THE EEG - PART 8
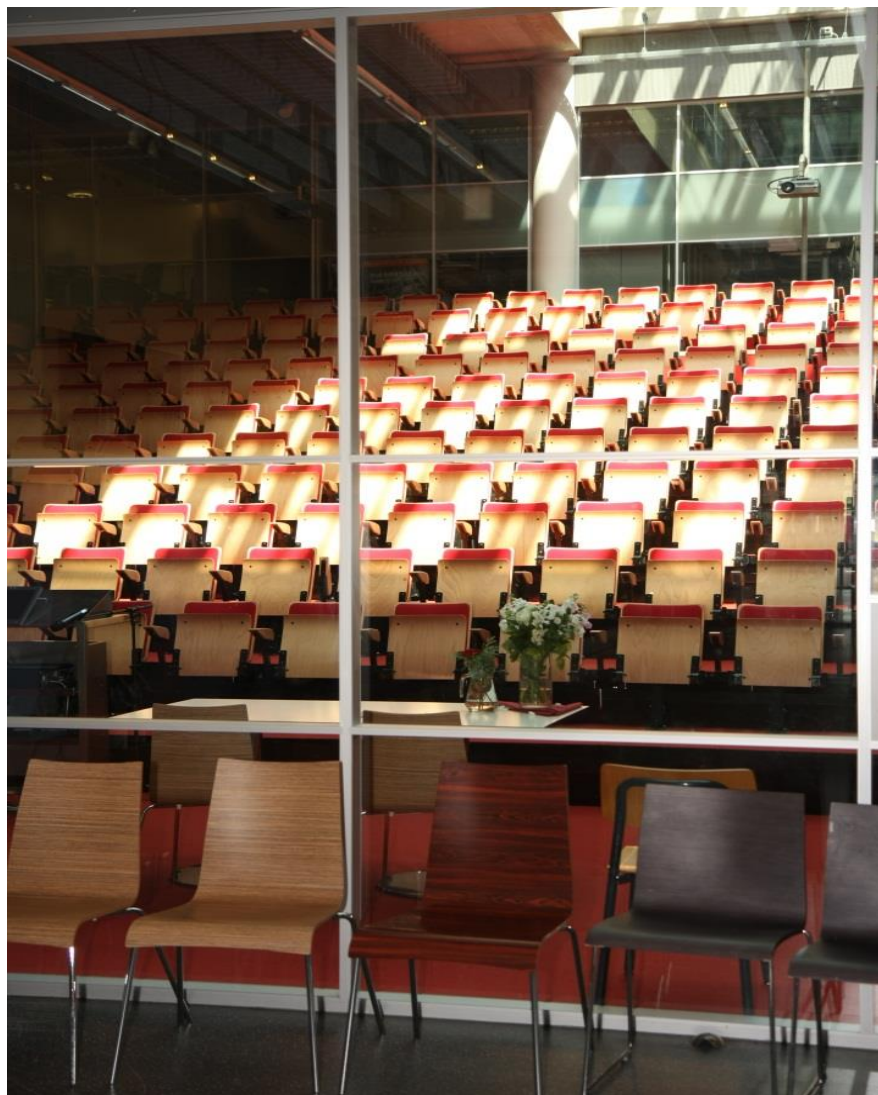# GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT & FINAL PROJECT HANDBOOK

GA/FP HANDBOOK (MASTER)

31 August 2023

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is your official source of information about the Graduation Assignment and Final Project (GA/FP). Its contents have been discussed and agreed at various meetings of the Examination and Graduation Board with external members, Academic Supervisors and administrative staff of Wittenborg as well as advice from external advisors. It is designed to provide you with general information and suggestions to help you complete your final graduation assignment/final project (GA/FP) successfully.

The GA/FP provides you the opportunity to engage, in depth, with an area or issue of professional or intellectual interest. Carrying out a graduation assignment provides an opportunity to read extensively, but with a clear purpose and focus, in order to develop fresh understanding of a specific question. Writing the graduation assignment, a major piece of work, a thesis, allows you to share that experience and to disseminate the results.

A thesis must provide evidence of your ability to analyse complex data and to evaluate the implications of your results.

Your thesis should include a reflection on the research process itself as well as providing a discussion of the problems and issues raised in the course of the study. You should also reflect on the limitations of your research study and suggest possibilities for the development of future work in this area, either in terms of more research, or practical implications deriving from this study.

A thesis should be in a formal academic style, a style quite appropriate for many other reports in professional settings. It has certain conventions. The readers/viewers for your assignment will be other members of your particular academic community (students and Academic Supervisors). It is not written for a non-expert audience, so you can, indeed should, use an academic style of writing and presenting.

Most research reports use roughly the same format. It doesn't matter whether you've done a customer satisfaction survey, an employee opinion survey, a health care survey, or a marketing research survey. All have the same basic structure and format. The important thing is that readers of research reports (i.e. decision makers, funders, etc.) will know exactly where to find the information they are looking for, regardless of the individual report. Once you have learned the basic rules for research proposal and report writing, you can apply them to any discipline.

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Aims and Objectives – Learning outcomes

One of the important purposes of GA/FP is to introduce students to original research with the guidance of an academic supervisor The main contribution of a GA/FP is that, instead of studying by way of a series of minor and highly-specified topics, the student is obligated to examine a sizeable topic for a much longer period of time and to learn to define clearly both the very question and the research findings. By the time a GA/FP is completed the student can often claim to have mastered some aspect of knowledge and is much more aware of the processes of research.

In particular, you will gain experience with:

- formulating a research question and research objective
- making critical use of relevant literature
- selecting and using appropriate research methods in your research design to conduct research
- analysing and interpreting results and conclusions
- organising and presenting material in a clear, logical, convincing way
- learning outcomes
- complete a relatively in-depth research project
- demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject area and interpret that information
- produce a coherent, well structured, analytical GA/FP
- define and plan a workable research project to meet given research objectives
- know how to carry out an adequate literature review as a major ingredient of one's master-level graduation research project and final thesis
- know how to design a research: defining feasible objectives, presenting a helpful conceptual model and describing the methodology that is to be used
- indicate the strength and weakness of a particular research design
- define a research as a manageable project whereby involving the relevant stakeholders and possible contributors

You will work with your Research Methods and Final Project module lecturers and your academic supervisor to agree on a suitable GA/FP topic. A general timetable for the work will be set out and a proposal will be submitted. This must be approved by the Research Methods and Final Project lecturer/team as part of the module evaluation, as well as approved by the academic supervisor before you embark on the GA/FP itself.

Learning Outcomes Linked to Final Qualifications

Mapped with Programme Learning Outcomes: 7, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 (see p. 10-11).

This is direct mapping of the final qualification for this module. A student will achieve the overall qualifications for this programme after successfully completing the GA/FP

See the Education & Examination Guide (Part 2, EEG) for further reference.

Prerequisite of the GA/FP

Normally, students will be admitted to the GA/FP after having gained at least 65 European Credits (ECs) including the completion of Research Methods and Final Project Module. In addition, the Research Proposal must be approved by the Academic Supervisor. Students are expected to have demonstrated in their previous work the capacities necessary to successfully complete a GA/FP and to show that their choice of topic is appropriate for such an assignment.

Submission of GA/FP

A student is only allowed to submit a final version of their GA/FP if the following conditions have been met:

- Student has obtained all ECs except for those of the GA/FP.

- Student has returned all library books or any other borrowed materials and cleared all other liabilities due.

- Student has settled all financial obligations to Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences.

- Student has filled up a clearance form and obtained an official approval from the concerned office(s). This is a pre-requisite before the GA/FP is marked.

Study Load

The GA/FP is expected to include a substantial amount of original theoretical, analytic or empirical work and be 12,000 to 15,000 words in length excluding appendices. Precise details about the length of all types of GA/FP are given below.

The GA/FP module is worth 30 ECs on MBA and 25 ECs on MBM, which is equivalent to 840 hours of work or 700 hours of work respectively. The Final Project research & editing time spans 1 full semester (term) which is ½ a year for MBA students, whereas MBM students will have an additional module Professional-based Learning (WP42) included in the semester in which they also complete their Final Project. The Final Project time span for both programmes includes reading, research, field study, writing, review, and defence.

Methods and Instruments

Teaching and Learning Methods

The GA/FP is an individual piece of work, so you will write it on your own. This will be supported by regular timetabled tutorial meetings with your academic supervisor, at which you will be expected to produce such work as the Academic Supervisor and you shall from time to time agree.

Assessment Instruments

You will be required to demonstrate that you have a good knowledge of the subject area and a clear plan for a GA/FP by producing a Research Proposal and a Literature Review in the area on which you are conducting the research. You will be required to reach a Pass level in these parts of the assessment before you are allowed to proceed with the complete GA/FP.

The GA/FP will be assessed based on a list of criteria, which includes, among others, the originality of the material presented, the addition of new knowledge, the provision of solution(s) for any research issues/problems, your research and presentation skills, your ability to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the subject area, and your ability to apply theory to practice.

Compulsory and Recommended Reading

- Research Methods for business students, M. Saunders, P. Lewis, A. Thornhill. (ISBN 978-0-273-71686-0)

- Marketing Research by Burns and Bush. (ISBN 0-13-147732-3)

- Case Study Research: Design and Methods, Robert K. Yin, Sage Publications, 2003, ISBN 076192552X, 9780761925521

- Articles and literature provided in the Research Methods and Final Project module

- Research Proposal (RP)

GRADUATION

In order to proceed for GA/FP Presentation and Oral Defence to successfully graduate, students have to submit a completed clearance form before the GA/FP submission deadline. The online form can be found in the GA/FP online area.

On the following page is shown what the final qualifications are of the International Master of Business Administration, the achievement of which should be apparent on the completion of your GA/FP, which is the last step towards your degree.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

Preparing a research proposal is a very important part of the research process. The research proposal outlines the research topic, objectives, main research question, methods and so on. The research proposal is part of the Research Methods Module and it requires approval from the Academic Supervisor before students can start their actual research. The next section provides some guidelines for writing a research proposal for writing an academic dissertation.

Guidelines for Research Proposal

To be considered for registration for a final research project (GA/FP), all students must submit a research proposal that outlines their intended research. Students can only submit a research proposal if they have attended the Research Methods module, as the RP is the sole outcome/product of this module. Research proposals should be presented under headings that provide the title and summary of the study as well as addressing each of the points listed below. In addition, you can use the research proposal templates.

Outline of the Research Proposal

Title of the study - The title can be a working title in that it can be changed at a later date. It should convey the essence of the proposed work.

Purpose of the study – a clearly focused statement of the overall purpose of the proposed research.

Relevant background literature – a section outlining key research that has already been carried out in the particular area.

Research questions or hypotheses – clearly focused research questions/hypotheses that are worth asking and capable of being answered.

