Student Handbook

Work-based Learning Project

Work-based Project Module Tutors

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Your Individual Project Tutor

As a work-based project student, you will be assigned an Individual Project Tutor, who will be your primary source of guidance and support throughout your module. Your Individual Project Tutor will be responsible for supporting you in:

- writing a suitable research question around which to form your work-based project.
- designing and structuring a work-based project that is suitable for your research question, your workplace, and you as a student.
- developing individual learning outcomes that fully capture the work-based project you have designed and your level-appropriate learning.
- completing the University Ethics Form and securing ethical approval from the University for your work-based project.
- developing and approving your research instruments.
- supporting you in negotiating your project with your employer/organisation, both before and during the project.
- conducting your work-based project and managing any difficulties that arise over the course of your project; and
- preparing the written submissions that detail and describe your project as well as your final project presentation.

Your Individual Project Tutor is not responsible for:

- coming up with a research question for you or turning your idea into a suitable research question for you.
- designing a work-based project for you based upon your research question.
- completing your University Ethics Form for you.
- writing your individual learning outcomes for you.
- guaranteeing that the project you have proposed will receive ethical approval from the University.
- negotiating with your employer/organisation on your behalf regarding your work-based project.
- guaranteeing that your employer/organisation will approve the work-based project you have proposed.
- developing your research instruments for you.
- doing any of the active research necessary for you to complete your work-based project.
- guaranteeing that the circumstances of your employment will not change in any way that affects your work-based project; and
- providing more than one written edit of any written submission drafts for your final project submission.

Your Individual Project Tutor will be an expert in designing and conducting work-based research, though not necessarily in your field of work. Their guidance is meant to support you as you engage with your independent learning process through the work-based project module, and to help you make the most of your time spent studying. You will have meetings at least monthly with your Individual Project Tutor and should never hesitate to contact them for additional guidance, support, and knowledge outside of these meetings.

As a work-based project student, you also have access to support and guidance from:

- the work-based project Module Lead, who may be able to offer a second opinion, further guidance, or just a fresh pair of eyes with any element of your project; or

- the Ethics Board Representative, who can give you guidance and advice specific to the Ethics Form or the University ethics procedures and policies.

Finally, as a student at the University, you are encouraged to seek guidance and support wherever necessary from the additional services and resources available to you, detailed in the "Support Resources" section of this handbook.

You will be asked to complete some basic steps towards your work-based project prior to the official start of the module on the Module Induction Day. Your chief responsibility, on which you may have already begun work, is to select a research question around which to frame your work-based project and to begin the early stages of designing your research.

Effective research questions

The first step in designing your work-based project is to settle on a question to study and explore. Your Individual Project Tutor will help support you through this process, but it is crucial that the question and design of your work-based project are your own. Research question development should, ideally, follow a five-step process:

1. Choose a topic that interests you…
    a. …and ***read*** everything you can find
2. Find an interesting aspect of the topic
    b. Ask yourself ***who/when/where*** questions
3. Identify a question within that aspect
    c. Ask yourself ***how/why*** questions
4. Is your question
    d. ***focused***?
    e. ***complex***?
    f. ***interesting***?
    g. ***researchable***?
5. What ***types of information*** will you need to answer the question? Are those types ***accessible*** to you?

Achievable Research

In addition to being an effective research question, it is crucial that your work-based learning project is achievable. Your Individual Project Tutor will support you through determining whether the project you've identified is achievable based around several key considerations:

6. ***Time frame*** – can this project be completed within the level and credit value you are pursuing?
7. ***Workplace support*** – is your workplace willing to support this project?
8. ***Financing*** – is there financial outlay involved in pursuing this project and, if so, have you discussed this with your workplace and received a guarantee of support?
9. ***Rules, laws, and guidelines*** – have you confirmed that the project conforms not just to the rules of the workplace and the University, but also to any additional rules, codes of practice, guidelines, etc. governing this area, such as laws of the country, region, or local authority, standards of practice of a profession, etc.

10. ***Moral considerations*** – is the research proposed in keeping with the basic moral codes of conduct and behaviour acceptable in the culture hosting the research, as well as the culture of the University?
11. ***Data availability*** – is the data necessary to complete the project reasonably available/accessible to you?
12. ***Workplace impact*** – will the project have a demonstrable impact on your workplace and/or work practice?

You will work in collaboration with your Individual Project Tutor to ensure that your project meets these and any other criteria before beginning; a process which may require some renegotiation of your original research question as well as a narrowing or widening of the scope of your project. Remember that, while your Individual Project Tutor is here to provide you with expert advice and guidance, the project you conduct must ultimately be your own. Don't hesitate to engage in several drafts and redrafts of the project during this process, until you are sure that you have settled upon a work-based project that is effective and achievable, but also still of interest to you and of impact to your workplace practice.

Designing for accuracy, validity, and reliability

Once you have settled upon the research question that will form the basis of your work- based project, you will need to work with your Individual Project Tutor to design the project you wish to conduct. Again, it is helpful to have a rough idea of the types of inquiry that interest you (e.g., a preference for qualitative over quantitative methods, an interest in conducting action research, a rough idea for a suitable experiment, etc.) prior to arriving at the project Induction Day.

Your Individual Project Tutor will help you to refine your ideas, based upon the final research question at which you arrive, to design a project that not only meets the needs of you as a learner and of your workplace, but also of:

- Accuracy
    - Has your project been designed in such a way that the research methods and research instruments you will employ are capable of measuring/recording what you are studying?
    - e.g., when measuring the temperature of a pot of water, is it more accurate to use a finger dipped in the water, or a submerged thermometer?
- Validity
    - Has your project been designed in such a way that your results will truly demonstrate what you are attempting to demonstrate? Are you employing the best possible methods for the task you have set yourself?
    - e.g., is measuring the temperature of a pot of water the most valid way to answer the question "at what temperature does water boil?" is it the most valid way to answer the question "how long does it take to cook pasta in 105° water?"
- Reliability
    - Has your project been designed in such a way that your results could be replicated by another researcher following your design?
    - e.g., have you put measures in place such as using the same thermometer to measure different pots of water, boiling all pots on the same setting on the same stove?
- Complexity
    - Has your project been designed in such a way that it will demonstrate your skills, knowledge, and abilities and your mastery of the module's learning outcomes?

Learning Outcomes

Module Learning Outcomes (L7)

The Work-based Learning Project module has five key learning outcomes, each of which must be reflected in your work-based learning project submissions: the project proposal, the project report, and the project presentation. These learning outcomes are:

- design and negotiate a substantial, methodologically sound, work-based study, demonstrating due regard to ethical issues.
- analyse, interpret, critically evaluate and report relevant research data, understanding and managing dilemmas and value-conflicts.
- recommend future actions based on the findings, discussing interrelationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.
- reflect critically on the outcomes of a project, including individual learning, lessons learned, and issues of insider research.

Module Learning Outcomes (L6)

- design and negotiate an appropriate and methodologically sound work-based study demonstrating due regard to ethical issues;
- analyse, interpret, evaluate and report relevant research data, identifying dilemmas and value-conflicts;
- recommend future actions based on the findings, identifying interrelationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located;
- reflect on the outcomes of a project, including individual learning, lessons learned, and issues of insider research.

Individual Learning Outcomes

In addition to the five module learning outcomes, each student is expected to develop, with the support and guidance of their Individual Project Tutor, three to five individual learning outcomes. Your individual learning outcomes will relate directly to your specific project and what you hope and expect to achieve and will form part of the aims and justifications for your work-based learning project. Your Individual Project Tutor will work with you to ensure that your individual learning outcomes capture the extent of the learning you will engage with through your work-based learning project and that they are appropriate to your level of study.

Organisational Approval

Before you can begin your work-based project you must receive approval, in writing, of your employer or organisation (even if you are a sole trader). This written approval must be shown to your Individual Project Tutor and submitted as an appendix to your Ethics Form.

It is your responsibility as a work-based learner to ensure that your employer/organisation and your direct supervisor, as well as any relevant colleagues or subordinates, understand the nature of your proposed project, its purpose, and its potential impact on the workplace. It is crucial that your project has both the understanding and support of those involved, and a project that does not receive this support must be renegotiated with the employer/organisation until they are willing to grant it.

