

MSc Occ Medicine and Hygiene Dissertation Guide 2025/26

Description



The University of Manchester

MSc Occupational Hygiene

MSc Occupational Medicine

Dissertation Guide

2025/2026

General Information

The Dissertation Guide is a reference document that contains information on the University expectations for the MSc dissertation. The dissertation is a 60-credit unit that gives you the opportunity to undertake a detailed independent study into a subject of interest. This guide should be read in conjunction with your Programme Handbook.

Useful Contacts

If you have any questions or encounter any problems during your studies, please contact a member of the Student Hub team and we will endeavour to deal with your query or re-direct it appropriately.

Key Academic Staff

Anne Clayson	Programme Director MSc Occupational Hygiene, MSc Occupational Medicine	Anne.Clayson@manchester.ac.uk
Nicola Gartland	Deputy Programme Director MSc Occupational Hygiene, MSc Occupational Medicine	Nicola.Gartland@manchester.ac.uk

Melanie
Carder Course Unit Lead

Melanie.Carder@manchester.ac.uk

Programme Admin team

EMAIL ADDRESS

shs.assessment@manchester.ac.uk

PURPOSE

- Examination queries
- Assessment queries
- Assessment submission
- Resit/reassessment que

shs.attendance@manchester.ac.uk

- Attendance Monitoring

shs.dc@manchester.ac.uk

- Disability Support

shs.mitcircs@manchester.ac.uk

- Mitigating Circumstances

shs.programmes@manchester.ac.uk

- Registration advice and
- Course unit selection an
- Timetable queries
- Programme content

shs.wellbeing@manchester.ac.uk

- Wellbeing student support

shs.hub@manchester.ac.uk

- Student support hub â? teams

Other contact

Canvas & Technical Support

Faculty eLearning Team
FBMHcontact@manchester.ac.uk
+44(0)161 306 5544

Dissertation Proposal

Developing your dissertation proposal is a critical part of the dissertation process, the purpose of which is to establish clear aims, objectives and methods for your dissertation. This should also include a timeline of activity and any associated costs. This is addressed during your dissertation preparation workshop, the semester launch event at the start of your dissertation year and in conversations with your supervisor.

Students need to complete a short form to indicate the title and a brief outline of what they will be focusing on. This is formative only; it helps students to formulate their ideas and helps in the assignment of an appropriate supervisor.

The dissertation proposal form can be found in the 'Preparing for Your MSc Year' area on Canvas. Students should email the completed form by **10th September 2025** to melanie.carder@manchester.ac.uk and nicola.gartland@manchester.ac.uk.

Further guidance may be found in:

Davies, M (2013) *Study skills for international postgraduates*, Palgrave Macmillan

Rudestam, KE and Newton, RR (2015) *Surviving your dissertation: a comprehensive guide to content and process*, 4th Edition available online via the [University Library](#)

Swetnam and Swetnam (2000) *Writing your dissertation: the bestselling guide to planning, preparing and presenting first-class work*, 3rd Edition, Available online via the [University Library](#)

You and Your Supervisor

Allocation of Supervisor

You will be allocated a supervisor for the duration of your MSc dissertation study. The supervisor's role is to give advice and help on the nature and standard of the work required and direct you to useful literature and appropriate methodology. It is not feasible for your supervisor to re-draft your work and above all, you must have realistic expectations for the return of comments on your draft. With this in mind, timely requests for supervision meetings are your responsibility. Please bear in mind your supervisor will have other responsibilities. It is recommended that you set out in advance a number of key dates at the start of your supervision. These may be in line with your Gantt chart, or at various other intervals pertinent to your study.

Meeting with your supervisor

Supervisions are usually based on something written by you, so that the supervisor can give you feedback on your ideas and proposed methods. Remember your supervisor will need time to read it and prepare a response.

The impetus for arranging meetings rests with you rather than your supervisor. Remember that s/he can only guide your writing and advise you on areas that require improvement if he/she has seen the text. We advise **very strongly** that you send your supervisor sections of your document, with a note indicating stage of completion and draft contents, as soon as you complete them and the whole draft **at least 6 weeks** before the final submission date.

Please note that supervisors are **not** to be expected to proofread or correct spelling/grammar. Of course, most will advise on presentation and format but for further support for writing skills please refer

to the Language Centre detailed on page 4 for access to bespoke help and guidance.