Definitions of key terms – precise definitions of the key terms in the research question/s or hypotheses, enabling unequivocal observation, measurement and identification throughout the study.

Research methodology – an appropriate choice of research approach for the particular questions or problems under investigation, including a well-defined list of procedures to be followed in carrying out the research, as well as the method of data collection and analysis, and, if appropriate: a broad description of any particular theoretical framework to be used in the analysis and the reasons for its selection in the study; a brief statement describing how the study population will be selected for the study and the reason for the approach to selection.

Significance of the research – a statement that illustrates why the research question or hypothesis is worth asking.

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Ethical considerations – consideration of ethical issues involved in carrying out the research, such as whether informed consent needs to be obtained and, if so, how this will be done.

Timetable for the research – a proposed timetable is extremely important because it gives an indication as to the feasibility of the proposal.

Anticipated problems and limitations – a section that highlights any anticipated problems and limitations in the proposed study, including threats to reliability and validity and how these will be countered.

Bibliography – a list of sources and references (articles, journals, books, periodicals) used and referred to in the process of your research.

Appendices – (if appropriate), which contain any material that will be used or adapted for the study, including any permission that might need to be obtained to use it.

GA/FP STYLE AND LAYOUT OF THE GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT

The following highlights the commonalities associated with any type of GA/FP:

A research project is a sustained investigation of an important topic, area or issue relevant to your programme of study. It will demonstrate an up-to-date understanding of developments concerning this topic, area or issue. If possible the concept should be original or you should investigate an issue using one of the methodologies/models contained in your programme.

A research project is not merely a collection of all the information that you can find concerning a particular topic. Instead:

- It seeks to explain how something works, or why something happens in the way that it does, and/or critically compares existing practices, knowledge and understandings, and where possible attempts to discover and conceptualise new information and knowledge.

- For your research project you should select an issue that you can pursue in depth; one which allows you to analyse existing ideas, theories and concepts, and through original research contributes to debates and knowledge relating to the subject in question.

- The topic should always be placed within the context of the disciplinary domains that you have developed in your study to date.

The GA/FP is a substantial piece of work leading to the production of a thesis normally of between 12,000 to 15,000 words, excluding appendices (the word *thesis* here covers all written submissions which will vary in style content and size depending on which type of project is adopted).

Above all, the final project is an opportunity for you to explore an area or topic that you find interesting and important. It is much easier to keep your motivation high if you find your dissertation topic inspiring.

There are two main types of assignment: dissertation and an applied business assignment.

The next sections identify the key types of research assignments. Students need to be clear at the beginning as to the type of assignment they will be undertaking as the guidelines and final output will be significantly different. It is important that students acknowledge which type of assignment they intend to pursue at the earliest opportunity. The key component parts of each type of assignment are summarised below

Types of GA/FP

The Academic Dissertation

This type of assignment includes a critical review of relevant literature plus independent primary research carried out by you:

- Wherever possible the literature review should be based upon academic books and manuscripts (normally not general textbooks), official statistics/reports, and if possible, articles in refereed academic journals. It should critically compare and evaluate relevant concepts, models and theories.

- The primary research involves the design of an independent primary research project integrated with the subjects of your literature review. You will need to set its overall purpose, plus its aims and objectives, and to choose relevant research methods.

- The primary research itself can use one or more of a variety of methods, including quantitative sample surveys, and qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, and participant observation.

- If a sample survey is used, you will be expected to select and justify the sample population, discuss sampling frames, design your questionnaires, conduct pilot surveys, and analyse your findings.

- If qualitative methods are used, you will be expected to select and justify your qualitative methods (e.g. interviews, observations, focus groups, discourse analysis, etc.) and analyse your findings.

- If analysis of original archive data is involved, you will be expected to identify and justify relevant archive data, and critically analyse the data.

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Applied Business Assignment: *Consultancy Assignment*

The applied business project can be a consultancy assignment. Consultancy is normally defined as an independent and objective advisory service provided by a qualified person(s) to a client (company and/or organisation) in order to help them identify and analyse problems and opportunities. A consultancy assignment also recommends solutions or suggests actions with respect to the identified issues and even provides help to the company and/or organisation in the implementation of solutions. Clients are not necessarily interested in the academic context that may underpin a consultancy assignment; they tend to be more interested in the data or market research collected and recommended strategies for a way forward. It is envisioned that while you may deliver a typical piece of consultancy to a client, you must submit a project to Wittenborg that demonstrates its academic underpinning. This may be something similar to a literature review that is included as part of a typical dissertation.

Students will be responsible for finding a commissioner/client who may wish to have a piece of consultancy undertaken (grounded in a related industry sector). The consultancy should be related to a subject in which you have in-depth knowledge and detailed understanding, so that you are able to combine theory and practice to solve problems and suggest ways forward. This needs to be approved by the module teacher of Research Methodology and/ Academic Supervisor and company supervisor. A typical consultancy project would have a commissioner/client identifying the terms of reference and the student consultant submitting a proposal to identify how they would respond to the proposed project's overall purpose.

A proposal normally acts as a contract between the consultant and commissioner/client and identifies key deliverables, such as agreed primary data collection and timings associated with interim draft and final reports. These deadlines must be coordinated with Wittenborg's due dates for the GA/FP. Once the commissioner/client and Wittenborg accept the proposal the student will work with the commissioner/client and with the guidance of the academic supervisor. The student shall submit the final piece of consultancy to the client, which may or may not include the academic literature that underpinned the piece of research. At the same time, the student must submit the consultancy project to Wittenborg which meets the required elements of the content.

Advice on Commissioned Research

Whatever type of GA/FP chosen, you may focus upon a problem or issue of interest to a particular organisation, which may help you to complete it in various ways. In such cases it should be clear that:

- The research assignment will be assessed on the basis of the same criteria outlined in this document (Final Project Handbook).

- The copyright to your research and to any findings discovered during the course of your project research rests with Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences.

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In some cases, the research for your research assignment may be 'sponsored' by an external organisation. Such sponsorship can take a variety of forms, which may include:

- Privileged access to information

- Help to conduct market research surveys, etc., within the organisation

- Payment of expenses relating to the research

- Payment of a fee to you as a researcher

In return for the sponsorship, the commissioner/client may expect their own copy of the research project, or a client report. This is entirely your own responsibility and accountability, and does not affect in any way your requirement to submit two copies of your research assignment for assessment as part of your degree.

Our policy regarding this type of sponsored research is as follows:

If Wittenborg is contacted by a commissioner/client seeking a student researcher, or most commonly seeking an internship student with a research question accompanied, this opportunity will be advertised and the commissioner/client will be expected to select a suitable person from amongst those who apply.

If you are approached directly by a commissioner/client, whilst you would be expected to discuss this with your academic supervisor, the sponsorship arrangement is entirely your own responsibility.

Client satisfaction or dissatisfaction with your research will not be taken into account in the assessment of your research project. Your research project should meet the rules and regulations laid down in this Handbook.

You must state on your acknowledgement page if your project was sponsored, and must state the name of the sponsoring organisation or individual, and the nature of the sponsorship. Also, you must identify how the results will or may be used by the sponsor.

Projects may, at the sponsor's request, be marked confidential – in that case the specific results deemed sensitive by the sponsor will be seen only by the assessors and copies of the report will not be made public.

The Written Style of a GA/FP

A master's level thesis should be presented in ways that serve the particular purpose of the research. All research results in the production of a GA/FP, although the word limit may vary depending upon which type of project you undertake. Above all, the written thesis should be clear and concise, and written to inform rather than to entertain. Avoid too many numbered sub-headings in chapters as this affects discussion and integration (remember you are not writing a report). Be careful about the type of

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language that you use. Generally, try to adopt the style of writing in a typical academic paper in your area of study.

While you are writing, you should always have the potential reader(s) in mind. You are not writing for members of the general public, but rather for the professional field that the research is based upon. Some advice on writing style is given below:

- NORMALLY a thesis is written in the third person, i.e. 'it was discovered', 'the findings indicate', 'this thesis aims to'. The first person 'I' can be used if it is part of a quote from your primary or secondary research. However, you may choose to write the whole of your thesis in the first person, but you must understand the intellectual rationale for doing so and be able to support your use of 'I' by drawing upon relevant literature. This needs to be done in consultation with your supervisor.

- Never use a metaphor or simile that you are used to seeing in print. In other words, avoid clichés *like the plague*!

- Never use a long word when a short one will do. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.

- Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent (obviously you will tend to use some scientific and jargon words in a thesis, but always explain terminology and acronyms, and avoid trying to show off).

Important Notes

From the very beginning, establish an overall research aim (or set of aims) for the project that you can stated in less than 25 words. Make sure that everything in the thesis is relevant to this aim, and that your research methods are appropriate for it. The aim should not normally be simply to describe something. Rather you should seek to improve the theoretical understanding or practical application of the phenomenon under investigation/research.

Your objectives should be chosen and designed to achieve your overall aim (or set of aims). They should have a clear logical structure and should be related to each other. If you have more than one aim, then you should set objectives to meet each aim set. **The first objective** will normally relate to the general academic context in which your research is set, e.g.: marketing, human resources, quality, logistics, motivation, commitment, etc. **The last objective** will normally be an outcome objective, the *so what?* test.

- Begin each section or chapter by setting it in the context of your aim(s) and/or objectives and state how it follows on from the previous section.

- End each chapter by summarising key themes/arguments and by stating how it leads into the next chapter.

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- Make sure your findings are laid out logically, step by step.

- In general, guide the reader through the thesis by telling them what you are doing.

- Use the layout of a typical GA/FP.

The Layout of a Typical GA/FP

The layout of a typical GA/FP will now be explained in a little more detail. Some of the sections below may not be necessarily included in the final submission, depending upon the type of GA/FP chosen to complete (refer to the table below to see summary of which sections may be relevant for each type of GA/FP).

The Title Page

This should contain the title, which should be indicative of the subject matter (but not just a prosaic description of the subject matter). Have a look at other GA/FP and/or research dissertations in your field of study for possible examples of appropriately worded titles. On each copy of your thesis the title page should also include your full name and student number, your course, institution, and the date. Nothing else should appear on the title page.

Full Title of GA/FP

(centred in top quarter of page, Font size 18 and bold)

Figure/Picture (optional)

by

Full name of author

S-Number

Full name of the Academic Supervisor

Type of GA/FP (academic dissertation/consultancy report etc.)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Name of the degree programme (e.g. International Business Administration)

Specialisation (e.g. Economics & Management)

Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences

Month, and year submitted

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Figure 1 Sample Title Page

The Abstract

This is a short paragraph, which effectively summarises the main aims, methods used, findings, conclusions and recommendations. It should be no longer than 200 words (one page max.). Obviously the abstract would be one of the last parts to be written.

