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Y Drindod Dewi Sant

UNIVERSITY OF WALES

Trinity Saint David

MSc Applied Health & Social Psychology

**Part II:
DISSERTATION HANDBOOK**

2019-2020

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1. Introduction

This document has been put together to help you whilst conducting your research project for your MSc and presenting this in the form of a dissertation and oral presentation.

Research can be very rewarding: learning about an area in detail, finding the answers to questions you are interested in as well as contributing to understanding of an area. It also has frustrations that are felt not only by first time researchers, but also by the most experienced investigator.

Firstly, being uncertain is part of the process. This handbook is not going to remove that – every project brings different challenges. And because research is about finding things out yourself, there won't be anyone who has all the answers for you.

Realistically, the most enjoyable phase– data collection and/or data analysis– is a small amount of time relative to the time it will take to submit and receive ethics approval, and recruit. Take care not to underestimate how long it will take to prepare documents to gain the approvals that you need before you can start collecting data.

This guide attempts to anticipate many of the questions you may have – and highlight questions you may not have thought of but should ask. Remember though, that for many of these questions there is not a single answer but it will depend on the project, the target population, and recruitment method etc.

2. General Information

Dissertation co-ordinator: Dr Ceri Phelps

Supervisor Contact Details:

Name	Email
Dr. Paul Hutchings	Paul.hutchings@uwtsd.ac.uk
Dr Lymarie Rodriguez	Lymarie.rodriguez@uwtsd.ac.uk
Dr. Ceri Phelps	Ceri.phelps@uwtsd.ac.uk
Dr Kate Williams	Kate.williams@uwtsd.ac.uk

3. Aims

The Part II dissertation has the following aims:

- To develop higher order research skills by identifying and undertaking a piece of primary research related to applied psychology which demonstrates scientific and ethical rigour in all respects.
- To enable students to demonstrate self-direction, autonomy, and originality in identifying, tackling and solving issues of relevance to an applied research question in social and/or health psychology.
- To provide students with the ability to demonstrate a professional standard of presentation skills through the presentation of their work at an internal conference.

In order to pass the Part II dissertation you must demonstrate the ability to:

1. Conduct an in-depth systematic literature review critically appraising the evidence-base relevant to the dissertation topic.
2. Design a research project identifying appropriate hypotheses/research questions and research methodology.
3. Carry out primary data collection using appropriate tools and methodology in compliance with relevant legal, ethical and data requirements.
4. Analyse data using appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative methods.
5. Interpret and critique the project results and findings and report them in the required format.
6. Reflect on the research process and methods, demonstrating clear understanding of ethical and research frameworks and lessons learned for future research/practice.
7. Present and discuss your work appropriately to an academic audience.

4. Contribution of the dissertation to your degree

The dissertation consists of **60 credits** for the MSc Applied Social & Health Psychology and it must be of a suitable standard for the degree to be awarded. It is therefore important to work consistently on the project throughout the course and dedicate time and effort to it.

Under structured supervision, this will provide students with the opportunity to engage in an independent applied research project which will demonstrate scientifically and ethically rigorous research skills by identifying and undertaking a piece of primary research related to a topical research question within applied social and/or health psychology.

4.1 ASSESSMENT

The dissertation submitted for the MSc is essentially a record of the research study undertaken by the student. The dissertation must be of satisfactory literary standard and include appropriate references. It should be used to demonstrate that the student is competent in the appropriate method of research and has developed an adequate knowledge of the field of study.

Assessment Component 1

30 minute individual presentation (25%): Students will be required to present their dissertation to peers at an in-house mini-conference and will be assessed on their presentation skills, engagement and ability to demonstrate understanding of their dissertation.

Assessment Component 2

Written dissertation (75%): Students will be required to write up their study and submit a 12,000 word written thesis following

standard psychology reporting conventions through three core chapters preceded by a brief summary of the thesis.

- Executive Summary (500 words)
- Systematic literature review (4,500 words)
- Research paper targeted at appropriate journal (4,500 words)
- Reflective chapter (2,500 words)

In the classification of 'Distinction', 'Merit' or 'Pass' as a final grade for your MSc degree, your dissertation mark contributes 50% to the total weighting, with the taught modules contributing the other 50%.