If you are struggling to communicate with your employer/organisation or any other members of your workplace regarding your work-based project, or in securing their consent for you to proceed with your project as proposed, please do not hesitate to involve your Individual Project Tutor, who may be able to help you negotiate the process.

Funding, material support, and other provisions

Certain projects may, by the nature, require a financial outlay or professional concession from the employer. If, for example, your project requires testing a new piece of machinery, that machinery will need to be purchased. In other cases, the project may require special provisions/adjustments be made by the organization. If, for example, you wish to investigatethe effects of changed shift patterns, then certain staff members' shift patterns will need to be modified.

In situations where your project has special requirements such as funding, material support, changes to existing policies, etc. you must communicate these to your employer and seek their agreement prior to beginning your project. This approval should be explicitly mentioned in the letter of approval you receive.

Data ownership

The final step in ensuring that your employing organisation approves of the project is negotiating the final ownership of data generated by your work. It is necessary that the ownership of data is understood by both you and your employer, and that all terms and conditions agreed upon regarding ownership of data are explicitly mentioned within your letter of approval and made clear in your Ethics Form.

- Data generated by the organisation (e.g., readings from machinery owned by the organisation, information from files to which you have been given access, etc.) are

  the property of the organisation. You must acknowledge this in the Ethics Form and must make clear the terms under which this data is being accessed and used, and the methods of storage and protection employed.
- Data generated by you (e.g., results from questionnaires, notes from observations are ordinarily

considered to be your property and, under standard circumstances, would be destroyed. In certain, special circumstances however, the organisation may request that this data be shared with them. In such a situation, should you agree, it is necessary that:

- this arrangement be made clear in the Ethics Form, and
- any participants be made aware, as part of their informed consent process, the organisation will be accessing their data.

Sole Traders

Even if you have applied to study as a work-based learner as a sole trader, and are therefore self-employed, it is still necessary for you to complete the organisational approval process and provide the necessary paperwork for the Ethics Form. Treat this as an opportunity to reflect upon the ways in which your personal and professional learning needs may differ from the needs of your business, and how you can ensure that your work-based learning project meets all of these needs.

Ethics Form

Access your module Moodle page to view an annotated draft of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) E1 Ethics Form, to support you indrafting your own.

Purpose

Before you can begin your work-based project, you must receive approval from the University, in the form of a signed University Ethics Form. This form is not negotiable, cannot be avoided, and must be completed and signed off before you may begin any work onyour project. The form is here to protect your participants, the University, and you as a researcher, so it is incredibly important that you commit the time and care necessary to effectively engage with the ethics approval process.

It is important to remember that research ethics is not a black and white subject, and that thepurpose of the Ethics Form is not to determine what research *is* or *is not* ethical. It is the baseline expectation of the University that all research undertaken by students and/or supported by staff will strive to *be ethical*. Please understand that the Ethics Form and approval process is not about determining, based on yes/no criteria, whether or not your research is ethical enough.

Rather, the University Ethics Form is about demonstrating consideration of the ethicalimplications of research and showing that strategies have been put in place wherever possible to mitigate impacts. Your research will be approved not when you have demonstrated that you are *ethical enough* but rather when the approving authorities (whether the Individual Project Tutor, the Ethics Board Representative, the Institute's Ethics Board, or the University Ethics Board) deem that you have considered the full range of eventualities and possibilities and thought through the full ramifications of your research and its wider impact.

Basic Ethical Principles

As a starting point, you should work to ensure that the work-based project you design will be conducted in line with some basic ethical principles, including:

- ***Beneficence*** – the idea that all research should have the well-being of participants as an end goal.
- ***Non-malfeasance*** – the idea that research should "do no harm".
- ***Respect*** – the idea that research will pay due regard to the feelings, wishes, andrights of all involved, including the researcher, participants, and the wider community.
- ***Justice*** – the idea that research will be fair and equal in treatment and outcomes.

- ***Participant interests*** – the idea that research will be conducted in a way that accounts for the best interests of participants.
- ***Participant safety*** – the idea that research will be designed for the safety of participants, and not expose them to unnecessary risk or harm.
- ***Researcher safety*** – the idea that research will be designed for the safety of the research, and not expose him/her to unnecessary risk or harm.
- ***Impact on others*** – the idea that research will be designed to account for its impact on others, including the wider community or future generations.
- ***Informed consent*** – the idea that all participatory parties will be given the opportunity to consent to participation, and that they will be given sufficient information to understand what that consent entails, requires, and implies.
- ***Briefing and debriefing*** – the idea that all participants should have the right and opportunity to discuss the topic with the researcher, receive information on what is being researched, why their personal part in the research is required, and what are the findings.
- ***Withdrawal*** – the idea that all participants should have, and be made aware of, the right to leave research at any point without negative consequences.
- ***Confidentiality*** – the idea that all data should be protected and that participants have a right to know the degree to which the information they provide throughout the course of the research will be protected.
- ***Anonymity*** – the idea that research data should not reveal, or make it possible to discover, names or personal identifying information of participants.

While different research will work within these principles in different ways and to different degrees, it is crucial that you address, at minimum, all of these issues and the ways in which they are apparent in the research/project.

Research Integrity

In addition to paying due reference to ethical considerations in designing research and drafting an Ethics Form, it is paramount that you maintain your connection to the Basic Ethical Principles throughout the course of the research, in order to preserve its integrity. Your Individual Project Tutor will support and guide you through the stages of your research in tutorial meetings, helping you to stay on track and work to the University of Wales Trinity Saint David Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice (Appendix 1). While your tutor will help you to stay within the guidelines set by this document, it would be wise to familiarise yourself with its contents and strive to work within it.

Ethics Approval Process

Step 1 – Tutor Sign-off

You will work alongside your Individual Project Tutor to write and develop your Ethics Form. When your tutor is satisfied that you have completed your form, capturing the entirety of your proposed project and giving due consideration to ethical issues and carefully considering the risks, impacts, and ramifications of your project, he/she will "signoff" and pass your Ethics Form to the Ethics Board Representative.

Step 2 – PPF Sign-off

The PPF Ethics Board Representative is our Academy's authority on matters of research ethics. He/she acts as our Academy's representative on the University Ethics Board and has theauthority to give final approval to all Ethics Forms for research conducted in taught undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes. Once your Individual Project Tutor is satisfied with your Ethics Form, it will be reviewed by the PPF Ethics Board representative, who may ask for some clarifications, amendments, or reconsiderations. Once the PPF Ethics Board Representative is satisfied with your Ethics Form, he/she will sign it and you will be free to begin your work-based project.

Remember that your project timeline begins on the day you receive ethical approval for yourproject, and you will have 4, 6, or 8 months from that day to complete your project. Your tutor will contact you to arrange a date for your final presentation and submission. Your Individual Project Tutor will send you a signed and dated electronic copy of your Ethics Form for your personal records. It is crucial that you retain this copy until your work-based project has been marked and that mark has been formally confirmed by a UWTSD Exam Board. You will also need to attach this signed and dated electronic copy as an appendix to your Project Report.

The Institute's Ethics Board

The Institute of Management and Health, under which PPF sits, has an Ethics Board that meets on a monthly basis. The purpose of the Institute's Ethics Board is to review Ethics forms and to review individual cases referred to them by the Academy's Ethics Board Representatives.

On rare occasions, either your Individual Project Tutor or the PPF Ethics Board Representative may ask the Institute's Ethics Board to review your Ethics Form. Your form may be sent for review by the Institute's Ethics Board if:

- your project is ethically complex and has been deemed to require a further layer of vetting and approval, to ensure all necessary due diligence has been conducted.
- your project is in a field or area with which your Individual Project Tutor and the PPF Ethics Board Representative are unfamiliar, and they would like an additional opinion regarding the ethical considerations you have taken; or
- there is an irreconcilable disagreement between you and your Individual Project Tutor and/or the PPF Ethics Board Representative regarding the project.