An Executive Summary

An executive summary is normally included for a consultancy. The summary should highlight key findings from any primary data collected and recommended strategies and/or solutions. The summary should be written in a way that comprehensively highlights the contents of the report, and can range from 1-3 pages.

Acknowledgements

It is traditional to acknowledge and thank those who have been of particular help to you in completing the project. It is equally traditional to acknowledge that any errors or omissions are your sole responsibility. You must also state in this section (at the bottom of the acknowledgements page) that..."I confirm that this project is my own work and no part of it has been previously published elsewhere or submitted as part of any other module assessment".

Also, the acknowledgements must include notes about sponsorship if indeed you received some help or financial aid from an organisation or individual.

Word Count

One final criterion that must be identified at the bottom of the acknowledgements page is the word count. The word count for a standard research dissertation is 12,000 – 15,000 words. Where a thesis is accompanied by material other than written form the word count guidance will vary. If you are undertaking the assignment with creative output, then a reduced word limit may be agreed with the Academic Supervisor for the written aspect of the project. Whatever the nature of the thesis, the agreed word count will be strictly adhered to. Any GA/FP outside of the leeway will be penalised (up to 0.5 marks). The word count includes all text within the main body of the thesis, not including the abstract, acknowledgements, table of contents, references, tables and figures, and the appendices. We will be able to check your word count, when you submit your GA/FP online through Wittenborg-Online. The word count will be considered as part of the technical requirements for a submitted thesis. If you do not submit a completed GA/FP meeting the technical requirements, a total of 0.5 marks will be taken off your final mark.

COUNTING THE WORDS

 For example, you have a sentence like this in your project:

A number of studies (Anderson and Smith, 2011; Jones et al., 2009; Murphy and Johnson, 2010; Norris, 2009; Smith et al., 2011) have recently explored the socio-cultural impacts of event visitors at Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

...you do not include the authors in the brackets as part of the word count but you include the other words (a number of studies....have recently explored.....).

All quotes are part of the word count whether as part of the literature review or primary data, thus a sentence like this:

According to Anderson and Smith (2011:34) the "social-cultural impacts of Mardi Gras are most keenly felt among residents in the French Quarter."

...the word count is everything in the sentence except for Anderson and Smith (2011:34), 18 words not 22.

The Table of Contents

This should be written on its own page(s) and should show chapter/major section headings and page numbers. The preliminary sections (Abstract, Contents list, etc.) are numbered with small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.). Page numbering in Arabic numerals (1,2,3, etc.) usually begins with the thesis itself (i.e. the first page of the Introduction chapter, etc.). The title page is not numbered. Tables and figures should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis. You may want to number tables/figures starting within each chapter (e.g. Table 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, etc.).

3.2.6 List of Figures

This should be placed after the table of content. It should contain a list of tables and figures used in the thesis.

Glossary

Sometimes used by students and not mandatory, a glossary is a list of technical terms, esoteric terms or acronyms and their meanings. If you include any of these, it is helpful to the reader to include a glossary either at the beginning of your thesis or at the end. (If required, it may be included at the start of the thesis before the first page of your introduction chapter, and after the lists.)

The Introduction

This first chapter should contain:

An outline of the purpose of the assignment (what type of assignment you are undertaking). Where applicable you should also outline the rationale for your topic or concept, including reasons why you decided upon the area of your research. Include brief details of knowledge and concepts that have inspired your interest (and which will be discussed in detail in the next chapters). You may like to

include brief details of your topic focus, for example, profile/general information of a company, an organisation, an industry, etc.

- The aims and where applicable objectives of the assignment (make sure you show how it hangs together: reveal its logic and structure).

- The original terms of reference from the commissioner or client that demonstrates the overall purpose of work (only applicable for applied research where the commissioner or client is involved).

- A brief introduction to your chosen methodology. For each aim/objective, have a method for achieving it.

- A very brief outline of the content of each chapter.

The Literature Review

This second chapter may comprise one or two chapters depending on your topic and it comprises the academic underpinning for your whole GA/FP. It should demonstrate that you have conducted a thorough investigation of relevant secondary sources, understood, outlined, compared and discussed key ideas, explanations, concepts, models and theories. You are expected to demonstrate your understanding of the material, not merely describing what various authors have said. You should present these issues in a systematic, well-structured and logical sequence. Do not use too many sub-headings as these interrupt the flow of your work.

You will be expected to use prominent and up-to-date academic books (normally not textbooks). In broad terms, the results of this secondary research should provide you with ideas as to what you might find when you conduct your primary research. As such, you should make sure that the findings of your literature review are relevant for your planned primary research and vice-versa.

For example, any questions asked must relate to the issues identified in your readings. You should be prepared, therefore, to critically compare and contrast your secondary findings with your primary research findings in the main analysis chapter. References to secondary sources should be given in the text, not just for quotations, but wherever ideas and information drawn from the work of others is used. If sources are not acknowledged this will be considered as plagiarism.

At the end of the literature review, a conclusion should be drawn on the theoretical/conceptual framework that the student plans to apply in the research. It should specify the aspect/constructs/ variables and their (expected) relations. This framework will form the basis for the development of the data collection tool. It is strongly advised to visualise this framework by adding a figure of it.

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As previously stated, commissioner/clients may not necessarily be interested in the academic underpinning or theory that may contribute to a business project. However, this literature must be included in your submission to Wittenborg. You need to carefully discuss with your commissioner/clients as to whether they want an academic 'literature review' included in the submission to them. This is not to be confused with non-academic sources, such as government statistics or market research reports, which would normally be included in consultancy work and would be referenced accordingly, and included in any submission to the commissioner/clients.

Research Methodology

The discussion of research methodology can be a separate chapter or a section of the chapter in which you critically analyse your findings. However, whichever is selected it should clearly show how the methods chosen relate to the aims/objectives and to the literature review; your method(s) is(are) decided upon the basis of these.

The section on methodology should include a *rationale* for the choice of methodologies, for instance, research approach, research strategy, data gathering and data analysis. In the rationale you should consider what alternative methodological tools might have been employed (particularly those which related studies have employed), together with their advantages and limitations for your research. For instance: Why did you choose to conduct a survey instead of a case study or vice versa, why did you employ a qualitative or quantitative research approach, etc.

Remember that your methods should critically relate to issues identified in your literature review. As part of your final write-up, you may want to provide an in-depth reflection on the research methods chosen and its limitations

As discussed in the relevant lectures, it is also important to consider the issue of ethics in relation to the collection and use of your primary data. Ethical considerations are on-going throughout the GA/FP process in terms of being an aspect you must always bear in mind. For example, you will have to consider whether you need to keep the names of any people interviewed or surveyed anonymous and you must make it clear to interviewees or respondents how you will use the information they provide. How will you 'use' any visual data such as photographs or films? What ethical considerations might there be in the uses to which such data is put? If you have collected any data from a company or organisation, are you allowed to use the name of the company or the name of the individual(s) interviewed? Will any respondents that take part in the data collection be 'harmed' in any way? Many students discuss ethics generally in their methods section but then fail to discuss how ethical issues relating to their research were actually addressed during the primary research stage.

When working with a commissioner/client, a consultant (i.e. you, the student in this case) would normally seek feedback and approval for any primary research instruments that would be used as part of the research process.

Primary Research Findings (Results Chapter)

This section reports on and discusses the findings of the study. The findings, their critical analysis and conceptualisation should be presented section by section in a systematic, well-synthesised and logical sequence. All your findings should, of course, be directly relevant to your aim/s and objectives of the research and consistent with the framework that is presented in the literature review. Consider the extent to which the reader can rely on your findings. Put any tables or graphs that you decide to use in a relevant part of the text, not in an appendix, and describe and discuss them there to provide evidence for your findings/conclusions.

The discussion of the results should be well argued in relation to each research question or hypothesis. Inferences, projections, and probable explanations of the results should also be included. If any, discuss the implications of patterns and trends, and include any secondary findings.

This section should be soberly argued, especially when you are dealing with controversial or complex issues or concepts. Whenever a claim is made, it should be backed up with argument and evidence (whether from your own research or that of others). The result of this discussion will give you the main conclusions of your research (see below).

Consultancy project primary findings should be related to wider academic materials in the submission to the school; however, the separate submission to the client may not necessarily include this element.

Conclusions

This section should be a succinct critical synthesis of the main findings of your research. You need to demonstrate explicitly how and to what extent you have achieved your aim(s) and objectives. You may need to highlight and critically discuss any differences between your actual findings and what you expected to find at the outset. Indicate how your research has helped to move issues/debates forward or has helped to redefine existing knowledge and concepts. Your conclusions should follow logically from your findings and be supported by them. In particular, they should not contain anything new which was not in the findings.

Recommendations/Strategy (if any)

Where a master's GA/FP results in recommendations or a suggested strategy these should be appropriate, reasonable, and capable of being implemented. Some recommendations and strategies may have attached timelines and may identify who is responsible for implementation. List them in logical order and ensure they follow from the evidence and conclusions of the findings. Not all assignments will have recommendations; some will produce concluding statements/analyses of the phenomenon under investigation, where appropriate identifying areas for further research.

For a consultancy project the recommendations will form a crucial part of the project. The commissioner/client is seeking your expert advice as to solutions or ways forward and will expect a series of recommendations, normally associated with a timeline as to when these need to be

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implemented in a logical order. Associated costing may be attached to each or some of the recommendations. Remember to keep recommendations feasible and grounded in your primary data.

References

The References includes all references that were used in the research process. Any citation in the References must be cited at least once somewhere within the GA/FP. Do not 'pad out' the References with sources never cited with the text – this is an important academic convention that must be adhered to. References must be in the appropriate Harvard-Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) style. Details can be found in Part 5A and 5B of the EEG.

Appendices

You must include a copy of your original or modified proposal in your appendices. As the research process evolves throughout the project, some students may find that they need to amend, add or change some of their objectives. This maybe because issues they were not aware of have emerged during the in-depth literature review stage. This is fine, as long as you keep your Academic Supervisor informed and obtain their approval for any changes made; major changes will be reviewed by the Research Methodology Module Lecturer as appropriate.

The appendices can be used to present information which is too detailed to include in the main thesis and/or information that is interesting but not essential to the main thrust of the thesis, such as an original copy of a questionnaire, and transcripts of some qualitative interviews. All interview transcripts, data files or observation transcripts etc. must be uploaded in the submission online area. Students may also include the standard letter they have sent to the interviewees of their research. No interviewee personal data should be included.

Each appendix should be given a title, a letter (A, B, etc.) and the page numbering continues from your bibliography. They should be included on the contents list. Normally, students should not include brochures, photocopies of articles and in general material that were not written by them.