5. The MSc Dissertation Approval Process & Timescales

The Dissertation does not officially start until after the taught part of the course finishes and the examination board transfers you from Part I to Part II of the MSc. To ensure completion of a robust dissertation by the deadline, our advice would be to follow a timetable approximately like this:

5.1 Choose a topic before the end of Part 1

It is really best if this is something that you find interesting and worth pursuing – you really need to be interested to maintain motivation. You may choose to do a project that is related to the work of an existing group or researcher in the School of Psychology. Alternatively, you may choose to develop a project that is in a different area, in which case the most suitable supervisor available in the school will be allocated to you. It is important that you choose a topic that is approved by the Programme Director as suitable for an MSc project.

5.2 Make a start on your Literature Review as soon as possible

It is expected that the first thing you will do, even before you begin to generate your specific research idea, is to start to engage with the academic literature on your area of interest. Because you will be required to write a systematic literature review as part of your thesis it is a good idea, even in the early stages of your literature review, for you to get into the habit of documenting your searches and criteria for finding information; there is nothing more frustrating than writing up and not being able to remember where you came across relevant information several months previously.

As you carry out your literature review you will hopefully start to generate ideas for your own research, spot gaps in the literature

regarding theory and evidence, and begin to formulate a coherent argument that will form an evidence-based foundation for your proposed research. At this point extensive reading, note-taking, writing and reformulation of your writing is essential.

5.3 Submit your Final Proposal no later than 31st May

From your initial review of the literature, and in discussion with the programme director and/or supervisor, you should now be in a position to formulate a justification for your research, a methodology, and a plan for how the research can be carried out within the time and cost constraints of a Master's-level research project. You will be given the opportunity to submit your proposal to your supervisor for comment if submitted seven working days prior to this deadline, and this will be returned in time for refinement before final submission of the completed protocol.

5.5 Work towards an early submission for Ethics Approval by June/July

The availability of Faculty Ethics Committee has been factored into your dissertation process for the academic year. It is your responsibility to ensure that you meet the deadlines set out by the Faculty Ethics Committee, as the School has no control over timings of ethics boards. Based upon your coverage of ethics in the taught element of the programme it is expected that all student should recognise the requirements and thoroughness needed for an ethics submission at Faculty level. Whilst your supervisor may provide comments on a draft of the ethics form prior to submission (if submitted to the supervisor in good time) it is the students' responsibility to produce a sound ethics approval form. Poor quality ethics forms will not be signed off for submission to ethics.

6. Supervision

6.1 Role of Supervisor

Academic supervision is provided by a researcher / academic within the School of Psychology MSc Programme Team, occasionally supported by an additional supervisor if recruiting participants from a specific participant group or as part of a work-based research project. The role of the academic supervisor is the main supervisory role, guiding on methods and dissertation writing, giving feedback on dissertation chapter drafts etc.

The research proposal will be discussed by the course team. The Programme Director will meet with the student to discuss the recommendations of the team and the options - continuation with acknowledgement of recommendations; with significant revision; or, in exceptional cases, mutual agreement to discontinue the dissertation. On the basis of the research proposal a relevant supervisor will be appointed as well as a second adviser where appropriate. The supervisor will be allocated so as to reflect the specific area of focus of the dissertation and provide effective and knowledgeable support. After this process students will register their dissertations for examination by the University of Wales using standard forms and procedures (these will be provided by the Programme Team).

Subsequently a programme of individual and, where appropriate, small group tutorials will be agreed between the student and the tutor, defining the nature and frequency of meetings.

Reasonable expectations of your **academic supervisor** include:

1. Commenting on the appropriateness of the question posed, providing constructive criticism, and making

suggestions for the improvement and development of the research question.

2. Commenting on the research method(s) proposed and making suggestions for the development and improvement of the research methods.
3. Supporting the student in processing the research protocol through all relevant ethics and research panels.
4. Providing support and encouragement for the student during the collection, management and analysis of data.
5. Providing assistance in the write-up of the project, including **ONE** reading (only) of each section and ensuring that the report meets UWTSD regulations for the degree scheme.
6. Agreed contact during working hours.