Remember that, should you fundamentally disagree with the ethical guidance provided to you by your Individual Project Tutor or by the PPF Ethics Board Representative, you also have the right to ask that your Ethics Form be reviewed by the Institute's Ethics Board.

The University Ethics Board

In very rare instances, an Ethics Form may be sent to the University Ethics Board for final review. An Ethics Form will never be referred to the University Ethics Board unless it has already been sent to the Institute of Management and Health Ethics Board for review. The University Ethics Board may become involved if:

- the Institute of Management and Health Ethics Board wishes to pursue another opinion or an additional layer of vetting and approval; or
- the student, individual tutor, or PPF Ethics Board Representative wishes to appeal against the recommendations given by the Institute of Management and Health Ethics Board.

Remember that, should you fundamentally disagree with the decision given by the Institute's Ethics Board regarding your Ethics Form, you also have the right to ask that it be reviewed by the University Ethics Board.

Research Instruments

Your research instruments are any of the tools you use to collect and analyse data for your work-based project. They may include things like questionnaires or interview questions, forms to be used for tracking observations, or details of experiment designs.

All research instruments must be reviewed and approved by your Individual Project Tutor before you may use them for data collection or analysis, and any amendments you want to make after approval (e.g., changing the wording of a question on a questionnaire) should be cleared with your Individual Project Tutor beforehand.

The research instruments you choose to use will be entirely dependent upon your work-based project, your workplace context, your selected methods, and your personal paradigm as a researcher. Your Individual Project Tutor can help you if you are struggling to find research instruments to suit your needs.

Remember that your research instruments need to be as clear, as project-appropriate, and as user-friendly as possible. Wherever the opportunity exists, it is a good idea to ask an independent party to sample your research instruments for clarity and ease of use (e.g., asking a family member to take a questionnaire).

Being an Insider Researcher

One of the most fundamental elements of your experience on the work-based learning project module will stem from your status as an "insider researcher" – someone who researches a community or space of which they are a member. Being an insider researcher is not necessarily a positive or a negative thing within your research; it is simply an unavoidable element that must be acknowledged and examined.

As you conduct your work-based learning project, always try to keep one eye to the impact of your status as an "insider" – how might it be affecting or impacting the data you collect? How might it be impacting or affecting your participants? How might it be impacting or affecting you as a researcher or as a professional?

Insider research and its impact will need to be included as a major theme within your analysis of the ethical implications of your work-based project, as well as your methodology, findings, and conclusions and recommendations, as appropriate.

Credit values, word counts, and presentation times

The word count and presentation time for your work-based project will change depending on the level at which you are studying and the credit value you are pursuing. Please see the chart below for a breakdown of the total word count for your work-based project, as well as the expectation for each assessment component. If you are unsure of the level, credit value and module code of your work-based project, please ask your Individual Project Tutor.

Expected sections and estimated word counts

Report – Approximate Word Counts by Section							**Total Report**	**Proposal**	**Total word count on module descriptor**	**Presentation number of minutes**
Module Code	**Credit Value**	**Introduction**	**Lit Review**	**Methods**	**Findings**	**Conclusions**				
BMPF6007D	20	140	420	420	1680	140	**2800**	400	3200	5 mins
BMPF6008D BMPF6078D	30	220	660	660	2640	220	**4400**	400	4800	7 mins
BMPF6094D BMPF6093D BMPF6092D	40	288	864	864	3456	288	**5760**	640	6400	10 mins
BMPF6010 BMPF6045D	60	420	1260	1260	5040	420	**8400**	1200	9600	14 mins
BMPF7325/D	20	180	540	540	2160	180	**3600**	400	4000	6 mins
BMPF7326/D	30	270	810	810	3240	270	**5400**	600	6000	8 mins
BMPF7327/D	40	360	1080	1080	4320	360	**7200**	800	8000	13 mins
BMPF7328/D	45	405	1215	1215	4860	405	**8100**	900	9000	13 mins
BMPF7329/D	60	540	1620	1620	6480	540	**10800**	1200	12000	15 mins

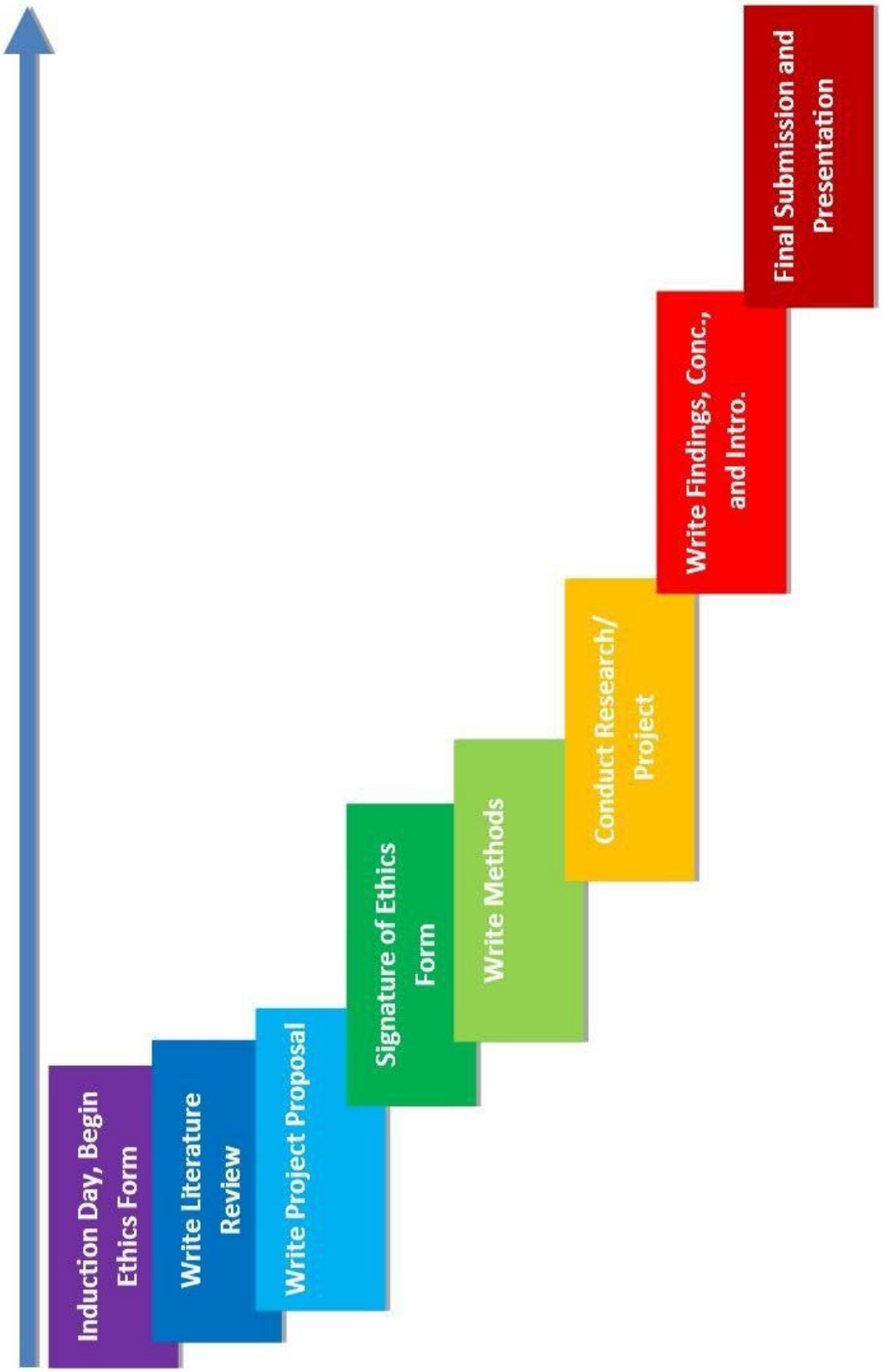
The Project Timeline

As a university student, there are strict rules governing the time that may be allocated to you to complete your work. You will be given a set period of time within which you must complete your work-based project, submit your written work, and make your final presentation. Please see the chart below to find your own time allocation. Remember that your allocated time begins on the day your Ethics Form receives a signature of approval bythe PPF Ethics Board representative.

