informed and supported by scholarly material that is *relevant* to and *focused* on the task(s) set; you should make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources, as appropriate (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline). You should provide evidence that you have accessed a wide *range* of sources, which may be academic, governmental and industrial; these sources may include academic journal articles, textbooks, current news articles, organisational documents, and websites. You should consider the *credibility* of your sources; academic journals are normally highly credible sources while websites require careful consideration/selection and should be used sparingly. Any sources you use should be current and up-to-date, mostly published within the last five years or so, though seminal/important works in the field may be older. You must provide *evidence* of your research/own reading throughout your work, using correctly a suitable referencing system, including in-text citations in the main body of your work and a reference list at the end of your work.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *Your presentation must be grounded in scholarly sources, but the range required here is more focused than a literature review. You need command of Kuhn's original work, key texts in research philosophy covering ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology and sources that speak to the paradigmatic traditions operating in your specific field. Foundational texts in this area - Kuhn, Lincoln and Guba, Guba and Lincoln, Crotty - predate the five-year window and are not only acceptable but expected. What matters is that your use of sources is purposeful: every reference should be doing analytical work in support of your argument, not simply demonstrating that you have read widely.*

No minimum source count applies - engage precisely and directly with Kuhn, with foundational texts in research philosophy and with sources specific to your field and every source you cite should be doing visible analytical work in your argument.

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills

At level 7, you should be able to demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of your academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice, with a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to your own research or advanced scholarship. Your work must demonstrate your growing mastery of these concepts, principles, current challenges, innovation and insights associated with the subject area. *Knowledge* relates to the facts, information and skills you have acquired through your learning. You demonstrate your *understanding* by interpreting the meaning of the facts and information (knowledge). This means that you need to select and include in your work the contemporary concepts, techniques, models, theories, etc. appropriate to the task(s) set. You should be able to explain the theories, concepts, etc. meaningfully to show your understanding. Your mark/grade will also depend upon the *extent* to which you demonstrate your knowledge and understanding; ideally each should be complete and detailed, with comprehensive coverage.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *Demonstrate that you understand what a paradigm is in Kuhn's sense and why it matters for doctoral research, that you can identify the dominant philosophical assumptions shaping your field and that you have a secure grasp of the logical relationship running from ontology through epistemology and axiology to methodology. This understanding should be visible in how you apply these concepts to your own study, not only in how you define them. A student who can define ontology but cannot explain what their own ontological commitments mean for their data collection has not demonstrated understanding at doctoral level.*

3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

You should be able to: evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively to make sound judgements in the absence of complete data. Your work must contain evidence of logical, analytical thinking, evaluation and synthesis.

For example, to examine and break information down into parts, make inferences, compile, compare and contrast information. This means not just describing what! But also justifying: Why? How? When? Who? Where? At what cost? At all times, you must provide justification for your arguments and judgements. Evidence that you have reflected upon the ideas of experts within the subject area is crucial to you providing a reasoned and informed debate within your work. Your choice of methodologies to gather data and information must be rigorously defended. Furthermore, you should provide evidence that you are able to make sound judgements and convincing arguments using data and concepts. Sound, valid, persuasive conclusions are necessary and must be derived from the content of your work. Where relevant, alternative solutions and recommendations may be proposed.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *The intellectual core of this presentation is the argument you make for your paradigmatic position. That argument must be coherent, sequenced and defended - not asserted. Show that you can evaluate the alternatives available in your field and explain in epistemological terms why your chosen paradigm is the right fit for your research. Identify what your paradigm forecloses as well as what it enables. The strongest presentations will not simply describe a paradigm and claim it fits - they will demonstrate the fit by showing how ontological, epistemological and axiological commitments flow through into specific, defensible design decisions.*

4. Practical Skills

At level 7, you should be able to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline. This includes acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, originality in tackling and solving problems, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts or situations.

You should be able to demonstrate mastery of the leading edge subject-related concepts and ideas as they relate to real world situations and/or particular contexts. How do they work in practice? You will deploy models, methods, techniques, and/or theories, in those contexts or circumstances, to assess current situations, perhaps to formulate plans or plausible, justifiable recommendations to solve problems, or to propose new models, or to create artefacts, which may be innovative and creative, thereby demonstrating your understanding of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research and/or application. This is likely to involve, for instance, the use of real world artefacts, examples and cases, the application of a model within an organisation and/or benchmarking one theory or organisation against others.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *Show that paradigm is not an abstract concept you have learned about but a framework you are actively using to make and justify real decisions about your research. Use concrete examples from your own study throughout - your methodology, your data, your analytical approach, your criteria for rigour. The test of practical understanding here is whether your paradigmatic position and your research design are visibly coherent: a listener should be able to see that your design follows from your philosophy, not simply that you can describe both separately.*