Table 3.1 Guide to Typical Contents of a GA/FP

Guide to typical contents of a thesis	Dissertation	Applied Business Assignment	Creative Project
Contents /Type of Thesis		Consultancy Assignment	
Title page and official front cover	X	X	X
Abstract	X		X

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Executive summary		X	
Acknowledgements	X	X	X
Table of contents (including appendices)	X	X	X
Lists of tables and figures	X	X	X
Glossary	X	X	X
Introduction (including your overall aim/s and objectives and terms of reference for consultancy project)	X	X	X
Literature Review/secondary research findings	X	X	X
Research Methodology and Methods	X	X	X[1]
An analysis of the market and business environment appropriate to the selected concept based on a range of secondary sources.		X	
Primary research findings	X	X	
Conclusions	X	X	X
Recommendations or strategy	X	X	
Bibliography (List of references)	X	X	X
Appendices - (if any)	X	X	
Word Count	12,000 – 15,000	12,000 – 15,000	5,000 -10,000

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[1.] *The exact nature of your methodology will need to be discussed and agreed with your Academic Supervisor and field specialist*

Extra notes for Consultancy assignments

The consultancy report should be written using the guidelines supplied for writing consultancy papers. The structure for writing a final GA/FPs follow a general format as outlined in this section of the handbook; however, this type of paper differs in some respects from a standard academic research paper. The structure and layout should reflect the contents enumerated in the guidelines for writing a consultancy report. Students should consult the Academic Supervisor if they have any doubts about what is required.

Referencing Your Sources

References refer the reader to the source of specific information, ideas, quotes, figures, tables that you have used in your dissertation. All sources listed in your bibliography must be cited at least once somewhere in the main text of your dissertation, in other words do not 'pad' your bibliography with sources not clearly used. These **must** be included whenever you use anything drawn from other sources. It is looked upon very seriously if you do not reference your sources. Quoting a reference helps to support the point you want to make. It indicates the basis for your opinions and clearly shows how you have reached these opinions. Useful phrases include: 'according to Smith (2007) many managers believe service quality.....', 'research has revealed the importance of....... (see Jones 1985; Peters 1997)', or 'many academics (Jones 1997; Smith 2007 Zikmund 2009) debate the influence of globalisation...'.

Wittenborg insists that students use the Harvard referencing system due to its simplicity and overall acceptance in academic writing.

The Harvard system

The authors' names are given in the text together with the year of the work to which you are referring and, where appropriate, the page numbers (always included for direct quotes).

For example:

Many academics (Cooper *et al*. 1993; Ryan 2004; Smith 1996) explain the benefits and costs that can be expected from tourism development. Ryan (2004) identified that tourism is an obvious source of foreign exchange and particularly useful for developing countries to earn hard currencies such as dollars, euros and sterling. Jones (2002: 323) identified that in Sri Lanka "tourism is a significant contributor to the overall economy, worth 17.6% of the GDP in 2001". Smith (2007: 42) emphasised the potential of tourism to earn foreign exchange:

Commodity trade, which is the principal foreign earner for most developing countries has not provided a revenue growth to match the increase in the imports bill. Import substitution and local processing can

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provide a means of saving or earning but many countries run the problem of limited domestic markets or restricted access to foreign markets...

Negative impacts of tourism can include:

- The emphasis on the economics of tourism, especially its benefits, reflect the widespread belief among agency personnel that tourism can yield rapid and considerable returns on investments and be a positive force in remedying economic problems (Jones 2002: 13).

- Jones (1979) as cited in Smith (1995: 88) mentioned tourism has many other benefits as well. The National Trust (2010) and IEG (2009) are two organisations that have compiled statistics on the economic impacts of tourism related to specific events. However, Johnson (2008: 34) stated the "National Trust is a primary example of an organisation that systematically undervalues the economic spending of its visitors by 5-10%." Despite this, the National Trust is well aware of the importance of visitor spending (interview with Jane Smith of the National Trust, 2010).

Notes

For direct quotes used, always cite the page number e.g. Smith (1995: 42).

References to personal communications/interviews that you have carried out appear parenthetically: . . as detailed above, e.g. (interview with the Minister of Tourism in 2010). NO further details are included in the bibliography as you are referring to your own primary research results, (underpinned by the discussion of your research methods).

Direct quotes of more than 40 words should be indented on a separate line from the main text. Quotes of less than 40 words should be incorporated into the text differentiated by double "quotation" marks.

Web pages cited should only be the author/copyright of the article or web site (do not put in long web addresses within the text). Then in the bibliography, put in the full web address as part of the reference citation. Do not forget to mention the date on which it was retrieved/accessed.

Bibliography examples (alphabetically ordered by surname or name of author (including organisations if not a person). Do not separate bibliography under 'books', then 'journals', then 'newspapers'. All citations go under one long list, alphabetically ordered. When we say alphabetically ordered it does NOT mean you change the order of the names of the authors as written in the source (e.g. Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009) *Research Methods for Business Students. 5th edition*. Harlow: Prentice Hall – DOES NOT BECOME Lewis, P. Saunders, M..... or reference as Lewis et al 2009 in text, it is always Saunders et al because this is the way the book is cited). You can underline the title of the book or you can use *italics* but choose and pick one style and be consistent.

Books:

One author -

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Smith, C. (1995). *Tourism and the Environment*. London: Pitman.

Two authors -

Smith, C. and Jones, A. (2003). *The Economic Benefits of Tourism*. Guildford: Open University Press.

Three or more authors, list all 3 authors but in text cite as Smith *et al*. (1996).

Edited text -

Collins, P. (ed.). (1994). *The Joy of Tourism*. New York: Smith Publishing Ltd.

Author from edited book (author and editor different) -

Fuller, R. (1970). 'Formula for a floating city', pp. 103-114, in Dunstan, M.J. and Smith, E. (eds.). (1970). *Worlds in the Making*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Unknown Author -

Tourism in Devon in the Early 20th Century. (1905). Exeter.

Journal -

Lundberg, M. (2008). 'The benefits of travelling abroad'. *Tourism Management*. Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 16-24.

Note: Using Sources from another language -

This is completely acceptable however you must provide the reference in the foreign language and then in (brackets) indicate the English translation so that the reader can see what type of source has been used (journal, book, etc.).

Newspaper -

Smith, C. (2009). 'Tourists wreak havoc in Cornwall'. *The Guardian*. 24 February 2009, p. 5.

From an Interview -

References to personal communication appear parenthetically: ....(interview with the Minister of Tourism in 2008) within text if part of your primary research.

From the Internet -

Try to see who is the author of the website, whether a person or a company or government agency, e.g. within text cite only IEG Inc. (2010) or National Trust (2010).

- IEG Inc. (2010). 'Sponsorship Monitor' [online]. Chicago. Available at: URL:http://www.sponsorship.com/products/primer.html [Accessed 6 January 2010].

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- National Trust (2010). 'Nostell Priory Reopens its Doors' [online]. London. Available at: URL:http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/scripts/wapis.isa [Accessed 1 March 2010].

An increasing amount of information is becoming available in a variety of electronic formats. If you cite a journal that is available online (but also on the shelf of the library for example) you do not need to cite any URL address, just cite the reference as if you picked it from the shelf. We do not care if you read it online or from the shelf. Our view is that electronic references are not so very different from the hardcopy formats commonly used.

Books from Internet -

- Bird, Isabella L. *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains.* New York, 1881. *Victorian Women Writers Project.* Ed. Perry Willett. 27 May 1999. Indiana U. 4 Oct. 1999 < http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/vwwp/ bird/rocky.html>.

- Bryant, Peter J. "The Age of Mammals." *Biodiversity and Conservation.* 28 Aug. 1999. 4 Oct. 1999 <http://darwin.bio.uci.edu/ ~sustain/bio65/leco2/b65leco2.htm>.

- Harnack, Andrew, and Eugene Kleppinger. Preface. *Online! A Reference Guide to Using Internet Sources.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000. 5 Jan. 2000. <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/ online>.

Citing E-Journals and other electronic sources

Some materials now are only available online and not in printed forms in the library. Here you must cite the URL address as part of the reference within the bibliography. Example:

- Coyle, M. (1996). Attacking the cult-historicists. *Renaissance Forum* [online], 1(1). Available at: URL:http://www.hull.ac.uk/renforum/vlnol/coycle.htm [Accessed 16 June 1998].

- Albers, J. (1994). *Interaction of colour* [CD-ROM]. New Haven: Yale University Press.

One common query about referencing concerns references to texts/authors from a second source. If you are quoting a source second hand, that is, you have not read the author/text referred to yourself, but have come across the information in a text you did read then the following example shows you how to present the information in the text:

"Smith (1998: 124) discusses the work of Patterson (1996) who argues many of the established theories on staff recruitment and development are very unsatisfactory because....".

The bibliography would include the original text you actually read but also the secondary text referred to, so when collecting references make sure you collect all references at the start. It is always good practice to try to read an original text and not rely on another later author paraphrasing their work; however, this is not always possible. Retrieve the original citation for Patterson (1996) from the bibliography of Smith (1998) and cite this way to demonstrate you never read the original work:

Patterson, F. (1996). *Personnel Management*. London: Pearson, in Smith, S. (1998). *Recruitment Practices in the Retail Sector*. London: Jonesbooks.

Remember the golden rule, however, that you should always try to read the original source whenever possible.

Technical production regulations

When submitting the GA/FP, it is extremely important that you follow certain technical requirements. These must be adhered to otherwise a penalty may be enforced which can hinder your ability to pass the GA/FP.

Two copies of your GA/FP have to be submitted to the Wittenborg Education Department Office before 12 a.m. on the hand-in date; however, you are allowed to submit earlier at your discretion. Both copies of the GA/FP will be archived in the Wittenborg Library from date of submission. All assignments must also be submitted online to the correct upload area through Wittenborg Online, as well for plagiarism check. There will be instructions provided throughout the programme on how to submit your paper or documents on intranet submission area, on the Wittenborg-Online. This online submission can be used to check for other technical requirements such as the word count.

Your document should be properly bound (NO spiral binding) and printed on double-sided A4-sized paper. Coloured or black and white is acceptable. Creative output projects that may include some visual artefact or portfolio will require only one submission of this element along with the two bound copies of the written thesis.

It should be typed in a reasonably sized font (Geneva 10, or Times 12 are good examples) single-spaced (except for indented quotations and footnotes).

Double-spacing or 1.5-spacing, if and where necessary, and in consultation with the Academic Supervisor, is also acceptable. Lengthy quotations (exceeding 40 words) should be presented, indented, with clear spaces above and below the main text.

Margins should be as follows: left (binding edge) 40mm/1.5", right, top & bottom 25mm/1".

Your front/title page should include the title of your GA/FP, your name and student number, the month and the year of examination, the title of your degree course and the name of your Academic Supervisor. It should not include anything else. Refer to the sample front/title page below.