Module Code	Level	Credit Value	Time Allocated from Signature of Ethics Form
BMPF6007	6	20	4 months
BMPF6009	6	40	6 months
BMPF6010	6	60	8 months
BMPF7007	7	20	3 months
BMPF7008	7	30	4 months
BMPF7009	7	40	6 months
BMPF7045	7	45	7 months
BMPF7010	7	60	8 months

While you are welcome to present/submit earlier to align more effectively with your schedule, please remember that these time allocations have been carefully chosen to align with the approximate time necessary to complete work at the level and credit value given. Your Individual Project Tutor will work with you throughout your work-based project to ensure that you have chosen a project of appropriate complexity, and that you are putting appropriate time and consideration into different sections, to work to the allocated times.

The time allocated to each unique project section will vary on a case-by-case basis, and everyproject is different. Depending on the specific needs of you and your project, your IndividualProject Tutor may ask you to change the order of work, revisit previous work, or make otheradjustments. The general order of work, however, tends to follow a similar path and timeline, shown below.


Induction Day, Begin Ethics Form
Write Literature Review
Write Project Proposal
Signature of Ethics Form
Write Methods
Conduct Research/ Project
Write Findings, Conc., and Intro.
Final Submission and Presentation

Tutorial Meetings

You will be expected to hold one-to-one tutorial meetings with your Individual Project Tutor approximately every 3-5 weeks. Your one-to-one tutorial meetings will be an opportunity for you to discuss your progress, report on completed work, receive guidance on your next steps, and resolve any issues that may arise over the course of your project. It is crucial that you engage with your one-to-one tutorial meetings throughout the course of your work- based project, to stay on track for your submission deadline and ensure that you are completing your project in a suitable, ethically sound, and effective manner.

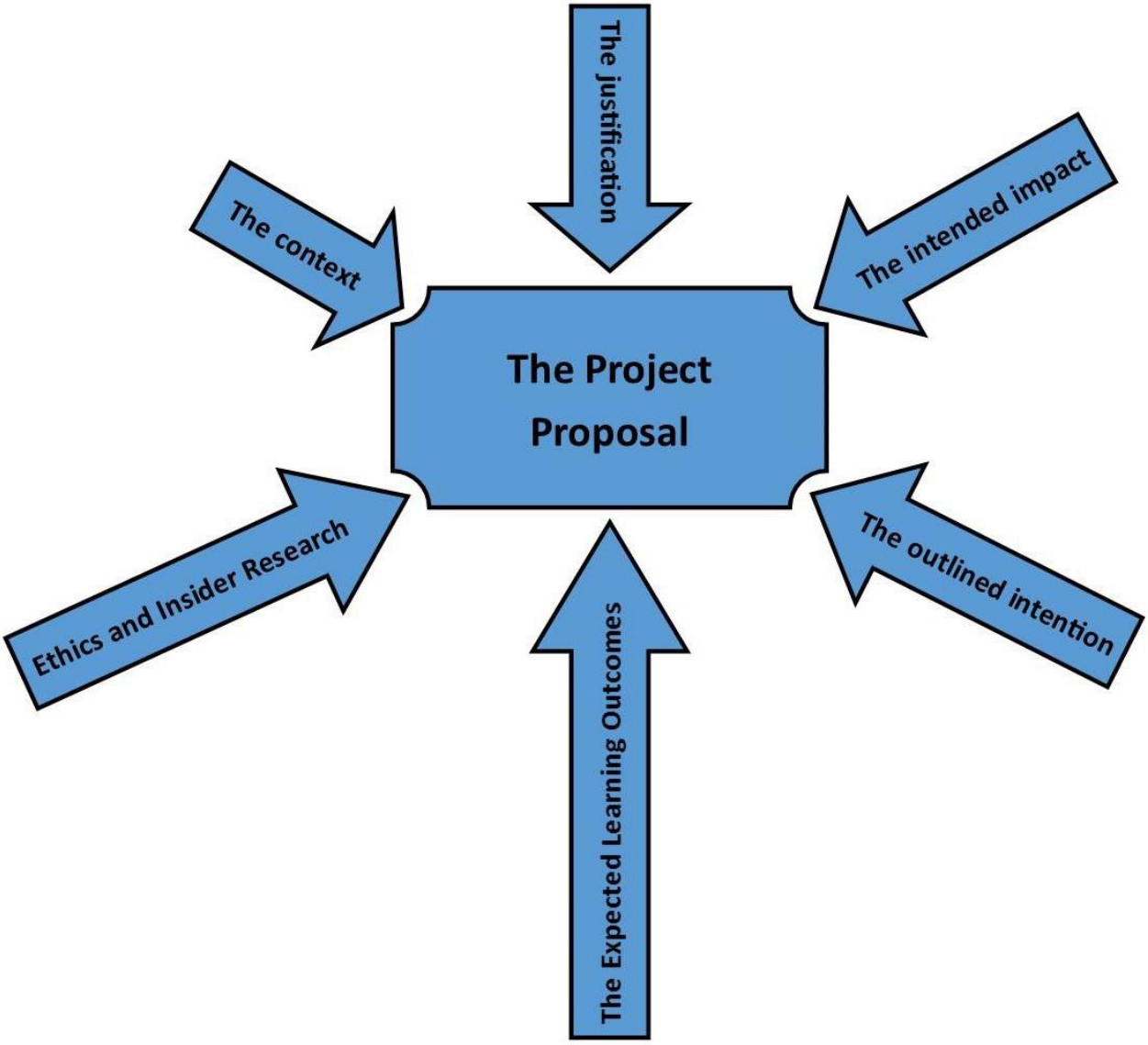
You will schedule your tutorial meetings with your Individual Project Tutor based upon your own professional schedule, the needs of your specific project, and the schedule of your tutor. As a rough guide, your tutorial meetings will focus on the following key project stages:

Session	**Content**
Tutorial 1 (Induction Day)	- Research question and research design - The Ethics Form - Beginning a Literature Review
Tutorial 2	- The Ethics Form - Writing the Literature Review (ongoing) - Writing the Project Proposal
This is as far into the process as you can go without a signed Ethics Form. If your own Ethics Form needs more work, negotiation, or editing, you may have additional tutorials using the same format as "Tutorial 2" above. Once your Ethics Form has received approval, your projecttimeline will begin, and you will move on to the tutorial topics below.	
Tutorial 3	- Ongoing support with Literature Review and Project Proposal asneeded - Writing a Methods section
Tutorial 4	- Ongoing support with Literature Review, Project Proposal, andMethods as needed - Conduct and implementation of research, use of research instruments,etc.
Tutorial 5	- Ongoing support in conduct and implementation of research, use ofresearch instruments, etc. - Support with Literature Review, Project Proposal, and Methods asneeded
Tutorial 6	- Help in wrapping up data collection processes - Writing the Findings, Conclusion, and Introduction
Tutorial 7	- Final support in written sections, draft edits - Support in presentation preparation

The Project Proposal

***Bear in mind that every student, and every work-based project, is unique. While this handbook provides a basic outline of expectations for student submissions and their contents, your own submission will be marked primarily based upon its suitability for your own project and its reflection of the module learning outcomes and your individual learning outcomes. ***

The Project Proposal document is expected to provide context, background, and justification and to introduce a work-based learning project. As a general rule, your Project Proposal document should provide:



1. The context
    a. What is the organisation/setting for the project?
    b. What is the current (and, if relevant, historic) situation in this organisation and setting?
2. The justification
    a. Why are you undertaking this project?
    b. How does this project sit within the context you have described?
3. The intended impact
    a. What do you hope to impact/achieve/accomplish through this project?
    b. What might the wider ramifications of this project be to the context described?
4. The outlined intention
    a. In brief, what do you intend to do, how/when/where do you intend to do it?
    b. Proposed methods, including a justification of those methods
    c. An expected timeline
    d. Graphics such as a GANTT chart may be helpful in some cases
5. The ethics and insider research
    a. A brief explanation of the ethical implications of the project, as well as theimpact of being an insider researcher upon the project
6. The expected learning outcomes
    a. These will be your personal, specific learning outcomes, not the modulelearning outcomes
7. References
    a. The need for references will vary by case, but may be appropriate or even necessary in setting the context, providing background, providing justification, or explaining the reasons for the intended impact
8. Writing style
    a. While first person is acceptable, it is generally preferable to write theProject Proposal in the third person
        i. E.g., “It was decided that…” or “It is proposed to…” or “The researcher will…”

The Project Report

Introduction

- 5-7% of your total report word count
- Background, justification, aims, LEARNING OUTCOMES

Literature Review

- 15-20% of your total report word count
- Fit the research/project within context, starting wide and narrowing to your specific project

Methodology

- 15-20% of your total report word count
- Why have you chosen these methods/methodology? How are you doing your project?
- Ethics? Insider Research?