It is very important that you **discuss any changes** to the research protocol, data collection approaches and data collection tools with **your academic supervisor**.

Discuss timing, supervisor availability (particularly over the summer before your dissertation is submitted) and how long they may take to look at your thesis at the outset.

6.2 Time management:

It is your responsibility to manage your time appropriately so that you meet the dissertation submission date, and to develop a project timetable in consultation with your academic supervisor that ensures that you can obtain their feedback on draft chapters when you need it. Remember that supervisors may take their holidays in July/August, and this may impact on your work plans in the run up to your dissertation submission

date. Be sure that you discuss this with your academic supervisor **well in advance** so that you have agreed with your supervisor on submission dates for draft chapters of your dissertation.

The Programme Team will arrange sessions (e.g., on completing ethics forms) at appropriate times. These tutorials are also a forum for asking questions.

6.3 The voice of experience

This is your dissertation project, not your supervisor's. It is normal to feel 'lost' or uncertain about direction at times when conducting research. Everyone does, even the most experienced researchers. It can be a source of frustration that there doesn't seem to be one right way or perfect project design: it is a matter of minimising research. It can feel like the answer is 'out there', if only someone would give it to you, or that it should have already been covered in the course earlier. In fact, the unique nature of each project means that you can only learn the answers as you go and no-one can anticipate entirely what you will need, nor know all the answers to the questions your project will raise. Everything will take longer than you expect. Discussing your concerns and feelings with your supervisor or the dissertation co-ordinator can be helpful (and cathartic!).

7. Ethical Practice and Data Storage

All students carrying out research on the MSc Applied Social and Health Psychology course are bound by the ethical requirements of the university and the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Conduct. Where there is any doubt regarding ethical practice whilst carrying out research the student **must** contact a member of the Programme Team for advice and clarification.

7.1 Data Management & Storage

“Primary data” is the actual data that you collect. This is likely to be in the form of either (a) audio recordings of interviews or (b) data collected on paper or online questionnaires. The University is responsible for storing your primary data (audio files and completed questionnaires), not you, the student – indeed, you are not permitted to keep this data after the end of the project. This is required under the Research Governance Framework to ensure that research data is not falsified, and the primary data must be stored for a stipulated length of time. The University retention periods for research data (in the absence of any stipulations from funders) are documented at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/>

So, once you have either (a) transcribed your audio files and anonymised the transcript or (b) input your questionnaire data into SPSS or Excel, you **MUST** pass the primary data (audio files and completed questionnaires) to the programme team for storage. All audio files must be stored digitally, labelled clearly with your name, year and project title and given to the MSc Programme Director for storage. Completed questionnaire may be stored in paper form and given to the MSc Programme Director, labelled clearly with your name, year and project title. All primary data (audio files and paper questionnaires) should be deleted from your own or any other computers you have

used. The data will be stored securely by the programme team for the requisite time.

“Secondary data” (interview transcripts, questionnaire responses in SPSS/Excel) should be stored in anonymised (de-identified) form with a key to indicate which identifier corresponds to which participant. You can keep the anonymised data, but you must ensure that any data that you keep protects the confidentiality of your participants.

7.2 Boundaries and safe practice

Be conscious of how the role of a researcher is different to that of any other professional or training role you may have had. Safe practice is just as important in research as it is in clinical practice. Your research participants may be vulnerable; care must be taken not to cause distress unnecessarily, and not to provide misleading information. Research participants may still become distressed in an interview, or when filling in a questionnaire, just because they are reminded of very distressing events that may have occurred. You must have plans in place to safeguard participants who do become distressed, or who have information needs e.g., by providing them with an opportunity to discuss their concerns with you. It will be important to discuss this with your supervisor before you start collecting data.

7.3 Feedback

Consider making a summary of the findings available to participants. Your dissertation abstract may also be placed on the School of Psychology MSc website.

7.4 Approval

No collection of primary data in any form should be carried out without confirmed approval from your supervisor and Faculty Research Ethics Committee approval. Breaches of this process may lead to data being disregarded and sections of the thesis

being disregarded in the marking process, as well as potential disciplinary action at a university level.