Dissertation Aims and Objectives

The dissertation enables students to demonstrate mastery of a potentially useful area of knowledge in the field of occupational hygiene or medicine. Through the successful design and completion of a dissertation, the student should be able to:

- Develop powers of critical appraisal, analytical thinking and logical argument
- Critically evaluate ideas and concepts in occupational health and explore other philosophical and practical approaches to minimising ill health in the workplace
- Identify alternative solutions to an occupational hygiene/medicine problem and form an opinion on a chosen course of action
- Develop, articulate, and sustain individual arguments related to occupational hygiene/medicine issues

By the end of the Dissertation, students should be able to:

- Propose a coherent rationale for a research question regarding a specific health and well-being issue relevant to Occupational Medicine or Occupational Hygiene
- Evaluate a range of research methods to apply an appropriate method to their topic
- Collect/use and appropriately analyse relevant data, information and evidence relating to the topic
- Present research conclusions and make recommendations for relevant research and practice

You must remember that your dissertation forms part of a Master of Science programme. As such it will be assessed against the framework which is included as Appendix I: Examiner Report Form. You need to ensure that your dissertation, regardless of the approach taken, reflects the different areas in the assessment framework (of which some may need interpretation) and demonstrates your application and reflective thinking of theory and scientific knowledge to a particular research/occupational health or hygiene question.

The Master's degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them
 - where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level

And holders will have:

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

These objectives are in line with the UK quality code for higher education available from the Quality Assurance Agency website <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code> .

When must I finish?

All students have up to 12 months (September to September) to complete their dissertation once they have registered for the dissertation unit.

The date for submitting your completed dissertation is **2pm (BST), 3rd September 2026**.

Types of Study Design

This section outlines some of what is required for the different dissertation options, intended as a guide or framework. Different research questions will present various challenges for the way in which the work is examined and reported.

You can currently choose from one of three different types of study design. These are empirical research report, adapted systematic review or research grant proposal. A description of each of these study designs is provided below.

Empirical Research Report

This option takes the format of a quantitative or qualitative research project. You may also choose to carry out a ‘‘mixed-methods’’ study with both quantitative and qualitative elements.

- Quantitative ‘‘analysis of numerical data. These data may not necessarily be numerical in origin, for example, ‘‘male and ‘‘female’’ but would be converted to numerical forms for analysis (‘‘1’’ = male and ‘‘2’’ = female).

- Qualitative analysis (for example, to identify themes) of non-numeric information such as interview transcripts, notes, video and audio recordings, images and text documents.

An empirical research project provides an opportunity for students to work from a dataset to answer research questions. A more detailed guide on some potential sources of existing data/datasets is available in the list of resources in Dissertation Skills in Canvas. Talk to your supervisor or course unit lead to discuss further. In all circumstances, you must have sufficient permission to access and use the data for the purposes of your dissertation. In some cases you will be asked to provide a formal letter of access from the person/organisation responsible for the data.

Sources of data are likely to include routine datasets / surveillance information, such as those accessed from the World Health Organisation (WHO) or national surveys such as the Health Survey for England. You might have access to more locally based sources of data, such as routine statistics from a health care provider. It is also possible to use data from an established research project with which you yourself might have been involved.

You might be collecting your own data as part of an exploration of a workplace issue. Where you are collecting raw data, you will have to justify your methods in your proposal and discuss in detail with your supervisor. You will need to follow the ethics procedures outlined by the University of Manchester Research Ethics guidance.

An empirical research report for the dissertation is likely to include the following sections, across a number of different chapters:

1. *Introduction, Background & Critical Review of Existing Literature.* This section will include a detailed critique of existing literature relating to the topic and bring in other information to highlight the case for the chosen topic. You will acknowledge and critique existing studies or data sources and explain the problems with these – in other words, why more research is needed. It is important to reflect on the implications of the proposed research in terms of future healthcare policy/planning or interventions and how it might benefit potential users of your findings.
2. *Methods & Study Design.* Here you will need to provide a detailed description of the methods of your data collection or those associated with the existing data set, including how the information was obtained, over what time period, using what methods, who was invited to participate and who actually took part. You will also need to be clear about the aims of the main data set/research project, AND of your specific aims that you are seeking to address in the dissertation. This will be followed by your proposal to answer those questions yourself using all or part of the dataset of choice. In a way, you might be performing a sub-study nested within a much broader and larger information/research project. At some point in your dissertation you will need to give attention to the integrity of the data, and how reliable it might be.
3. *Analysis & Results.* This will form a key part of your dissertation, along with the other sections. You will need to provide a detailed plan, and justification for your proposed methods of analysis. Before starting the analysis, you will need to familiarise yourself fully with the dataset and ensure that you understand the meaning of each variable. You will need to check that the data are free from errors and presented in a workable format for your dissertation. Do not underestimate the time involved in this ‘cleaning and preparation’ stage. In the analysis you will need to justify any deviances to your original plan and be clear about any assumptions that you make. In presenting your results, think about the most effective ways to present and communicate your

findings. Remember that you want to capture key findings from the study in a clear and meaningful way; otherwise the reader will find it difficult to identify what you found. But don't go overboard with the number of tables, charts and graphs. Stick to presenting what the reader needs to know to understand what you found in relation to your study objectives. A key skill is in knowing what and how much needs to be presented by way of analysis output and results.

4. *Discussion and Conclusion sections.* The discussion section is one of the most important parts of any dissertation. Here you will reflect on the relevance/importance of your research question, the quality of your research findings, and set these into the current context of existing knowledge. You can bring in some of the wider literature/evidence to develop arguments to highlight the internal and external generalisations or strengths and weaknesses of your research and show what value can be placed on your actual findings. It is important to discuss the value of the existing data source and to consider alternative / superior ways to answer your research question in future. In other words, what recommendations might arise from your work. It is not uncommon to find dissertations and academic papers finishing with the phrase 'more research is required' • this obvious statement conveys little information to the reader about what you actually know about the subject. If questions remain unanswered then provide some direction in terms of how they might be answered.

Other sections are likely to include references, appendices etc.

Indicative references

Chapman, S & McNeill, P. (2003). *Research Methods*. London. Routledge.

Bowling, A. (2011). *Research Methods in Health: investigating health and health services*. Buckingham. Open University Press.

Bland M. (2000). *An Introduction to Medical Statistics*. Oxford. OUP.

Research Methods Knowledge Base Guidelines for Presenting Quantitative Data:

<https://www.hfes.org/Portals/0/Documents/HF1998GillanGuidelines.pdf>

Adapted Systematic Review

The option of completing an adapted systematic review provides an opportunity for students to develop skills in systematically collating, assessing and summarising existing sources of evidence. The number of studies that could be included in the review can influence the amount of work involved. For the purposes of this dissertation, students can limit the number of studies in their review (see below) to ensure that the dissertation can be completed within the time/resources available. The review does not have to focus on randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and other types of evidence can be used. Note that you are not expected to complete a meta-analysis for the dissertation though you can include one if appropriate.

1. Introduction/background: This is similar to that described above, where you are making a case for the rationale and justifying through critical review.
2. Study design/methods: You need to develop a suitable review methodology appropriate to your research question. There are reporting guidelines for systematic reviews (see PRISMA guidelines

in bibliography below), which can help with identifying relevant information to include. The structure of the review is likely to include:

- a. Criteria for inclusion/exclusion of studies
 - b. Information sources
 - c. Search strategy
 - d. Selection process
 - e. Data collection process
 - f. Methods for assessing study quality
 - g. Methods of analysis/summarising data
3. Results including:
- a. Flow chart of search process/included & excluded studies
 - b. Summary of study characteristics
 - c. Summary of study quality assessment
 - d. Results of data synthesis
4. Discussion: this is likely to cover some of the areas/issues described in the proceeding dissertation option ‘‘Empirical Research Report’’•
5. Other sections are likely to include conclusion, references, appendices etc.

Dealing with too many or too few studies

Good quality search strategies for some research questions can identify hundreds, sometimes thousands of potentially eligible studies to be reviewed. Students are unlikely to have sufficient time (and do not have support from a second reviewer) to suitably deal with this. It is possible to limit the number of studies for the dissertation. This could be done for example, by limiting the years of publication in the search strategy, or only including UK studies (or for that matter non UK studies), or limiting studies by population such as just women, or by a specific age group. If you use one of these approaches then it needs to be clearly stated in the methods, results and discussion section.