Findings

- 50-60% of your total report word count
- Results AND what they might mean
- Make sense of the data

Conclusion

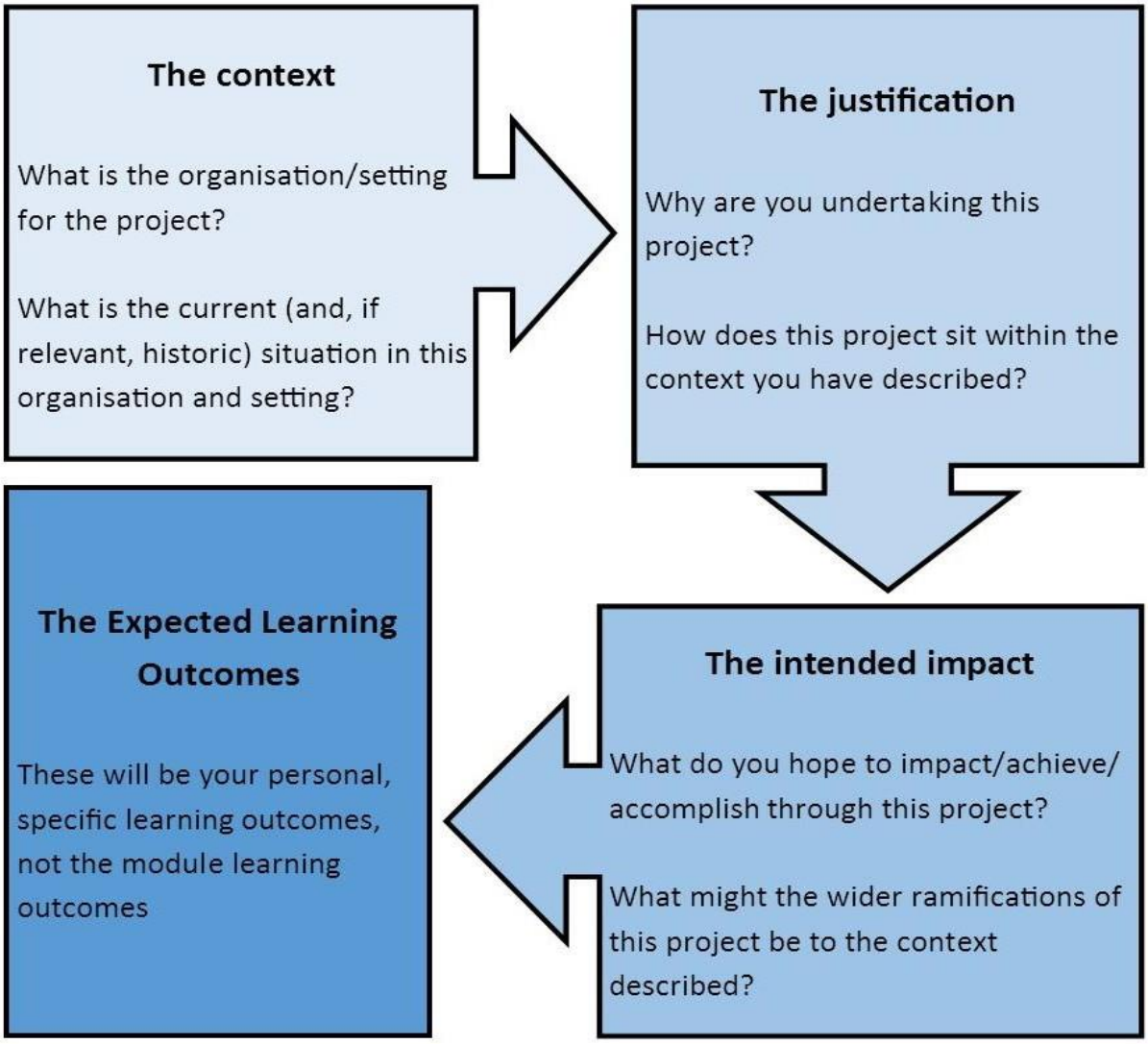
- 5-7% of your total report word count
- What does it all mean?
- Recommendations?

Introduction

The Introduction section is meant to do exactly that – introduce your work-based project to the reader. This section can feel as though you are repeating information contained in the Project Proposal, but it is important to focus on the two different intentions of these two different documents. It can help to imagine writing a Project Proposal as though you are trying to convince a boss/funder/etc. to allow a project to go forward, while a Project Report is providing a full summative write-up of a project from start to end.

While some information may be duplicated across the Project Proposal to the Introduction sections, you should never copy/paste content directly from one document to the other.

At its most basic, the Introduction section should include:



Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to provide a wider context in which your work-based project sits, and to explain and justify the question being asked/area being explored, the research design, and the methods chosen, based upon their connection to other published work.

By its nature, the literature review will vary significantly from project to project – some students may need to provide significantly more background information, while others may need to offer significantly more justification of methods. Literature reviews will also vary significantly in the quantity of information available that relates directly to your project.

If you are struggling to develop their literature review or to find suitable sources, don't forget that you can consult with the Institute of Management and Health Subject Librarian, who has a range of support resources available.

As a general rule, a student's literature review should:

1. Provide the wider context in which the project sits – what other research has been conducted into this area? What is the current situation in this area? What is the history of research in this area? What is the trend of research in this area?
2. Survey or summarise relevant policies, legislation, etc. such as workplace Codes of Practice, Health and Safety Policies, national strategies, national, international, or local legislation, government papers, etc.
3. Provide the basic information that already exists in the area being studied (through documents such as industry reports, journal articles, internal company reports, etc.) and identify the gaps the project seeks to address.
4. Connect the research design and methods to relevant theorists and/or already conducted and published projects with similar context, objectives, etc.

The wider context

Start big—think about the grand scheme of things and explain where your project sits within the current body of research. What is going on in the world that affects/ is affected by a study like yours? Focus on:

The field of study	The field of work
The current socio-political situations	The economy
International Research	National research

Narrow it down

Zero in and explain, given the situation you've described, how and why you've arrived at your research question. Focus on:

Your region	Your industry
Your sector	Your workplace type
A specific, critical incident	A specific, narrow field of study

Your own project

Find a few specific examples that share something in common with your own research, and use them to justify your design or methods. Focus on similar:

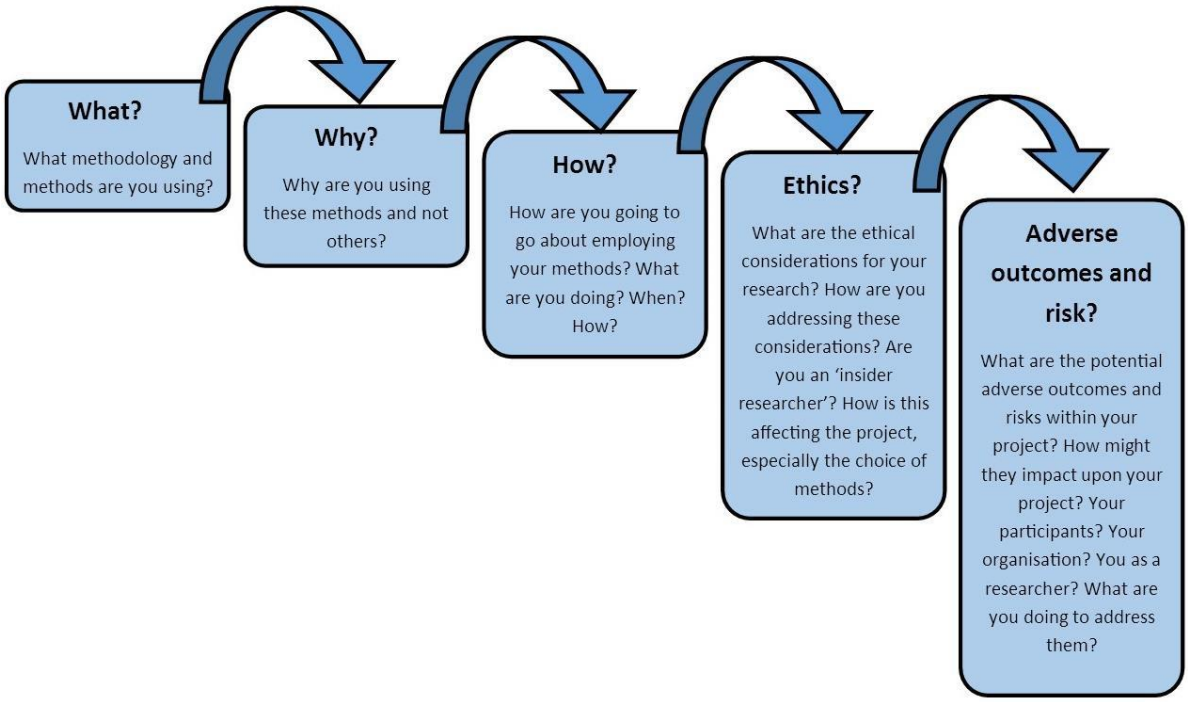
Organisations	Participants
Research questions	Research designs

Methods

The methods section is intended to provide a step-by-step guide to how you intend to conduct the work-based project, as well as a justification of why the project will be conducted in this way and not others. It is important that the methods section is not written as a 'first this, then that, then that' narrative, but rather as an overall picture of what was done, when, where, how, with whom, and why that allows the reader to fully understand the project.

At its most basic, the methods section should include:

1. A BRIEF explanation and justification of your research paradigm (ontological and epistemological positions) and how it might impact the study.
2. An overview of your choice of methodology (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) and a justification for this choice within the research context.
3. An outline of the methods that you will use, potential other methods that you could have used, and a justification for your choice of methods within the research context and objectives.
4. An examination of the ethical considerations of your research as it is designed, including an analysis of the impact of being an insider researcher. This examination and analysis should be grounded in both the University's ethics policies and guidelines and the codes of practice of your workplace.
5. An account of the research undertaken that follows the project timeline in a logical way, and explains:
    a. what was done.
    b. when.
    c. where, and
    d. with whom.



Findings

The findings section of the report is intended to provide the results of your work-based project. It should roughly follow the outline you have set in the methods section of what was done, when, where, and with whom and explain in detail what the results of this action were. It should then expand these results using critical quantitative and qualitative data analysis, as appropriate. The findings section should also explore any issues you encountered and analyse these issues (e.g., "participation in this questionnaire was low, potential explanations for this include…").

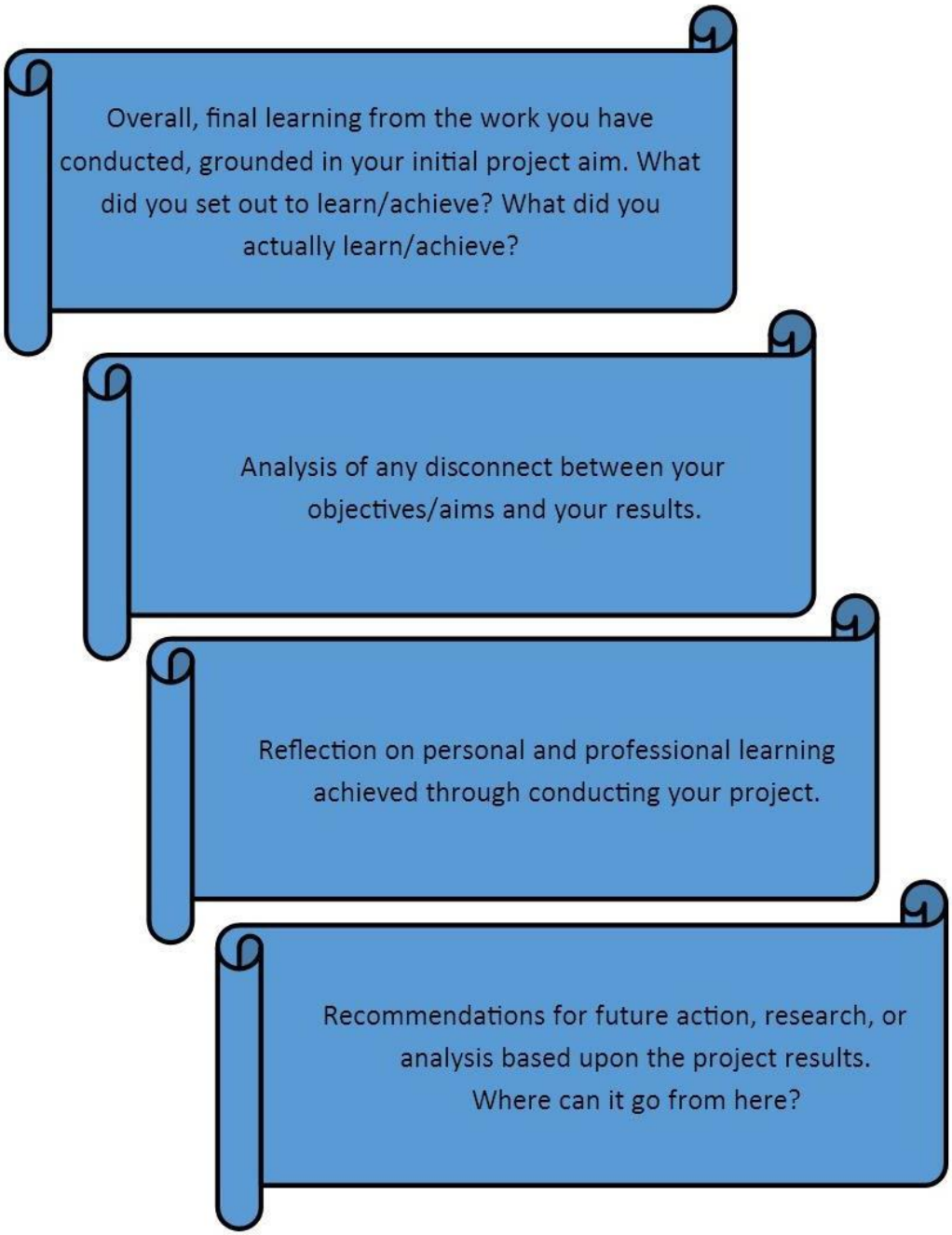
There is no fixed list of information that should be included in the findings section, as it is so specific to your individual work, but it should be critical, thoughtful, analytical, and grounded firmly within the methodology as outlined in the preceding section.

Wherever appropriate, please feel free to include charts, graphs, tables, drawings, maps, diagrams, and other visual aids in support of the explanation and analysis in your findings section.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations section is intended to "tie up" your project, linking the work you have conducted back to your stated aims, objectives, and justifications and providing insight into your learning, reflection on process and practice, and recommendations for future action based around your project experience.

At its most basic, the conclusions and recommendations section should include:



Appendices

You must include your **signed and dated Ethics Form** in your Project Report Appendix.

Your report must also include the signed and dated letter of approval from their employer in your Project Report Appendix.

Any remaining appendix documents will vary based upon your work-based project and the needs of reporting. Bear in mind that your appendices do not contribute to your overall work-based project word count, so you are welcome to include as much or as little information as is necessary/relevant in order to contextualise and understand your project. Some appendix documents that you may want to consider including are:

- research instruments used (e.g., questionnaires, consent forms, etc.).
- a glossary of terms, especially in situations where the report contains technical terminology and/or jargon.
- data analysis conducted over the course of the project.
- supplemental documents from the workplace, such as Codes of Practice, Health and Safety Guidelines, Codes of Behaviour, Job Descriptions etc. (especially in situations where these documents are referenced within your report but are not publicly available); or
- maps, diagrams, flow charts or process documents.

