

Skills for Learning

Guide to Writing Your Dissertation

Before you begin writing your dissertation, make sure you have a clear aim for the project and also ensure that you talk to your supervisor and consult your module documents on Canvas to find out about the dissertation structure and any other relevant guidelines you must follow.

The basic structure of a dissertation is often as follows:

- Title
- Contents
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Main section
- Conclusion
- Recommendations
- References
- Appendices

Each of these sections may be a chapter within the project but you may also want to break certain chapters down into further sections or subheadings to ensure that the dissertation is cogent and clear to read.

The Proposal

You may be required to produce a proposal before you start your dissertation which is usually around two pages long and briefly outlines the nature of your dissertation and how you will conduct the research.

The Literature Review

A [literature review](#) is a comprehensive summary, analysis and critical evaluation of published academic work on a particular topic. When researching and writing your review, consider how the key theories, concepts and ideas within the literature will help you to gain some background and context to your own topic and how the literature relates back to your research question.

When carrying out your review, ensure your searches are thorough and remember to keep a record of all sources you intend to use in your review which will help when it comes to citing and referencing those sources in your dissertation.

Using bibliographic management software such as **RefWorks** is an easy way to keep a track of all the sources you're using. Our [Guide to RefWorks](#) takes you through the process of setting up a RefWorks account. For further support, you can book onto the **Referencing with RefWorks** workshop.

Help and Advice

We have an array of print and electronic resources about the dissertation process including:

Biggam, J. (2021) *Succeeding with your master's dissertation: A step-by-step handbook*.

London: McGraw Hill Education:

https://librarysearch.wlv.ac.uk/permalink/44UOWO_INST/13ndfb5/alma991003130937504901

Greetham, B. (2019) *How to write your undergraduate dissertation*. London: Red Globe Press:

https://librarysearch.wlv.ac.uk/permalink/44UOWO_INST/13ndfb5/alma991002752403504901

Williams, K. (2018) *Planning your dissertation*. London: Macmillan International Higher Education:

https://librarysearch.wlv.ac.uk/permalink/44UOWO_INST/8bamsd/alma991002875802804901



Cite this work:

Skills for Learning (2024) *Guide to Writing Your Dissertation*. Available at:

<http://www.wlv.ac.uk/skills> (Accessed: give date accessed)

To request this document in an alternative format please contact skills@wlv.libanswers.com