Follow carefully what must be included in the acknowledgements page. Ensure that the WORD COUNT has been identified at the bottom of your acknowledgements page.

All costs associated with the assignment are borne by you, the student. If an organisation or individual does give you a lot of help then it would normally be a courtesy for you to send them a copy of your final project, or, at least an executive summary.

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OFFICIAL FRAMEWORK DEADLINES

Process and regulations.

NB: All work to be handed in by 4 p.m. (16:00 CET) on the due date.

The process begins during semester 1, when the Research Methods and Final Project Module begins; from the beginning you need to start thinking about possible research topic areas that are appropriate for a master's-level GA/FP. Draft version of your research proposal is the required prerequisite for this Module (See Module guide for further details).

Your project is marked by your Academic Supervisor and second–marked by an external second marker (2nd marker) from another institution/organisation as a matter of quality control and assurance.. The final stage of the assessment process is the Examination Board.

Regulations for late submissions/extensions to the deadline/mitigating circumstances

Late submission of your GA/FP should be avoided. However, circumstances can arise which make a late submission inevitable. These circumstances must be acceptable as reasons for a late submission. If they include illness or injury, a medical certificate will normally be required. Late submission will not be condoned for such reasons as , slow internet connection, computer failure, time difference, or poor time management. Refer to the section 'Extension to Deadlines and Mitigating Circumstances' in this document for more details.

Plagiarism

A formal session on plagiarism is held during Induction Week. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is a form of cheating, as a result of which an individual gains or seeks to gain an unfair academic advantage. It includes the use of another author's words verbatim, summarising or paraphrasing another person's argument or line of thinking, or use of a particularly apt phrase without proper attribution. When working with ideas and concepts that are not familiar to you, the temptation for some students to lift words or sections of text from other sources is great. Write in your own words because using the words or ideas of others without a reference (either using quotation marks and/or sourcing the author(s)) will lead to accusations of plagiarism. Learn about plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct in Part 5A/B of the EEG.

Academic Supervisors are generally familiar with differences between the writing style of students and experienced authors. There is Turnitin, a software that monitors plagiarism and the use of AI writing tools such as ChatGPT, is available and used by the school to detect any suspected cases of academic misconduct such as plagiarism. The software compares the writing used within a thesis to other sources for example websites on the Internet, journal articles, books, and other student work from other universities.

If plagiarism is detected, the Graduation and Examination Board of Wittenborg will become involved, which may ultimately result in a penalty: a serious warning, downgrading, a fail with or without a chance to resubmit, or even dismissal from the university. It is not a pleasurable experience for both the student and the university, and therefore best avoided.

Please remember that the generation of false primary data is also a serious academic offence. Students are required to upload all primary data through Wittenborg-Online. This means that the data files with the results of a questionnaire, the transcripts of all interviews or the results of all observations need to be uploaded on the designated online area before the deadline. Failure to upload these will result in a fail for the GA/FP as it is considered as incomplete.

Further details of the Turnitin submission will be provided as part of the module workshop materials and clear instructions will be provided under the project module on Wittenborg Online as to how and when to submit your GA/FP through Turnitin.

Note that self-plagiarism (submitting the same assignment for different courses) is also a form of plagiarism. If – irrespective of the outcome of Turnitin – there are doubts about whether or not you are the original author of a piece of work, WUAS will insist on an oral presentation.

GA/FP Lectures/Workshops

Some seminars lectures will be designed to support your research efforts on the research process generally and on topics specifically intended to support the GA/FP, for example:

- The concept of research and the research process

- Types of research project

- Inquiry paradigms

- Literature review and secondary data

- Developing and planning research proposals

- Setting research aims and objectives

- Characteristics and principles of qualitative research

- Characteristics and principles of quantitative research

- Data analysis

- Writing up the project

GA/FP CHECKLIST - FORMATTING AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

5.1 Manuscript Formatting Checklist

This checklist at the end of the general points is **very** important!

I.   Is your GA/FP paginated correctly?
II.   Did you use your full and official name on the title page, copyright page?
III.   Are the titles on the title and abstract pages exactly the same?
IV.   Are your margins correct?
V.   Did you attach your approved RP as an appendix item?
VI.   Did you submit two properly bound (tape binding only) copies of your GA/FP to the front desk before the deadline (See GA/FP planning in the GA/FP Handbook)?
VII.   Did you submit the Graduation Clearance Form before the deadline?
VIII. Is the statement of originality of work added on the 'Acknowledgement' ?
IX.   Did you add the wordcount. Does it meet the wordcount?
X.   did you upload the results of your data collection?

5.1.1 GA/FP FORMATTING CHECKLIST

☐ **Order:** Title page, Abstract, Dedication (optional), Acknowledgement page (optional), Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, Manuscript, References, Appendices, Abridged Manuscript

☐ **Format:** Use the Harvard Style Referencing

☐ **Font:** 12-point typeTimes New Roman font, 11-point type Arial or 10-point Geneva or alike

☐ **Justification:** Left justified format is required (except for Title Page), do not use right or full justified margins

☐ **Margins:** Top, Right and Bottom margins 25mm/1", Left margin 40mm/1.5" to allow room for binding

   o   Title page, and first page of each chapter: Top Margin 50mm/2"

☐ **Page numbers:** bottom centre of each page, at least 20mm/3/4" from the edge of the paper.

   o   Prefatory pages (Title Page, Abstract, Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures) should be numbered with lower case Roman numerals.

   o   The page number should be omitted from the Title Page; the second page (Abstract/Executive Summary) should be labelled i.

   o   Main body pages are to be numbered using Arabic numerals. The first page of the main body text should start with 1.

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o   Continue page numbering through all of the references and appendices.

☐ **Title Page:** The title must be 10 words or less, and double spaced. The title begins from the top of the page. Insert your name, but do not include any degrees. <u>The date should be the month and year the manuscript is submitted for marking</u>.

☐ **Abstract/**Executive Summary: Abstract should be maximum of one page or less. Executive Summary should be 1-3 pages.

☐ **Acknowledgements page:** Optional page, see other GA/FP.

☐ **Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures:** double space see other GA/FP.

☐ **Chapter headings:** Consult the GA/FP handbook for detailed information about how to label chapters. Begin chapters on a new page. Begin "CHAPTER 2" from the top of the page. Centre the word "CHAPTER" in all CAPS followed by the Roman Numeral of one, as follows: "CHAPTER I". Double space and centre the chapter title in all CAPS – "**INTRODUCTION**" Bold. Chapter subheadings should follow Harvard Headings guidelines.

☐ **Main body text:** Mostly <u>1.5-spaced</u> with a few exceptions. Table/Figure headings and long quotes may be single spaced.

☐ **Paragraphs:** Wherever possible, avoid beginning a new paragraph at the bottom of a page or ending a paragraph at the top of a page, unless at least two lines of text can be included in each case.

☐ **References:** Single-space references, following the Harvard style. Use hanging indents (the first line begins at the margin and subsequent lines are indented).

☐ **Appendix:** Retain the same margins as in the rest of the GA/FP. Typeface should be the same or similar to what is used in the rest of the document. The style of tables and figures should confirm to Harvard Style guidelines. Include Appendices in the Table of Contents.

5.3 Consultancy Report to-do list

1. Introduction
2. Letter of understanding (formulation of problem and Gap)
   a. Consultation with client, and scope and objectives of the project
   b. Clarify the objectives, and proposed deliverables are to be stated
   c. Formulation of the problem and definition of the research question
   d. Formulation of type of consultancy assignment
3. Analysis of problem and conceptual framework
   a. Internal analysis
   b. External analysis
   c. Use of models/frameworks (e.g. BCG, INK, Change models, cost analysis models, Value chain models)

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4. Literature review (see information under academic research)
5. Methodology and research methods (see information under academic research)
    a. The type of consultancy assignment must be highlighted and explained
6. Timelines and milestones
7. Analysis and results (see section under academic research)
8. Conclusions and recommendations
9. References
10. Appendices

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SUPERVISION OF THE GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT/FINAL PROJECT

Academic Supervisors are normally members of the academic staff at WUAS. They will be allocated according to various criteria including their familiarity with the proposed topic, their knowledge of the relevant methodologies, their experience in conducting and supervising research projects and their workloads.

Each student is entitled to receive support from their Academic Supervisor. You can request for an Academic Supervisor when you have received approval on your Research Topic in Semester 1. To request for an Academic Supervisor, you have to complete the Online Academic Supervisor Request Form. Please check the Moodle Online Area for the link and the instructions on how to request for an Academic Supervisor.

Academic Supervisors will normally be working together with a number of students, so the total time available should, as far as possible, be divided equally between their supervisees. Academic Supervisors are allocated a maximum of **12 hours per student** for supervision including marking so when you use your supervisor's time, use it wisely. This does not necessarily mean that supervisors will support their supervisees in one-to-one tutorials: different supervisors and students prefer different methods, and very often you will gain more from being part of a small tutorial group than from one-to-one support – especially in the early stages of your research. It is the responsibility of students to make mutually agreeable arrangements with their supervisor. Students can see other academic supervisors for advice; however, this is at the discretion of the other supervisors. Keep your supervisor up to date if you discuss aspects of your research with another supervisor.

We strongly advise you to see your supervisor regularly and to follow with them a structured and planned approach to the dissertation along the lines that we are suggesting in this document. Students who do poorly on the dissertation are usually the ones who have failed to meet regularly with their supervisor and who have not followed a systematic plan. Supervisors are advised to keep details of attendance for each supervisee. We strongly advise you to keep a similar record detailing what was discussed and the actions you need to take. The following highlights the standard level of supervision that students should receive from the school.

Academic Supervisor/Student Supervision

Students can expect the following level of supervision from their Academic Supervisor:

- Supervisors will make themselves available for appropriate tutorial times in normal office hours during semester times (normally not during the Easter/Summer break period for some supervisors who take annual leave at such times). Discuss supervisory arrangements with your academic supervisor at your first meeting.

- If you choose to complete your project at a distance (i.e. you are unable to come to the university location for supervisory meetings) this can impact upon the effectiveness of the support and guidance that supervisors will be able to offer. If you are planning to be away from

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the campus and unable to attend face-to-face tutorials, please liaise with your supervisor and agree on the support that they will be able to offer at a distance.

- Supervisors will normally review in depth one chapter of the thesis. This chapter can be the student's choice; however, the vast majority of students choose the literature review as this comes early on in the process and students generally want to receive some feedback at this stage. Students should submit a word-processed full draft of their chosen chapter. Supervisors are normally expected to review the chosen chapter once, and should not be expected to keep reviewing re-submitted versions of the same chapter.

- Supervisors should normally review a draft chapter and return it to the student within a few working days (3-5 days) with an appropriate level of feedback.