5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice

Your work must provide evidence of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for postgraduate-level employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments. This includes demonstrating: the independent learning ability for continuing professional development to advance existing skills and acquire new competences of a professional nature that will enable you to assume significant responsibility within organisations; that you can initiate and complete tasks, projects and procedures, whether individually and/or collaboratively, to a professional level; that you can use appropriate media to effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms for a variety of audiences; fluency of expression; clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation. Work should be coherent and well-structured in presentation and organisation.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *Eighteen minutes is a tight constraint for a complex argument. Demonstrate that you can structure and communicate sophisticated philosophical reasoning clearly, sequentially and within time. Your presentation should have a single coherent argument running through it from beginning to end - not six separate sections that happen to follow one another. The ability to make a*

complex case accessibly and precisely, without sacrificing intellectual rigour, is a doctoral skill and a professional one. Visual aids should support your argument, not substitute for it.

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

This section details the *extent* to which the assessment criteria are demonstrated by you, which in turn determines your mark. The marks available for each category of skill are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Generic Assessment Criteria		Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills			
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills			
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills			
4. Practical Application Skills			
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice			
Assessment Mark (Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)	Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)		%
	Up to 1 week late (50% maximum)	☐	
	Over 1 week late (0%)	☐	

GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Level 7

In accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, at the end of Level 7 students should be able to demonstrate: a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice; a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship; originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline; conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences. They will demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level. They the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility; decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations/professional environments; and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Level 7	FAIL	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTOR Y (Pass)	GOOD to VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONA L (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Engagement with literature (including current research, referencing, academic conventions and academic honesty)	Little or no evidence of reading and/or reliance on inappropriate sources. Views and findings mostly unsupported and non-authoritative. Referencing conventions used incoherently or largely absent.	Poor engagement with essential reading. No evidence of wider reading. Reliance on inappropriate sources, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Heavily reliant on information gained through class contact. Inconsistent and	Engagement with a very limited range of relevant and credible sources. Some omissions and minor errors. Referencing conventions evident though not always applied accurately or consistently.	Engagement with an appropriate range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Some over-reliance on texts. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with a wide range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Selection of relevant and credible sources. Very good use of referencing, with no/very few	Engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. Consistently accurate application of referencing.	Exceptional engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. High-level referencing skills consistently and professionally applied.

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Category	0-29%	30-44%	45-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
		weak use of referencing.			inaccuracies or inconsistencies.		
Knowledge and understanding (A systematic, conceptual understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline; a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research)	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of the subject matter is not systematic. Substantial inaccuracies. No awareness of current problems, insights or the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline.	Gaps in knowledge, with only superficial systematic understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material. No critical awareness of current problems, insights, or latest research within the discipline.	Limited knowledge and systematic understanding of the concepts and principles within the subject area, which to some marginal extent, is informed by current research and scholarship. Some critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, but often under-developed.	Knowledge is accurate and reasonably detailed. A systematic understanding of the field of study informed by, to some extent, current research and scholarship. A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights though this may be under-developed occasionally.	Knowledge has a well-defined focus, which is reasonably extensive, coherent and detailed, with a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. Exhibits good understanding of the breadth and depth of contemporary and established views, and the work is, at least in part, well-informed by current research and scholarship.	Excellent mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge. A systematic, excellent understanding of the concepts of the subject informed by current research and scholarship. Highly critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. A critical, awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.	Exceptional mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge. An exceptionally critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. An outstanding understanding of the concepts of the subject, well-informed by current research and scholarship. A critical, sophisticated and nuanced awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.
Cognitive and intellectual skills	Wholly or almost wholly descriptive work.	Largely descriptive work, with superficial	Limited attempt at critical evaluation/	Some critical evaluation/ critique of	Sound critical evaluation/ critique of	Excellent critical evaluation/ critique of	Exceptional critical evaluation/