In some cases, you might find less than a handful of potentially eligible studies for your review or none at all. This does not rule out conducting a systematic review for your dissertation though it can make it more challenging. You could still complete all of the sections outlined above until the results section. You could then explore possible strengths and weaknesses of your search strategy, or inclusion/exclusion criteria for example, before providing a more narrative review of some of the ‘‘weaker’’ forms of evidence that did not pass your criteria. It is unlikely that nothing has been published on your research question at all. You could then conclude with recommendations about what research was needed, what form this might take, and why it was important. Students embarking on this approach should ensure they have regular discussions with their supervisor early in the dissertation process.

Bibliography

Akobeng, A.K. (2005) Understanding systematic reviews and meta-analysis, Arch.Dis.Child, vol. 90, no. 8, pp.845-848 [online].

[CASP CHECKLISTS ‘‘ CASP ‘‘ Critical Appraisal Skills Programme \(casp-uk.net\)](http://casp-uk.net)

Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions

<https://www.cochrane.org/authors/handbooks-and-manuals/handbook/current>

CRD's guidance for undertaking reviews in health care.

http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/pdf/Systematic_Reviews.pdf

Davies, M (2013) *Study skills for international postgraduates*, Palgrave Macmillan

Greenhalgh, T. (1997) Papers that summarise other papers (systematic reviews and meta-analyses), BMJ, vol. 315, no. 7109, 672-675 [online]

Hall, GM (2013) How to write a paper, 5th Edition. Online course via University of Manchester Library

PRISMA – TRANSPARENT REPORTING of SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS and META-ANALYSES
(prisma-statement.org)

Rudestam, KE and Newton, RR (2015) *Surviving your dissertation: a comprehensive guide to content and process*, 4th Edition available online via the University Library

Swetnam and Swetnam (2000) *Writing your dissertation: the bestselling guide to planning, preparing and presenting first-class work*, 3rd Edition, Available online via the University Library

Research Grant Proposal

This option is likely to appeal to students who have identified the need for a particular area of research or those keen to develop a research project after completing their MSc. It will also be helpful for students looking to start a more research intense course of study in the future. The research grant proposal dissertation option will reflect some of the main sections of a research grant proposal, such as that used by the Medical Research Council (MRC) or the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC).

The dissertation for this option is likely to consist of three broad sections, broken down into individual chapters.

1. Case for support .This section needs to show:

- a. Why does this particular research need to be done?
- b. Why should resources be dedicated to this topic and what gaps in knowledge does the research seek to address?
- c. How might it lead to an improvement in a particular setting/context/population?

You will clearly formulate the problem, setting it in context of scientific and/or theoretical debates. You need to show how it is relevant to trying to improve the health of a particular group of workers. This section will include a detailed critique of existing literature relating to the topic and bring in other information to highlight the case for support. You will acknowledge and critique existing studies or data sources and explain the problems with these – in other words, why more research is needed. It is important to reflect on the implications of the proposed research in terms of future healthcare policy/planning or interventions and how it might benefit potential users of your findings. Thus you could include at some point in the dissertation a clear dissemination policy of your findings.

2. Research/study methods

The detailed study design must be directly related to your stated primary and secondary objectives and capable of answering the proposed research question. Whilst you are not asked to go on and do the actual study, the proposal must be related to current circumstances and existing evidence – it must be a study design that could actually be carried out in practice. You will give a clear rationale for the particular elements of the research project, using appropriate references to support specific parts of your study design. For example, your methods of sampling (if relevant) and evidence to support the sample size for the project need to be clearly justified. Similarly you need to justify your choice of data collection methods/measurement tools, and what can be expected in terms of response rates. Part of the study design will include an analysis plan of your collected data. It is not sufficient to just say that – methods suitable for continuous data will be used – for example – you need to give a detailed plan and again support your methods. A section on resources/costings is required. Here you need to provide information on the direct costs to carry out the research project. For example, how many research assistants will interview people and how much will it cost to employ them? This section must be realistic, set in a particular context/country and where possible, supported with evidence. This will coincide with a detailed time plan which can be helpful to present as a Gantt chart.