Structure and Format

There are no specific guidelines for structure and format of a student's submission, as every project will have different needs. As a general rule, however, your submission should be neat and well-ordered, including such basic document elements as:

- page numbers.
- a table of contents and/or index; or
- a list of tables/figures, as appropriate.

The Project Presentation

***Bear in mind that every student, and every work-based project, is unique. While this handbook provides a basic outline of expectations for student submissions and their contents, your own submission will be marked primarily based upon its suitability for your own project and its reflection of the module learning outcomes and your individual learning outcomes. ***

The Project Presentation is the final element of your work-based project portfolio and is intended to provide an opportunity for you to explain and justify your work-based project and reflect upon your learning and personal and professional development.

The Project Presentation will be attended by both the first and second markers. Your employer or a member of your organisation is welcome to attend as well.

There is no set expectation for materials and/or visual aids to be used, however you are welcome to make use of hand-outs, PowerPoint presentations, Prezi presentations, etc. asyou deem necessary.

While presentation times will vary based upon the level and credit value of the project (see table above) you should be prepared to answer approximately 5 minutes of questions fromyour first and second markers.

At its most basic, the Project Presentation should cover:

1. A brief outline of the background, justification, aims and objectives.
2. A more detailed outline of the methods, including exploration of ethical considerations and the impact of being an insider researcher.
3. A more detailed outline of the findings and explanation of analysis.
    a. Much like the findings section of the Project Report, students should be encouraged to use visual aids such as tables, charts, graphs, diagrams, maps, and drawings wherever possible/appropriate.
4. An in-depth analysis of conclusions and recommendations.
5. A reflective examination of the personal and professional learning experience.

The day of the Project Presentation is also your final submission deadline. Remember to follow the Project Submission guidelines detailed below.

Project Submission

Your final work-based project must be submitted electronically via Turnitin (in .pdf format where possible) and is due on the day of your final project presentation.

- Your work must be uploaded to Turnitin on Moodle. Please remember to include the following:
    - The Project Proposal
    - The Project Report
    - Any Appendices, including:
        - A copy of your ***signed and dated*** Ethics Form
        - A copy of your ***signed and dated*** letter of approval from your employer/organisation
    - The Project Presentation slides

In the event of technical issues, please email your submission to: PPF@uwtsd.ac.uk

Support Resources

In addition to your Individual Project Tutor, who will be your primary source of guidance and support throughout the work-based project, you have access to many academic and support staff members from across the University who can help you achieve your goals and complete your work-based project on time and to the best of your ability. Over the course of your project, you may want to seek out one or more of these staff members or make use of these resources.

Your Module Moodle Page

Moodle is the University's 24/7 online learning support platform, where your lecturers and Individual Project Tutors keep information, resources, and support materials that you can use to complete your work-based project. Your Module Moodle page is updated regularly and should be your first stop when you are looking for information, guidance, or course materials.

The Learner Zone

As a PPF Learner, you also have access to our 24/7 online Learner Zone via Moodle. The Learner Zone is a great repository on information on everything from study support and learning guidance to contact information for student support teams at the University. This is a great place to begin if you're looking for some guidance and help or just want to take a look through some resources.

The Institute of Management and Health Subject Librarian

The University library can be a tricky system to navigate and contains a huge volume of tools and resources that you will need to successfully complete your work-based project. While students are encouraged to explore on their own and make as extensive use as possible of the library resources, you may need an experienced hand to guide you through some specifics of the library, such as study skills, producing a literature review, or finding suitable peer-reviewed journals.

The Institute of Management and Health Subject Librarian, Lisa Ellis, is here to support you and can be contacted by phone or by email for an appointment.

Lisa Ellis -

Email : l.ellis@uwtsd.ac.uk

Telephone: 01792 481023

The Student Services Team

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David has a fantastic and supportive Student ServicesTeam, who can support you in a wide range of areas, including financial advice, study skills support, support for students with disabilities, counselling services, mental health services, and much more! You can contact their teams on any campus by phone or by email or take some time to look over their website to find the resources that are right for you.

http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/student-services/

Carmarthen Campus:

Tel: 01267 676830

Email: studentservices@uwtsd.ac.uk

Lampeter Campus:

Tel: 01570 424876

Email: student.support@uwtsd.ac.uk

Swansea Campus:

Tel: 01792 481206

Email: student.services@uwtsd.ac.uk

London Campus:

Tel: 020 756 67600

Email: londonstudentservices@uwtsd.ac.uk

Birmingham Campus:

Tel: 0121 229 3000

Email: birminghamstudentservices@uwtsd.ac.uk

The Academic Office

The Academic Office is there to support you through adhering to the rules and regulations of your programme. You may need to speak with the Academic Office if you are considering making a request for Extenuating Circumstances or an Interruption of your Studies, or if you have questions and concerns about the governance of your undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme and its management.

Academic Office

Tel: 01267676855

Email: aocases@uwtsd.ac.uk

Extenuating Circumstances and Interruption of Studies

Becoming a work-based learner is a serious commitment, but we understand that sometimes in life we are faced with the unexpected. The University of Wales Trinity Saint David has procedures in place to help you ensure that a major life change, serious illness, orpersonal emergency doesn't mean the end of your studies.

If you have questions or concerns, or would like to discuss your own circumstances in moredetail, please contact the Academic Office:

Student enquiries: aocases@uwtsd.ac.uk
Main Office: 01267 676855
Location: First Floor, Dewi Building, Carmarthen Campus

Extenuating Circumstances

Neither your Individual Project Tutor nor the Module Lead have the ability to grant you anyform of extension on your work-based project. Submission of assessment is governed by strict, University-wide procedures and individual lecturers do not have the authority to intervene. In circumstances where you are unable to complete your work-based project by the submission date, however, your personal case may qualify as 'Extenuating Circumstances'.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Extenuating Circumstances definition is:

> A student who believes that his/her performance in or ability to complete an assessment has been adversely affected by extenuating circumstances may request that those circumstances are recognised by the University. Claims for extenuating circumstances are judged on clear and transparent criteria as set out in the regulations and where necessary are considered by a cross-University Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
>
> For the purposes of this regulation, extenuating circumstances refer to immobilising ill health during the assessment period, bereavement of a close relative or friend during the assessment period, or other similarly profound experience or difficulty that is outside the control of the student. In respect of students in employment, where study is subsidiary to the employment, pressure from employment may also be considered as extenuating circumstances.

To find out more information about Extenuating Circumstances, please visit the Academic Office's Student Cases page:

Procedures for Academic Appeals, Complaints and Other Student Cases | University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Interruption of Studies

As a university student, you do not have the automatic right to interrupt your studies; a request must be made to the Academic Office on the appropriate form and approved.

Neither your Individual Project Tutor nor the Module Lead have the ability to grant you the right to interrupt your studies. In certain circumstances, however, your personal case may meet the necessary criteria to qualify for an 'Interruption of Studies':

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Interruption of Studies policy defines an interruption of studies as "the formal pause in a student's study for an extended period of time during which a student is not required to engage with his/her studies" and states that the grounds on which a student can request an interruption of studies are:

- Health or Medical;
- Maternity, paternity, or adoption leave;
- Compassionate (including bereavement and serious domestic difficulties);
- Financial;
- Exceptional Professional Commitments;
- Opportunities which contribute to academic development;
- Exceptional circumstances outside the control of the student that seriously compromises his/her ability to continue with his/her studies (including the impact of a situation in relation to learning difficulties/neurodiversity).

To find out more information about Interruption of Studies, or to download the appropriate application forms, please visit the Academic Office's Student Cases page:

Procedures for Academic Appeals, Complaints and Other Student Cases | University of Wales Trinity Saint David

FAQs

What if I can't think of a work-based project topic or research question?