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(Critical evaluation of current research and methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; make sound judgements in the absence of complete data.)	Little or no evaluation or critique or attempt at a systematic approach. Failure to develop arguments, leading to illogical or invalid judgements. Unsubstantiated generalisations, made without use of credible evidence.	use of critical evaluation of research and methodologies. Absent or weak development of hypotheses and judgements. Information accepted uncritically, uses generalised statements made with scant evidence and unsubstantiated opinions. Ideas sometimes illogical and contradictory.	critique of current research and methodologies, tending towards description. Limited attempt to propose new hypotheses. Can deal with complex issues but not systematically or creatively. Some evidence to support emerging judgements but these may be underdeveloped or with a little inconsistency / mis-interpretation. May assert rather than argue a case.	current research and methodologies, though slightly underdeveloped in places, Proposes adequate but limited new hypotheses, where relevant. Can deal with complex issues but not fully systematically or creatively. Ability to make judgements based on data (that may be incomplete) but with some tendency to assert/state opinion rather than argue on the basis of reason and evidence.	current research and methodologies, Proposes new hypotheses, where appropriate. Can deal with complex issues systematically and with some creativity. Ability to make sound judgements based on data (that may be incomplete)	current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Can synthesise complex issues systematically and creatively. Ability to investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated judgements.	critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Exemplary systematic and creative synthesis of complex issues. Ability to investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated, nuanced, judgements. Potential for journal publication or doctoral research.
Practical skills (Originality / creativity in the	Limited or no use of methods, materials, tools	Rudimentary application of methods, materials, tools	An awareness and mostly appropriate application of	An appropriate application of standard methods,	A very good application of a range of methods,	An advanced application of knowledge, methods,	Exceptional application skills in complex, unpredictable,

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application of knowledge, tools and techniques and in tackling and solving problems in complex and unpredictable professional situations; practical use of established techniques of research and enquiry to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.)	and/or techniques. Little or no appreciation of the context of the application. Limited understanding of the application of theory to practice or making appropriate links between the two. Very weak problem-solving skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.	and/or techniques but without consideration and competence. Flawed appreciation of the context of the application. Weak understanding of the application of theory to practice, with only occasional evidence of making appropriate links between the two. Weak problem-solving skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.	well-established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques, with occasional errors. Basic appreciation of the context of the application. Theoretical knowledge and understanding applied in practice, but not always making logical links between the two. Can identify problems and propose basic solutions without fully appreciating the complexity of unpredictable contexts.	materials, tools and/or techniques. Clear appreciation of the context of the application. Mainly consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making appropriate links between the two. Can identify problems and propose mostly appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts, with elements of originality.	materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application, with perceptive insights. Can identify problems and propose appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts. Evidence of originality and creativity.	materials, tools and/or techniques. The context of the application is well considered, and insightful. Can identify complex problems and propose excellent solutions. An excellent grasp of techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.	contexts, drawing skilfully on the latest research within the discipline. Can identify complex problems and propose sophisticated, original solutions. An outstanding application of techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline with assimilation and development of cutting edge

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							processes and techniques.
Transferable skills for life and professional practice (Exercise of self-direction, autonomy and personal responsibility; plan and implement tasks at a professional level; independent learning; use appropriate media to communicate effectively and professionally to a variety of audiences; fluency of expression; systematic approach; clarity and effectiveness in	Communication medium is inappropriate or misapplied. Work is poorly structured, disorganised and/or confusingly expressed. Very weak use of language and/or very inappropriate style. Little or no evidence of autonomy (or collaboration, where relevant) in the completion of tasks. Little or no evidence of the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.	Communication medium is poorly designed and/or not suitable for the audience. Work is poorly presented in a disjointed manner. It is loosely, and at times incoherently, structured, with information and ideas often poorly expressed. Weak use of language and/or inappropriate style. Weak independent initiative (or collaboration, if relevant). Limited evidence of the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.	Can communicate in a suitable medium but with some room for improvement. Mostly ordered presentation and structure in which relevant ideas / concepts are reasonably expressed. Work may lack coherence in places. Can work as part of a team, but with limited involvement in group activities. Demonstrates some but not all of the basic skills required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of minor weakness.	Can communicate effectively in a suitable format, but may have minor errors. Mostly coherent, organised work, in a suitable structure and is for the most part clearly expressed. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with clear contribution to group activities. Demonstrates the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of strength and some of minor weakness.	Can communicate well, confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, fluent, well-structured and organised. Can work very well autonomously and/or as part of a team, with a good contribution to group activities. Demonstrates comprehensive professional, postgraduate employment skills.	Can communicate professionally confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work autonomously with initiative. Where relevant can work professionally within a team, showing leadership skills as appropriate, managing conflict and meeting obligations. Demonstrates excellent professional, postgraduate employment skills and a	Can communicate with an exceptionally high level of professionalism. Work is remarkably coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work outstandingly well and professionally within a team, showing advanced leadership skills. Demonstrates exemplary professional, postgraduate employment skills and a strong appetite for further development.

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presentation and organisation.)						strong appetite for further development.	

THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN WELSH