- Supervisors will provide advice and guidance on appropriate research methodologies. It is expected that students will also attend relevant lectures to support their research as well as reviewing various research methods texts.

- Supervisors will notify students in advance of any leave they wish to take during semester time. At various times some supervisors may be out of the school for reasons such as attending conferences, placement visits and other university business. If this absence results in the supervisor being out of the office during term time for more than 5 working days, the supervisor should make appropriate cover for each student and should notify each student.

- Supervisors are allocated a total of 12 hours per year per student, which includes marking.

Supervisors can expect the following from each of their students:

  o regular, punctual attendance at supervisory tutorial meetings. Try to avoid 'dropping in' to supervisor's offices and quickly asking for advice since the supervisor may need time to reflect on your questions.

  o come fully prepared to supervisory tutorial meetings, which means that they have read around the subject area, and/or have drafts of material that need to be consulted.

  o inform supervisors with regard to their holiday plans and general availability throughout the research process.

  o keep supervisors up to date with any problems that may interfere with the deadline or the successful completion of the thesis.

  o openly communicate with their supervisor any other problems or fears with regard to their project.

  o develop a regular time line for their project research process.

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    o   strive to start their GA/FP as soon as they enter Semester 2 in order to be able to finish in a timely manner.

THE OFFICIAL PROCESS AND DEADLINES FOR GRADUATION

Graduation Clearance Form Guidelines

Students are not allowed to upload and defend their GA/FP without a signed clearance form from the Registrar. The clearance form shows that a student has completed all the required exams except the Final Project and paid all outstanding dues to the institution.

- The Clearance Form should be used as a standard graduation procedure

- Once a student submitted their GA/FP, the Exam Coordinator will submit their name to all the respective departments (Housing, Library, Registrar & Finance) for them to check and acknowledge in the Clearance Form. If there is any issue that needs to be settled, the student will be contacted by the respective department. Once the Clearance Form is completed and signed, the student's name will be added to the official GA/FP list for assessment and approval by the Graduation & Examination Board (GEB)

- After the approval of the GEB, the Oral Defence list will be prepared and sent to the students, Academic Supervisors, External Markers and other relevant departments, by 16:00 on Tuesday of Week 6.

- GA Oral Defence is always planned on the Friday of Exam Week (Week 6) each block with the exception of retake blocks. If Friday is a national holiday, the Oral Defence session will be moved to the immediate working day in the same week. For example, if Friday is Good Friday (national holiday), the oral defence will be moved to Thursday of the same week.

- Students must be present physically for their Oral Defence at their respective study locations (Amsterdam or Apeldoorn. Munich students will need to be present physically at the Apeldoorn campus.

- Students must prepare two properly bound (NO SPIRAL BINDING) copies of their GA/FP after the release of the Oral Defence list and submit them before or on the day of the Oral Defence. They can hand them in to the Front Desk for Amsterdam students and to the Registrar's office for Apeldoorn and Munich students.

  Students should upload their Oral Defence presentation (PowerPoint or Prezi) on the online area by Wednesday of Week 6 after the release of the Oral Defence list. However, students are allowed to modify their presentation after uploading. Students should also send their presentations to their Academic Supervisor. The uploaded version of the presentation should contain a 30-second synopsis video, in which the student gives a short overview of the GA/FP.

- The Oral Defence proceeding is a public event and any individual can attend it (for example parents, family members, friends, employers, students etc.). However, they must not interfere with the proceeding.

- Students must be formally and decently attired for the Oral Defence. Slippers, Crocs, flip-flops, pyjamas, shorts, track suits/pants, Bermudas, T-shirts, Spaghetti-strap dress/blouse, caps, sunglasses etc. are strictly prohibited. Students may be denied the Oral Defence or penalised with a deduction of 1-2 marks, if they are not formally and decently attired.

Note: Please, indicate if you would like to make use of any special arrangements/equipment for your Oral Defence. You must arrange this either through your Academic Supervisor/Study Advisor or the education department at least one week in advance of the Oral Defence.

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ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR THE FINAL PROJECT: MASTER DISSERTATION

Grade/Criteria	0 – 39%	40 – 49%	50 – 54% **Adequate but weak overall. All learning outcomes have been met but at least some barely exceed the 50% pass threshold**	55 – 59%
Design and conceptualisation of project	Unsatisfactory and very poorly thought out research redesign and conceptualisation, very weak/very limited engagement with theory. Weak/highly unsatisfactory attempt to expand, redefine and/or contribute to existing knowledge/practice. Aims and objectives are insufficiently grounded in the wider literature. Design and conceptualisation of the research demonstrates a	Unsatisfactory, poorly thought out research redesign and conceptualisation, very weak/limited engagement with theory. Weak/unsatisfactory attempt to expand, redefine and/or contribute to existing knowledge/practice. Aims and objectives are unsatisfactorily grounded in the wider literature. Design and conceptualisation of the research demonstrates a very limited level of understanding within the confines	Very basic and/or poorly thought out research redesign and conceptualisation, weak engagement with theory. Weak/limited attempt to expand, redefine and/or contribute to existing knowledge/practice. Aims and objectives are adequate but insufficiently grounded in the wider literature. Design and conceptualisation of the research demonstrates a weak approach within the confines of the project's	A standard but sound research redesign and conceptualisation, which engages with theory. Standard attempt to expand, redefine and/or contribute to existing knowledge/practice. Aims and objectives are grounded in the wider literature to a standard level. Design and conceptualisation of the research demonstrates a standard critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.

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	very poor level of understanding within the confines of the project's aims and objectives and in relation to the expectations for the level of study.	of the project's aims and objectives and in relation to the expectations for the level of study.	aims and objectives and in relation to the expectations for the level of study.	
Intellectual engagement, knowledge and understanding	Very limited, weak/poor understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Very limited recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing a highly unsatisfactory grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Several/many significant inaccuracies and/or misunderstandings evident. Very weak/insufficient identification of gaps in knowledge.	Very limited understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Weak recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing an unsatisfactory grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Some significant inaccuracies and/or misunderstandings evident. Weak/insufficient identification of gaps in knowledge.	Adequate but limited understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Adequate but limited recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing a weak grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Weak/limited identification of gaps in knowledge.	Some good understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Clear and at times good recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing a standard grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Standard identification of gaps in knowledge.

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Methodology and research methods	Very poorly thought out justification for and explanation of methods adopted with insufficient links made to the literature review and research questions. Very weak/insufficient recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Poorly thought out justification for and explanation of methods adopted with insufficient links made to the literature review and research questions. Weak/insufficient recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	An adequate but weak justification for and explanation of methods adopted with limited links made to the literature review and research questions. Limited/weak recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	A standard justification for and explanation of methods adopted with links made to the literature review and research questions. Standard recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.
Analysis and Evaluation	Analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/findings of the research are purely descriptive demonstrating inadequate understanding of reflectivity in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks adopted. Analysis of the research outcomes/findings is highly unsatisfactory within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Very poor/inadequate	Analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/findings of the research are too descriptive demonstrating insufficient understanding of reflectivity in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks adopted. Analysis of the research outcomes/findings is unsatisfactory within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Very poor conclusions and/or	Analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/findings of the research are descriptive demonstrating limited understanding of reflectivity in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks adopted. Research outcomes/findings are insufficiently analysed within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Very basic and/or poorly	Sound analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/findings of the research demonstrating some understanding of reflectivity when drawing on appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes/findings are discussed to a standard level within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Sound conclusions and/or recommendations

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	conclusions and/or recommendations discussed to an unsatisfactory level within the context of the outcomes/findings. Inadequate recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	recommendations discussed to an inadequate/limited level within the context of the outcomes/findings. Unsatisfactory recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	thought through conclusions and/or recommendations discussed to an adequate but limited level within the context of the outcomes/findings. Very basic, weak/limited recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	discussed to a standard level within the context of the outcomes/findings. Standard recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.
Structure, organisation and presentation	Very poor standard of organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Very poor standard of written and/or visual communication. Very poor compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Some serious/significant grammatical errors and omissions in the	Poor standard of organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Poor standard of written and/or visual communication. Poor compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Some significant grammatical errors and omissions in the references/bibliography.	Poor standard of organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Adequate standard of written and/or visual communication. Poor compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Grammatical errors and omissions in the references/bibliography.	Satisfactory organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Some good quality written and/or visual communication. Standard compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Some grammatical errors and omissions in the references/bibliography.

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	references/bibliogr aphy.			

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Grade/Criteria	60 – 69%	70 – 79%	80-100%
Design and conceptualisation of project	Very good research design and conceptualisation, with potential to expand, redefine and/or contribute to existing knowledge/practice. Aims and objectives are grounded in the wider literature to a very good level and have generally been achieved to a very good standard. Design and conceptualisation of the research is at times ambitious with very good evidence of a critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	An extremely good research design and conceptualisation, which expands, redefines and/or contributes to existing knowledge/practice. Aims and objectives are critically grounded in the wider literature and have been achieved to an extremely good level. Design and conceptualisation of the research is ambitious with extremely good evidence of a critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	Outstanding research design and conceptualisation, which clearly expands, redefines and/or contributes to existing knowledge/practice. Aims and objectives are critically grounded in the wider literature and have been achieved to an exceptional standard. Design and conceptualisation of the research is extremely coherent, appropriate, ambitious and original with excellent evidence of a critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.
Intellectual engagement, knowledge and understanding	Very good engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Clear and at times insightful recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing a very good grounding for the aims,	Extremely good critical engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Clear, insightful and in places sophisticated recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing an extremely	Outstanding critical engagement with theory, frameworks and debates in a highly persuasive narrative form. Highly sophisticated recognition of seminal works, chronology and

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	objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Very good identification of gaps in knowledge.	good grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Extremely good identification of gaps in knowledge.	contested aspects of the wider literature, providing an exemplary grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. In-depth and insightful understanding of the gaps in knowledge.
Methodology and research methods	Very good justification for methods adopted, with clearly discussed and explained in the context of the literature review and research questions. Good recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Extremely good justification for methods adopted, clearly and critically discussed and explained in the context of the literature review and research questions. Methods adopted are appropriate for the research questions, with very good recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Outstanding justification for methods adopted, clear and critically explained demonstrating a sophisticated high quality level of analysis in the context of the literature review and research questions. Methods adopted are highly appropriate for the research questions, with excellent recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.
Analysis and evaluation	Some high-quality analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/findings of the research demonstrating very good level of reflectivity when	Extremely good critical analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/findings of the research demonstrating an extremely good level of	Outstanding and very high-quality critical analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/findings of the research,

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	drawing on appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes/findings are discussed to a very good level within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Conclusions and/or recommendations are discussed to a very good level within the context of the outcomes/findings. Very good, informed recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	reflectivity when drawing on appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes/findings are discussed to an extremely original aims and objectives of the project. Conclusions and/or recommendations are discussed to an extremely good level within the context of the outcomes/findings. Very rigorous overt and informed recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	demonstrating a very high level of reflectivity when drawing on appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes/findings have been critically and comprehensively discussed in the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Conclusions and/or recommendations are discussed to an exemplary level within the context of the outcomes/findings. Highly rigorous overt and informed recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.
Structure, organisation and presentation	Very good organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Very good quality written and/or visual communication. Very good compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing,	Extremely good organisation, structure and presentation of the project. High quality written and/or visual communication. Full compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing,	Exemplary organisation, structure and presentation of the project. High quality written and/or visual communication with clear narrative style and appropriate structure. Strict compliance and

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	bibliography). Few grammatical errors and isolated omissions in the references/bibliography.	bibliography). No/limited apparent grammatical errors or omissions in the references/bibliography.	adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). No/few apparent grammatical errors or omissions in bibliography.