8. Writing your dissertation

8.1 Presentation standards

	Standard
Size and Thickness of Paper	A4 (minimum weight 70 gsm) or permanent photocopies cut to A4 size
Type or Print	Consistent and clear type of laser print quality for all copies for both text and illustrations.
Margins	4cm binding margin 2cm head margin 2.5cm fore-edge margin 4cm tail margin
Layout of Text	The text of the thesis should be produced in single-sided copy, on right-facing pages only. The main text should be in double spacing. Quotations and notes should be in single spacing. All pages should be numbered, including tables, illustrations etc., which are bound in with the text
Character Size	The characters employed in the main text (but not necessarily in illustrations, etc.,) shall be not less than 12pt. Characters used in all other text (notes, footnotes, captions etc.) shall be not less than 10pt. Printing should be of even quality with clear black characters and capable of photographic reproduction. Double or one and-a-half spacing should be used in the main text; but single spacing should be used in the Summary (Abstract) and in any indented quotations and footnotes.

Character fonts	A serif font –e.g. Times (New Roman) or Palatino – should be used for the main text and a sans serif font – e.g. Helvetica or Arial – for headings and labelling diagrams, etc.
Word spacing and division	Text should be set to ensure an even spacing between words for any particular line (i.e. unjustified). Word division at the ends of lines (hyphenation) should be avoided if possible
Title Page	See Report Structure
Spine (for final copy only)	Surname and initials of candidate Full or abbreviated title of the work Name of the degree for which it was submitted and the year of submission. <i>This information shall be printed along the spine in such a way as to be readable when the volume is lying flat with the front cover uppermost. If the work consists of more than one volume the spine shall also bear the number of each volume.</i>

8.2 Regulations

The following regulations *must* be followed:

- Word count should aim to be about 12,000 but up to 13,200 is acceptable.
- Typing must be **double spaced** on white A4 paper with **margins as specified below**
- **TWO** printed copies must be submitted plus one electronic copy in an approved format
- Temporary binding must be used for printed submissions for assessment
- Dissertations should be hard-bound for submission after assessment
- Following the completion of any typographical or minor corrections recommended by the Examining Board, you must submit at least one copy of your dissertation in permanent, hardback binding for retention by the Library, and a second copy in secure binding for retention by the School/ Faculty. Subject to certain conditions specified in Chapter 7 of the AQH, you may also be required to submit an additional copy in permanent, hardback binding for the National Library of Wales.

9. Report Structure

9.1 Title Page

- Title of thesis.
- Author's name.
- Name of degree
- University of Wales Trinity Saint David School of Psychology
- Year of presentation.

9.2 Declaration

On the first page (after the cover) you must include a signed declaration of the following

- That the dissertation does not include work accepted for any other degree or professional qualification (unless a clear statement is made as to the precise extent of the work so included).
- That the dissertation has been composed by you and is your own work.

9.3 Acknowledgements

The acknowledgement page should recognise those people who have helped you in either carrying out your research, making your research possible or have given you advice and support during the project.

9.4 Table of Contents

The contents page should list each section and main headings within each section. Numbered sections can make reading the thesis easier. A page number for each should be given.

The same format should be given for tables, graphs and diagrams.

Note that Microsoft Word has the capacity to convert headings into an automatically generated table of contents – making this much simpler.

9.5 Chapter 1: Executive Summary (500 words)

This short chapter will outline the context in which the research idea was developed and should provide a lay synopsis of the research.

9.6 Chapter 2: Systematic Literature Review (4,500 words)

Systematic literature reviewing is another key research skill. The literature review examines the main themes that have been pursued by other writers. It should be a critical review, rather than simply describing who has said what. Where there is not a large body of literature on the topic, you may need to look more broadly at the literature, for example at research studies of other conditions where there may be findings and implications that are relevant to your topic.