Sometimes having the freedom to study whatever interests you can be a bit daunting, and it is difficult to narrow your interests down into just one topic or question. Your employer or organisation can be a good place to start. Are there any projects that have been looming for awhile with no one to complete them? Are there any policies or practices that could be trialled/piloted? Any major questions that need to be answered? Questions like these can help you to frame your thinking and begin the process of finding a topic. If you are still struggling to refine your thoughts, your Individual Project Tutor is here to support you through all aspects of your work-based project, including helping you to settle on a topic.

What if I have a great idea for a work-based project, but my employer/organisation won't allow me to conduct it?

It is frustrating but remember that your employer/organisation is the host of your work- based project and must be completely on board with the project you are going to do. Keep in mind that it is important to frame your project in terms of its potential contributions to your workplace and the benefits it might bring. If your employer/organisation has specific concerns, think seriously and honestly about how you can address them within your project. If things are still not progressing, don't hesitate to ask your Individual Project Tutor to join you in a meeting with your employer/organisation to discuss the project further. Remember, **however**, that your Individual Project Tutor cannot demand that your project be allowed to go ahead, only advocate on its behalf. If, after hearing the project and any potential modifications explained, your employer/organisation is still not happy for it to go ahead, you will have no choice but to settle on a new topic of interest.

What if the nature of my role at work changes during my work-based project?

As a work-based learner, your professional and personal life will rarely be static and compliant while you attempt to focus on your academic life and complete your studies! Students of work-based learning are almost always working to navigate changes while studying, and the work-based project is no different. In the majority of cases, the change to the nature of your work will not have a major effect on your ability to complete the work- based project. Remember that it certainly ***will*** have an impact, however – think of this as a nice enhancement to your final report, and an opportunity to examine the way that dynamic, ever-changing workplaces affect the area you are studying!

What if my workplace changes in a fundamental way that affects my work-based project?

In very rare instances, your personal role or your workplace may change in a way that makes it impossible for you to continue with your work-based project as it has been designed. Should this happen, ***don't panic***. Simply contact your Individual Project Tutor as soon as possible, and they will help you to negotiate your existing project (or, if necessary,design a new project) that will allow you to complete the work-based project module.

What if my employer/organisation change their minds about allowing me to conduct mywork-based project?

In the case of your employer/organisation, the best defence against a change of approval is agood offence – make sure that all relevant members of your organisation have a full understanding of your work-based project before you begin. Don't hesitate to involve your Individual Project Tutor and ask them to attend meetings to support you and ensure that your employer and other relevant colleagues know what the organisation's role will be, whatyou

intend to do, when, with whom, for how long, and to what effect. If an issue still arises with an employer/organisation deciding after you have begun that they do not want your project to go forward, ***don't panic***. Simply contact your Individual Project Tutor as soon as possible, and they will help you to negotiate your existing project (or, if necessary, design a new project) that will allow you to complete the work-based project module.

What if I have a fundamental disagreement with my Individual Project Tutor about my work-based project research question or project design?

Your Individual Project Tutor is an expert in work-based learning research and projects and is here to give you advice and guidance on making sure that your project is effective, achievable, and has a real impact on your workplace and on you as a professional. That said, this is ***your*** project, and it is important that you are fully comfortable and happy with the project you design. Don't be afraid to be honest with your Individual Project Tutor about what you want to do and why, and if they know what you are trying to achieve, they can usually find a way to get you there. If a disagreement arises that you just cannot resolve, don't hesitate to involve the Module Lead in your meetings and discussions, to find a way to reach a project that you are happy with and that your Individual Project Tutor can support you in.

What if I have a fundamental disagreement with my Individual Project Tutor aboutmy Ethics Form?

When it comes to the Ethics Form, there is a chain of command that dictates what is and is not considered ethically acceptable by the University. While your Individual Project Tutor isgiving you guidance and advice on how to successfully produce an ethical assessment of your project, it is the University, and not your Individual Project Tutor, who make the ultimate decision on whether your ethical analysis is sufficient for your project to go ahead. Any ethical issues that cannot be resolved between you and your Tutor should be referred first to the PPF Ethics Board Representative, our ethics expert. Should you disagree with their advice or want additional review, it is your right to request that your Ethics Form be reviewed by the Institute's Ethics Board and, if necessary, the University Ethics Board.

Why is it taking so long to negotiate my Ethics Form and begin my work-based project?

The Ethics Form is complex for a very good reason – its purpose it to protect yourparticipants, you as a researcher, and the University itself. A proper Ethics Form demonstrates that you have paid due consideration to ***all*** of the ethical issues associated with your project, and this can take some time and effort, especially if your project is multi- faceted or involves working with specific groups or in specific circumstances. Make sure that you are in constant contact with your Individual Project Tutor during your ethics approval process, and stay on top of questions that are asked of you, requests for comments, etc. The sooner those responsible for reviewing your Ethics Form have complete information, the sooner they can render a verdict on your form. Have patience with the process and know that, in the long run, fully engaging with your Ethics Form will dramatically improve your work-based project.

Why can't I begin my project while I'm waiting for my Ethics Form to be approved?

Remember that the Ethics Form is all about protection from harm – for you, for your participants, and for the University. Until your Ethics Form has been approved and the appropriate party (whether the PPF Ethics Board Representative, the Institute's EthicsBoard, or the University Ethics Board) has confirmed that you have given due regard to the ethical issues associated with your project, we cannot be confident that your project will not inadvertently do harm to one of these parties, therefore you cannot be permitted to begin any data collection.

What if I really want to complete my work-based project early?

We understand that it can be very tempting to want to finish your work-based project early, especially if it is the last module standing between you and your BA or MA degree, but the allocated times exist for a reason. These are the times considered necessary to truly engage with the work-based project at the level and credit value you have selected, and if you find yourself needing significantly less time than given, the odds are that you have either designed a project that is not suitably complex or failed to engage fully with the project you have designed. Individual circumstances vary, and your Individual Project Tutor will work with you to ensure that your submission dates are suitable but expect to take the full time allocated for your project to complete and submit.

What if I'm struggling to keep up with the schedule of tutorial meetings?

Your Individual Project Tutor will work with you to ensure that your tutorial meetings fit your specific needs and your personal and professional schedule. If you are having a hard time making meetings or have fallen behind and haven't completed the work you are planning to discuss at your next meeting, don't hesitate to call/email your Individual Project Tutor and ask to reschedule. Just try not to make a habit of it – just a few delayed/missed meetings over the course of your project can set you behind and make it difficult to meet your final submission deadline.

What if I'm struggling to keep up with the timeline of my work-based project, and won't finish in time?

Your work-based project tutorial and meeting schedule has been designed, in part, to help ensure that you are able to stay on track with your project, catch any issues early, and meet your submission deadlines. Sometimes, however, life happens, and you can end up in a situation where you feel you may not be able to complete your project by the submission deadline. If you're starting to get concerned, speak to your Individual Project Tutor as quickly as possible. They can help you to get back on track with your timeline or, if appropriate, make an application for recognition of Extenuating Circumstance/Interruption of Studies to the University.

What if I want a second opinion regarding my project, from someone other than my Individual Project Tutor?

Sometimes you may disagree with the advice or guidance your Individual Project Tutor gives you, and sometimes you might just feel unsure or want a second opinion. Never hesitate to contact the Module Lead if you want another member of PPF staff to look over a piece of work or give an opinion.

What if I need study skills support in writing my proposal, writing my report, preparing my presentation, etc.?

As a work-based learner and a UWTSD student, there are many support services available that can help you make the most of your time as a student and achieve your best academically. Have a look at the "Support Resources" chapter of this handbook for contact information for Student Services, the UWTSD Library, and many other resource offices. Or don't hesitate to use the 24/7 online resources available on Moodle, both on your module page and on the PPF Learner Zone page.

What if I can't find any suitable sources, references, studies, etc. to include in my literature review?

The Institute of Management and Health have a "Subject Librarian" who has tons of resources available to support you in writing your report and developing a literature review for your project. The Subject Librarian can provide you with expert advice and guidance and make sure you have the tools and resources you need. Her contact information is available in the "Institute of Management and Health Subject Librarian" chapter of this handbook.