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GRADUATION ASSIGNMEN/FINAL PROJECT PLANNING

1. This GA/FP planning schedule is for full-time study in order to achieve attributed ECs. According to this planning, the students who are working full-time on their GAs can complete it in time. Students working part-time, or completing any other study requirements, should consider extra time and must discuss this clearly with their academic supervisor.

2. Only those students who have started their work before the summer (from Block April) can graduate in Block September.

3. Students should make sure that the submitted content is not a draft and/or final draft but the absolute final, , before they press the submission button before or on the deadline for submitting any part and/or final version GA.

4. Students must develop their own planning for each chapter of the GA, data collection and/or analysis to write initial draft versions. These drafts should be used to develop final versions which should be uploaded before the submission deadlines.

5. Students must submit two properly bound copies of their dissertation within one month of their graduation. They can hand them in to the Front Desk.

6. GA/FP oral defence is planned six times a year for both Bachelor and Master programmes during the final week of each block (except for retake blocks) and the schedule is published on the Wednesday of the final week of each block. These six possibilities are arranged along with the six Graduation and Examination Board meetings, during which the submitted GA/FPs are approved for oral defence after the evaluation from two examiners. There is no possibility to submit/defend the GA/FP outside these dates/deadlines. In case of failure to defend the GA/FP in the block where the GA/FP submission was successful, students can submit/defend in the subsequent opportunity.

7. Block Weeks mentioned in this schedule are the standard 6 weeks of each block excluding any Introduction Weeks (IW), Study Weeks (SW) and Catch-up Weeks mentioned in any block in the year calendar. Please check the GA/FP module online area for the specific days and times for upload deadlines.

8. The Turnitin Upload area for GA Final Version of a block CLOSES at 4 p.m. CET (16:00 hours Dutch Time) on the Monday of Week 4 of a block. Once it is closed, it will become hidden to students and the upload area in the next block will open. If you miss the deadline you will need to submit in the next block's submission area.

9. Technical errors: Make sure that you attempt your upload well before the deadline. If there is an error, you are obliged to contact the Front Desk immediately for help.

10. Graduation Ceremonies (2 per academic year) are planned as follows:

    - 2nd Week Friday of Retake Block 4

    - 2nd Week Friday of Retake Block 8

GRADUATION OPPORTUNITY 1, (BLOCK SEPTEMBER)		
Day	**Block Week**	**Deadlines**
Block April (previous academic year)		
Monday	Block April, Week 1	Make contact with assigned academic supervisor once your Research Topic is approved in Semester 1. You can only continue with the rest of process after you have obtained a pass in your Research Proposal.
Monday	Block April, Week 2	Send Research Proposal to academic supervisor
Friday	Block April, Week 4	Approval of passed Research Proposal by the academic supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block April, week 6	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Block May (previous academic year)		
Monday	Block May, Week 1	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1-3, including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block May, Week 4	Academic supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block May, Week 5	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Ch. 1- 4
Block September		
Friday	Block September, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on student request if necessary
	Block September, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block September, Week 3	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block September, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block September, Week 6	Approval Graduation and Examination Board (GEB)

Tuesday	Block September, Week 6	Results GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block September, Week 6	GA/FP/Final Project Oral Defence

GRADUATION OPPORTUNITY 2, (BLOCK OCTOBER)		
Day	Block Week	Deadlines
Block May (previous academic year)		
Monday	Block May, Week 1	Make contact with assigned academic supervisor once your Research Topic is approved in Semester 1. You can only continue with the rest of process after you have obtained a pass in your Research Proposal.
Monday	Block May, Week 2	Send Research Proposal to academic supervisor
Friday	Block May, Week 4	Approval of passed Research Proposal by the academic supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block May, week 6	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Block September		
Monday	Block September, Week 1	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1-3, including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block September, Week 4	Academic supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block September, Week 6	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Ch. 1- 4
Block October		
Friday	Block October, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on student request if necessary
	Block October, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback

	Block October, Week 3	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block October, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block October, Week 6	Approval Graduation and Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block October, Week 6	Results GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block October, Week 6	GA/FP/Final Project Oral Defence

GRADUATION OPPORTUNITY 3, (BLOCK DECEMBER)		
Day	**Block Week**	**Deadlines**
Block September		
Monday	Block September, Week 1	Make contact with assigned academic supervisor once your Research Topic is approved in Semester 1. You can only continue with the rest of process after you have obtained a pass in your Research Proposal.
Monday	Block September, Week 2	Send Research Proposal to academic supervisor
Friday	Block September, Week 4	Approval of passed Research Proposal by the academic supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block September, week 6	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Block October		
Monday	Block October, Week 1	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1-3, including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block October, Week 4	Academic supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block October, Week 5	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Ch. 1- 4
Block December		
Friday	Block December, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on Student request if necessary
	Block December, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block December, Week 3	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block December, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline

Monday	Block December, Week 6	Approval Graduation and Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block December, Week 6	Results GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block December, Week 6	GA/FP/Final Project Oral Defence

GRADUATION OPPORTUNITY 4, (BLOCK FEBRUARY)		
Day	**Block Week**	**Deadlines**
Block October		
Monday	Block October, Week 1	Make contact with assigned academic supervisor once your Research Topic is approved in Semester 1. You can only continue with the rest of process after you have obtained a pass in your Research Proposal.
Monday	Block October, Week 2	Send Research proposal to academic supervisor
Friday	Block October, Week 4	Approval of passed Research Proposal by the academic supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block October, week 6	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Block December		
Monday	Block December, Week 1	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1-3, including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block December, Week 4	Academic supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block December, Week 5	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Ch. 1- 4
Block February		
Friday	Block February, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on student request if necessary

	Block February, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block February, Week 3	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block February, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block February, Week 6	Approval Graduation and Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block February, Week 6	Results GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block February, Week 6	GA/FP/Final Project Oral Defence

GRADUATION OPPORTUNITY 5, (BLOCK APRIL)		
Day	**Block Week**	**Deadlines**
Block December		
Monday	Block December, Week 1	Make contact with assigned academic supervisor once your Research Topic is approved in Semester 1. You can only continue with the rest of process after you have obtained a pass in your Research Proposal.
Monday	Block December, Week 2	Send Research Proposal to academic supervisor
Friday	Block December, Week 4	Approval of passed Research Proposal by the academic supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block December, week 6	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Block February		
Monday	Block February, Week 1	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1-3, including the Questionnaire

Friday	Block February, Week 4	Academic supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block February Week 5	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Ch. 1- 4
Block April		
Friday	Block April, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on student request if necessary
	Block April, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block April, Week 3	Possible meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block April, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block April, Week 6	Approval Graduation and Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block April, Week 6	Results GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block April, Week 6	GA/FP/Final Project Oral Defence

GRADUATION OPPORTUNITY 6, (BLOCK MAY)		
Day	**Block Week**	**Deadlines**
Block February		
Monday	Block February, Week 1	Make contact with assigned academic supervisor once your Research Topic is approved in Semester 1. You can only continue with the rest of process after you have obtained a pass in your Research Proposal.
Monday	Block February, Week 2	Send Research Proposal to academic supervisor
Friday	Block February, Week 4	Approval of passed Research Proposal by the academic supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block February, week 6	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Block April		

Monday	Block April, Week 1	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1-3, including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block April, Week 4	Academic supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block April, Week 5	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Ch. 1- 4
Block May		
Friday	Block May, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on student request if necessary
	Block May, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block May, Week 3	Possible academic supervisor meeting on student request if necessary
Monday	Block May, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block May, Week 6	Approval Graduation and Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block May, Week 6	Results GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block May, Week 6	GA/FP/Final Project Oral Defence

EXTENSION TO DEADLINES AND MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Mitigating Circumstances

During your studies you may have certain times when circumstances prevent you performing to the best of your ability. This could be due to family problems, close personal bereavement or illness. In the first instance this should be discussed with the Academic Supervisor who will advise you.

Regulations concerning mitigating circumstances

As with all modules, the GA/FP is covered by the general assessment regulations concerning mitigating circumstances. If you feel that the progress or the quality of your GA/FP is being affected by adverse circumstances (for example, prolonged debilitating illness, or stress due to unavoidable personal circumstances), then you can apply for an extension. You need to discuss with/report to your Academic Supervisor about your adverse circumstances and the possibility of extensions AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE . You should be able to foresee, if you require an extension well in advance of the submission deadline (usually at least a week before). Normally, you will be required to produce evidence that you have suffered from adverse circumstances.

Retake of Remaining Module under Mitigating Circumstances

On condition that a student has a mitigating circumstance and/or a minimum of 210 ECs (Bachelor's) and 50 ECs (Master's), a request can be made for a special seat if the remaining module is NOT within the block (s) prior to graduation. A maximum of 2 modules can be requested. A student is permitted to do a retake under mitigating circumstances only once. Otherwise, it reverts to the normal planning of the module and assessments/retakes. A retake under mitigating circumstances can only be done when a student has attempted the normal exam (1st attempt). In special cases (at the student's written request) the Graduation & Examination Board (GEB) may decide otherwise. Retake under mitigating circumstances requests should be submitted no later than Week 1 of the block before the planned special seat, i.e. for a special seat in Block October, the request has to be submitted in Week 1 of Block September.

A request for a special seat must be done by completing the "Retake of remaining module/Mitigating Circumstances Form" is available in the Students Resources online area.

Extension to Deadlines

Normally, deadlines must not be missed. If, due to exceptional circumstances, you are unable to meet the deadline you may request an extension using the appropriate 'Special Request/Mitigating Circumstances Form', available online. Supporting evidence will normally be required when applications for extensions are made, such as a medical certificate, doctor's letter, death certificate, etc. The GEB is the only body , which can authorise extensions. You may wish to make an appointment with your study advisor who can also help you complete the application and ensure that you have relevant evidence.