Points to note:

- Outline in the introductory paragraph what the aims and objectives of the literature review are, to give the reader a clear picture of what literature you are going to review and why. Please also include
 - o A short section (couple of paragraphs) on the methods used, which can cover how the literature search was done e.g. (1) what databases were searched (2) what search terms you used (linking these with the aims and objectives of the literature review) (3) what time period the search covered.
 - o A main section of the literature review which will be the results and include a short paragraph at the beginning of this outlining how many papers were

identified by the search, and how decisions were made about which papers to include in this review.

- o Conclude the lit review with a section on what the current research literature DOES NOT tell us (thereby making a case for YOUR research project!).
- Ensure the papers and topics included are relevant to your project, and that the literature you cover aligns well with the aims and objectives of the literature review. This chapter of your dissertation is in effect the beginning of an argument supporting the need and relevance of your project, rather than demonstrating simply that you have read widely.
- Use primary references and be sure that you have read and critically evaluated them. Your examiners are likely to have a good knowledge of the literature.
- Evaluate, rather than simply describe. At MSc level, your literature review MUST demonstrate both critical appraisal and synthesis of the research literature (See general tips for academic writing)
- Take care (in all dissertation chapters) to avoid duplication of content across chapters. This can be achieved with appropriate paraphrasing and summarizing, which are key research writing skills. In addition, take care that key phrases are used once only; thereafter, paraphrasing and summarizing is important. Your examiner will easily spot repetition of key phrases so do avoid this.
- Summarise the main points emerging from your review of the literature at the end.

Research Questions and Project Aims:

Following your summary of the literature reviewed, make sure you clearly state the following:

- (a) the gap in the literature that your project aims/aimed to fill
- (b) your research and the aims of your study.

9.7 Chapter 3: Research paper (4,500 words)

This chapter will take the form of a draft manuscript prepared with a view to submission for publication in a specified journal, and following the journal's specific "Instructions to authors". Please identify the journal by name, in a single sentence at the start of this chapter: "This manuscript has been written for submission to [journal name] following that journal's Instructions to Authors."

The student's supervisor may wish to recommend a journal better suited to the student's project, and to the supervisor's own field of research. The target journal should be agreed with your supervisor. Following dissertation submission for examination, this chapter may require some revision prior to submission for publication in the target journal, for example if the chosen journal has a maximum word count less than 4,500 words. Whilst not part of the assessment, the expectation is that all students will submit this article for publication in the specified journal within one year of completion.

Most journals will specify a structure that includes abstract, introduction, methods, results and discussion.

The research paper should start with an abstract setting out the topic area and aims of the project, a summary of the methods used, a couple of sentences on your main findings and conclusions or implications of your work. This may be either structured into headings (e.g., aim, method, results,

conclusions) or unstructured. This abstract should be up to 250 words.

The introduction section should be a concise summary of Chapter 2 (Literature Review). Although the literature review in the research paper is on the same topic as Chapter 2, you must demonstrate here the skill of condensing a full in-depth literature review into the conventional form suitable for the introduction to a published paper in an academic journal, and at the same time, make a strong case for your project. Take care not to duplicate any sentences or key phrases used in Chapter 2. The aim of this section is to make a case for the research to be presented by clearly and concisely identifying a gap in published research. This section should be limited to communicating the main points made in Chapter 2, and clarifying the aims and research questions at the end.

The method section should include a justification for the approach chosen as well as a description of the recruitment, data collection and data analysis methods. References should be provided for methods and any modifications made described. Cross-referencing to appendices is allowed here. This section should illustrate that you understood what you were doing and made sensible decisions, rather than blindly following a particular method 'recipe'.

The results section should demonstrate the way that the research questions have been answered. As well as the results of data analysis, a description of the participants, response rate (etc.,) should be included. Remember that your sample is a "result" of the sampling method you used to recruit from your target population. The order that the results are presented in should be logical and subheadings may be useful, if allowed by the journal. There is no rigid format for this section and some journals may combine results and discussion in a single section, though this is not recommended at MSc level.

No new data should be presented in the Discussion section. Rather, this section places the results in the context of the literature (and/or practice) and elaborates on issues arising from the findings. Avoid the temptation to simply reiterate the findings in an abbreviated form. It is a waste of words. The examiner will be looking for a discussion of the place of your findings in the context of current literature, strengths and weaknesses (including issues of validity and reliability of your findings), implications of your findings for research and practice, suggestions for further research, and concluding remarks. The conclusion should return to your aims / research questions and demonstrate to what extent these have been achieved / answered. All of the threads of the project should be clearly brought together.

9.8 Chapter 4: Reflective Chapter (2,500 words)

This chapter is intended to be a short reflective piece describing what actually happened rather than what the student thought would happen, and what the student learned from the experience. Reflection is valuable in research as well as in professional practice, and is a key skill in your research. The examiner will be looking for reflection on the research process including things you might have done differently in hindsight, if you had the chance to do the study again. This should demonstrate your learning through the process of conducting your study, including what you have learned about how to manage a research project. Think of this chapter as a chance to illustrate for students coming after you what the practical and other pitfalls are in conducting an MSc dissertation project, and how they might avoid any mistakes that you made.

9.9 Appendices

Appendices are not included in the 12,000 word limit.

Appendices should include the ethics approval letter, the information and consent sheets used in the study, full transcript of a sample of interviews (if relevant), questionnaires (if relevant), the interview guide (if relevant) etc.

For Qualitative data, you should consider including a section of coded transcript to illustrate your coding.

The precise content should be decided by you, bearing in mind what you think is important for readers to be aware of or assess for themselves

9.10 Reference List

APA referencing conventions to be followed at all times

10. FAQs

10.1 How strict is the word limit?

Conciseness is a key skills in academic writing, and the 12,000 word limit is to encourage you to write an MSc dissertation that does justice to your work, and that demonstrates all the key skills outlined in the marking grid. Keep in mind that you are trying to demonstrate the criteria set out in the marking grid, rather than writing only what you would like to say! Therefore the overall word limit for each section (Systematic Literature Review; Research Paper; Reflective Chapter) are as set out in the handbook $\pm 10\%$ of the word count; the exception to this is the Executive Summary, which has a maximum word count of 500 words (this is because Executive Summaries traditionally have no scope to be higher than the word count in professional submissions).

10.2 Are quotes included in the word count?

Yes, they are, so use them judiciously. For example, thematic analysis does not need every quote to be provided but a representative quote will suffice. If you are doing a thematic analysis and find yourself using a lot of individual quotes, be certain that these are in fact representative of common themes, rather than individual quotes that make statements that you see as important. Some research papers present a description of themes and sub-themes with representative quotes in tabular form (tables are not included in the word limit), with appropriate cross-referencing. Avoid using a lot of quotes at the cost of clarity of research method or discussion.

10.3 When is the Report Submission date?

The complete dissertation (printed copies and electronic copy) will be submitted on the same day as your individual presentation.

10.4 Am I able to pay participants or purchase materials for my research?

UWTSD is unable to contribute to the costs of conducting the dissertation project, or of presenting and submitting the Dissertation. Thus, the scope of the project needs to reflect the fact that this is unfunded work.

11. Dissertation Oral Presentation

11.1 Presentation guidance

Assessment component One is a 30-minute presentation of your dissertation thesis to an academic audience, and this makes up 25% of your overall Part II mark.

This presentation should follow the structure of the main sections of your thesis (Systematic literature review, Research

paper, and Reflective chapter) in that these will be the key issues that you will want to convey to your audience.

- You will need to convey to your audience what the issue is and the background to your area of research (the type of things you will have covered in your systematic literature review section)
- You will need to clearly explain your methodology, results, conclusions and implications (which you will have covered in your research paper section)
- You will need to reflect upon the research process, including what you have learnt, recognising issues and potential ways to address these (based upon your reflective chapter section).

There are no set timings for each of these sections (i.e., you will not be judged upon spending 10 minutes discussing the systematic literature review, another 10 minutes on the research etc.); rather, it is expected that you will put together an appropriate presentation (with whatever visual aids you feel are necessary) that, in 30 minutes, will address all of the above.