Requests for extensions should normally be submitted in advance at least three full working days before the deadline date. You must take the application with your supporting evidence to your Academic Supervisor.

Late Submission

Late submission is not normally condoned unless there are significant reasons ('mitigating circumstances') supported by written evidence. This includes absence from an assessment, failure to submit or undertake work, failure to submit work by the deadline, or poor performance.

The deadline date for submission of claims for mitigation is the last Thursday of the block. If you hand work in late (that is, after the deadline, or the extended deadline if one was granted), the assignment receives a 'zero' mark on the feedback sheet. However, for the student's information the study advisor will write the actual mark the work *would have* received (had it not been late) on the GA/FP mark sheet.

Waiver of Tuition Fee

A student will be granted a waiver in the tuition fee of one block maximum only once in case of failure in their GA/FP. This waiver is not applicable in case of the following circumstances:

- Incomplete GA/FP
- Students who missed any of the three submission deadlines
- Failed GA/FP due to academic misconduct

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – PRO–FORMA RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM

- Research Proposal Form

Please word process this pro forma, following its exact layout.

- Student Name:

- Student Number:

- Course:

- Research Interest outline:

- Please develop a 500-word narrative outlining your research interests and potential areas of investigation. Please identify the type of project (e.g. dissertation, consultancy project, creative output).

- Please highlight a list of books, articles and other relevant sources that you have consulted so far. Submit these sources using the Harvard referencing style.

Date:

To be completed by module lecturer – this will appear on the upload area as mark/comments:

Decision: Approved (Student may upload GA/FP Proposal)/NO (Student can resubmit before resubmission deadline, plus feedback)

FINAL-YEAR ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR:

APPENDIX 2 – RESEARCH INTERESTS RESUBMISSION FROM

Research Interests Resubmission Form

DEADLINE FRIDAY EXAM WEEK - SAME BLOCK AS FIRST SUBMISSION

Please word process this pro forma, following its exact layout.

Student Name:

Student Number:

Course:

- Research Interest outline:

- Please develop a 500-word narrative outlining your research interests and potential areas of investigation. Please identify the type of project (e.g. dissertation, consultancy project, creative output).

Please highlight a list of books, articles and other relevant sources that you have consulted so far. Please submit these sources using the Harvard referencing style.

Student Name:

Student Number:

Date:

To be completed by module lecturer – this will appear on the upload area as mark/comments:

Decision: Approved (Student may upload GA/FP Proposal)/NO (Student can join next submission deadline as first submission)

FEEDBACK DEADLINE: Following Block Friday Lesson Week 2

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR:

APPENDIX 3 – RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS

This segment must be read alongside:

- BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research. See:

  www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf?noredirect=1

- National Ethics Council for Social and Behavioural Sciences. See:

  www.nethics.nl/.cm4all/iproc.php/Gedragscode/CODE%20OF%20ETHICS%20FOR%20RESEARCH%20IN%20THE%20SOCIAL%20AND%20BEHAVIOURAL%20SCIENCES%20v2%20230518.pdf?cdp=a

- Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. See:

  www.nwo.nl/en/documents/nwo/policy/netherlands-code-of-conduct-for-research-integrity

How to use

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the questions in Section A, please, provide an outline of how the potential risks will be addressed against the question number in Section B.

The Academic Supervisor (Tier 1) will use this information to assess whether the risks are insignificant enough, or could be mitigated, to enable the research to proceed with Tier 1 ethical approval, or whether the proposal needs to be referred to Head Academic Supervision (Tier 2), or Head of School (Tier 3) or the WUAS Graduation and Examination Board (Tier 4).

Use checklist C to confirm that ethical issues regarding research participants have been identified and addressed appropriately. Based on the information of sections A, B and C, the 'Consent Form' (p. 10) is created. Checklist E provides an overview for accompanying documents.

Students must receive ethical approval before starting collecting data (Section D).

CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS SEGMENT

SECTION A: ETHICAL RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Please, tick YES or NO for each question. If you have answered YES to any of the questions from 1 to 15 below, please, provide a brief outline of how these risks will be addressed in the relevant part of the box in Section B or give details of any existing protocols within the WUAS School that already cover these specific issues.

#	Question	Yes/No
1	Will participants be likely to undergo vigorous physical activity, prolonged or repetitive testing, or to experience physical harm, more than minimal pain or discomfort or exposure to dangerous situations/environments as part of the research?	Yes/No
2	Does the study involve any physiological or psychological interventions with the potential to be invasive, intrusive or harmful (e.g. administration of drugs or other substances, taking samples of blood, saliva, urine, etc., use of equipment to monitor bodily performance, manual handling of participants, techniques such as hypnotherapy)?	Yes/No
3	Will the study involve participants who could be considered vulnerable (for example due to age, psychological or medical condition, social inequality), or where possible coercion or feelings of obligation to participate may exist (e.g. when recruiting one's own students or colleagues)?	Yes/No
4	Will the study involve the discussion of sensitive topics (for example, painful reflections or traumas, religious or other beliefs, sexual behaviour, experience of violence, abuse or bullying, illness, illegal or political behaviour, people's gender or ethnic status, detailed financial matters, issues relating to body image)?	Yes/No
5	Could participants experience psychological or emotional stress, anxiety, humiliation or other negative consequences, beyond what would be expected to be encountered in normal life?	Yes/No
6	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge at the time (e.g. covert observation or recording of people in non- public places), or involve deception or conduct of the research without participants' full and informed consent?	Yes/No

7	Will the research require the co-operation or permission of an individual or gatekeeper in order to gain access to participants (e.g. a teacher at a school, a manager of sheltered housing, the organiser of a self-help group, etc.)?	Yes/No
8	Will the research involve access to records of a confidential or personal nature, or documents of a sensitive political, moral, medical or religious nature?	Yes/No
9	Will the research involve collecting visual information of a personal nature, such as taking photographs or making video recordings of participants?	Yes/No
10	Will the research involve accessing participants or data of a personal nature via an online environment or internet setting (e.g. chat rooms, social media, instant messaging, etc.)?	Yes/No
11	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	Yes/No
12	Does the research have the potential for causing significant negative impact on the environment (including animal or plant populations, or rare or protected species, habitats or sites)?	Yes/No
13	Might the research raise specific ethical issues regarding cultural/political sensitivities (e.g. local customs or gatekeepers, political sensitivities)?	Yes/No
14	Might the research involve the disclosure of confidential information beyond the initial consent given?	Yes/No
15	Are there any other ethical issues that are not covered in the questions above?	Yes/No

SECTION B: ADDRESSING POTENTIAL RISK

To be completed only if one or more questions in section A above have been answered as 'YES'.

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the questions in Section A above, please, provide an outline of how the potential risks will be addressed against the question number. The Academic Supervisor (Tier 1) will use this information to assess whether the risks are insignificant enough, or could be mitigated, to enable the research to proceed with Tier 1 ethical approval, or whether the proposal needs to be referred to Head Academic Supervision (Tier 2), and ultimately the WUAS Graduation & Examination Board (Tier 3).

Please outline potential risks and how they will be addressed.

Question in section A	Outline potential risks and how they will be addressed.	Yes/No
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
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10		
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14		
15		

Some WUAS Schools may carry out research that involves types of risk on a routine basis (e.g. manual handling of participants or working with specific hazardous substances, involving children as participants in a school setting, taking photographs or videos of participants), and may already have specific protocols that cover procedures and guidelines for dealing with these risks. If activities to be undertaken in the proposed project are covered by such a protocol, please, provide details below.

Where the research is covered by such a protocol and does not raise any additional ethical issues it does not need to be considered at Tier 2.

Additional details: <...add, when applicable...>

SECTION C: CHECKLIST ETHICAL ISSUES RELATING TO RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Please use the checklist below to confirm that ethical issues regarding research participants have been identified and addressed appropriately.

#	Statements	Yes	N/A
1	Participants will be fully informed regarding the purpose of the study and their participation in it.		
2	It will be made clear to participants that their participation is voluntary, and they may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.		
3	Consent will be obtained from participants for taking part in the study.		
4	Recruitment materials (including posters, leaflets and emails), information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires or letters provide sufficient and accurate information, and have been clearly written and presented in a format suitable for the target audience.		
5	Where the research is likely to involve participants, who might not understand English, arrangements will be made for translation of materials and/or provision of interpreters as appropriate.		
6	Appropriate arrangements have been made to consider anonymity, confidentiality and privacy of participants.		
7	Appropriate arrangements have been made for the collection, handling and storage of electronic and/or physical data.		

SECTION D: ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR SIGN-OFF (FOR STUDENT RESEARCH ONLY)

I confirm that I have checked the application and that:

[ ]   the student has addressed the relevant ethical issues,

[ ]   the student has the necessary skills and experience to carry out the proposed research and
        has been trained in ethics as part of their course,

[ ]   this is a practicable and worthwhile research project, appropriate to the level of study.

Academic Supervisor: _____   Date: _____

SECTION E: CHECKLIST FOR ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

Please, add these documents to this document (do not upload these as separate files).

Please, ensure you have attached copies of any of the following documents where relevant:

[ ]   Information sheet

[ ]   Consent form

[ ]   Advertising or recruitment materials

[ ]   Sample questionnaires or interview questions

[ ]   Risk assessment forms. Note: See sections A, B, C.

[ ]   Letters of support from external organisations involved in the research

[ ]   List of references

Submit this form in accordance with the instructions at the beginning of this document.

Student applicants: If you have answered 'no' to all the questions in Section C, or the work is covered by an approved WUAS School protocol, this form may be submitted with the student dissertation or project outline. If you have answered 'yes' to one or more of the questions in Section D, please return this form and all accompanying documentation to the Academic Supervisor.

WUAS Staff applicants:

Please return this form and accompanying documentation to WUAS Head of Research.

CONSENT FORM

The research project to reflect the scope of the participation for which consent is being sought:

<...add title...>

	Please initial or tick box
I agree to take part in this research which is to answer: <...add text...>	
The researcher has explained to my satisfaction the purpose, principles and procedures of the study and the possible risks involved.	
I have read the information sheet and I understand the principles, procedures and possible risks involved.	
I am aware that I will be required to participate in <...add description...>, that are part of the research project. As well as, to answer questions by means of <...add research methods...>. The researcher will make use of <...add additional research methods, and/or technologies...>, of which I am aware.	
I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will normally be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else.	
I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without incurring consequences from doing so.	
I agree that should I withdraw from the study, the data collected up to that point may be used by the researcher for the purposes described in the information sheet. Where there is a possibility that data may be reused or shared, in accordance with Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences Intellectual Property (IP) Policy.	
I agree that data collected may subsequently be archived and used by other bona fide researchers.	

Name (please, print)   ....

Signed   ....

Date   ....