12. Module Validation Information

MODULE CODE:

TITLE:

Applied Psychology

Research Dissertation

DATED:

26/02/2015

LEVEL:

7

CREDITS:

60

JACS CODE:

C831

AIM(S)

- To develop higher order research skills by identifying and undertaking a piece of primary research related to applied psychology which demonstrates scientific and ethical rigour in all respects.
- To enable students to demonstrate self-direction, autonomy, and originality in identifying, tackling and solving issues of relevance to an applied research question in social and/or health psychology.
- To provide students with the ability to demonstrate a professional standard of presentation skills through the presentation of their work at an internal conference.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of the module students will be able to:

1. Conduct an in-depth systematic literature review critically appraising the evidence-base relevant to the dissertation topic.
2. Design a research project identifying appropriate hypotheses/research questions and research methodology.
3. Carry out primary data collection using appropriate tools and methodology in compliance with relevant legal, ethical and data requirements.
4. Analyse data using appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative methods.
5. Interpret and critique the project results and findings and report them in the required format.
6. Reflect on the research process and methods, demonstrating clear understanding of ethical and

research frameworks and lessons learned for future research/practice.

7. Present and discuss their work appropriately to an academic audience.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

The student will be required to work on his/her own initiative in the production of the dissertation on a specific research area under appropriate supervision.

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

The student is expected to take full ownership of their own dissertation project under appropriate supervision, and to manage their time appropriately to ensure completion within the timescales. Workshops and small group tutorials associated with this module will provide students with an overview of research methodology including design, data collection methods and analytical processes. Each student will be allocated a supervisor. In accordance the Academic Quality Handbook 2014/15 7.17.6 (5) the student may receive up to 15 hours of group tutorial supervision and up to ten hours of individual supervision.

SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The research proposal will be discussed by the course team. The Programme Director will meet with the student to discuss the recommendations of the team and the options - continuation with acknowledgement of recommendations, with significant revision or in exceptional cases, mutual agreement to discontinue the dissertation. On the basis of the research proposal a relevant supervisor will be appointed as well as a second adviser where appropriate. The supervisor will be allocated so as to reflect the specific area of focus of the dissertation and provide effective and knowledgeable support.

After this process students will register their dissertations for examination by the University of Wales using standard forms and procedures.

Subsequently a programme of individual and, where appropriate, small group tutorials will be agreed between the student and the tutor, defining the nature and frequency of meetings.

Allocation of teaching to deliver the module are:

Activity type	Hours	Percentage
Scheduled learning	25	4%
Independent learning	575	96%
Placement learning		
TOTAL	600	100%

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Component 1

30 minute individual presentation (25%): Students will be required to present their dissertation to peers at an in-house mini-conference and will be assessed on their presentation skills, engagement and ability to demonstrate understanding of their dissertation.

Assessment Component 2

Written dissertation (75%): Students will be required to write up their study and submit a 12,000 word written thesis following standard psychology reporting conventions through three core chapters preceded by a brief summary of the thesis.

- Executive Summary (500 words)
- Systematic literature review (4,500 words)
- Research paper targeted at appropriate journal (4,500 words)
- Reflective chapter (2,500 words)

Assessment Summary

Activity type	Percentage
Written Exam	
Coursework	75%
Practical	25%
TOTAL	100%

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)

Does the module contribute to ESD?	
	Yes
If yes please provide brief details (no more than 100 words):	
Research supervision expertise within the School directly contributes to the sustainability agenda, including a focus on understanding the causes of prejudice and discrimination, developing cost-effective and easily accessible interventions to improved psychological and physical health, and exploring the role of the media in influencing the public's attitudes towards key policies. Students will also develop key problem-solving skills and critical reflective skills in the line with the QAA (2013) Education for Sustainable Development guidelines.	

Reading list

Students will be expected to make use of the research methods and academic writing books used during Part One of the programme to inform all stages of their dissertation including the research proposal.

READING LIST (EXEMPLI GRATIA)

Essential Reading

Students will be expected to identify and engage in extensive use of appropriate primary source materials in the form of academic journals, specialised texts and policy documents of relevance to their chosen topic

APA (2010). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). APA: Washington, DC.

<http://www.bps.org.uk/what-we-do/ethics-standards/ethics-standards>

Recommended Reading (depending upon chosen methodology).

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