All research needs to follow accepted ethical principles such as the Declaration of Helsinki and research governance. Whilst these may vary across different countries, remember that your final postgraduate award (if successful) is from the University of Manchester – as such you would be expected to show your understanding and application of research ethics and governance expected from research conducted in the United Kingdom and apply this as appropriate to your own setting. This will include an assessment of risks to different stakeholders and how you have tried to minimise any risks, including contingency plans, in your research design.

3. Discussion

Here you need to reflect on the relevance/importance of your research question and of your proposed research design. This can bring in some of the wider literature/evidence to develop arguments to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of your proposed research. You can discuss and reflect on some aspects of the study design, including a critique of your methods, and show how you have tried to use rigorous methods for your research that reflect the body of existing knowledge in that area. Research rarely goes to plan and you can show how you have considered some of the potential difficulties in completing the research and how you have tried to overcome these in your proposal (perhaps through contingency plans). Whilst you will not have any actual findings to discuss, you can postulate what these might be and the implications of a positive or null-finding from your research in terms of service delivery/health policy for example.

4. Other sections are likely to include references, appendices etc.

Bibliography

Chapman, S & Mcneill, P. (2003). Research Methods. London. Routledge.

Bowling, A. (2011). Research Methods in Health: investigating health and health services. Buckingham. Open University Press.

Crosby R. DiClemente RJ & Salazar LF. (2006). Research Methods in Health Promotion. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.

Ulin, P, Robinson ET & Tolley EE. (2004). Qualitative Methods in Public Health: A Field Guide for Applied Research. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.

Links: How to Write a Research Proposal Medical Research Council – guidance on grant applications The Economic & Social Research Council How to Write a Research Proposal: <http://ielcass.tripod.com/proposalwriting.pdf>

Ethics Decision Tool & Ethical Approval

Please refer to the University of Manchester Research Ethics webpage for information about ethics, and guidance for applying for ethical approval for projects. To help determine whether your project requires formal ethical approval, please use the University's [ethics decision tool](#).

Possible Problems and How to Avoid Them

Time management

The dissertation is a period of independent study, and you will be responsible for managing your own time. Time management is a key skill required to successfully complete the dissertation. You will need to reflect on your own work-life balance and commitments over the academic year and consider these as part of your planning. We encourage you to develop and discuss a Gantt chart or other method of time management planning with your supervisor and to regularly refer to it throughout the year. Some students find it helpful to share their planning with members of their family, friends or manager and to consider when they will be taking holidays, for example.

Careful advance planning pays dividends in the success of any research, and particularly so when you are liaising with your employer. Your GANTT chart can be flexible as long as it is regularly reviewed. You should also give careful consideration to the following points:

- What particular scientific question am I hoping to answer?
- What benefits might my employer (if relevant) gain from supporting my research?
- Might it lead to any unwelcome findings detrimental to the company?
- Are there any foreseeable industrial relations implications/problems?
- Who will pay the costs of research? (Note that these are **not** the same as the course fees and research fees can mount up):
- Depending upon the type of project, project costs can be supported up to a specific amount determined by the Faculty. Your Programme Director or Supervisor can provide more information.

Remember: Your research should be small scale but high quality and make a (modest) contribution to scientific knowledge. Be realistic – do not expect to answer fundamental questions about the universe!

If you experience problems with your research project contact your supervisor as soon as possible. S/he may either be able to suggest ways of overcoming problems or advise on alternative arrangements.

Even if all goes smoothly with your research you are likely to hit the ‘‘why am I doing this’’ is it all worth it? phase at some point. Don’t give up! Persevere if you need encouragement to bolster signs of flagging motivation, contact us; a friendly voice sometimes helps enormously in overcoming the feeling of isolation which is often the root cause of such feelings. The longer your research and writing up takes, the more likely you are to become disheartened. This is one of the main reasons we encourage you to get on with your dissertation and submit it as early as possible.

Here is a suggested framework to help you plan your own milestones for the dissertation unit. If you start later in the academic year then you will have less time for the milestones outlined below.

Milestone

1. Background reading/idea generation/proposal discussion	Pre-dissertation year
2. Study ideas/proposal will be approved (usually at the first or second attempt), including time plan	September – October
3. Detailed study proposal	October – November
4. Literature review & critical appraisal of methods and materials	December
5. Data collection	January – April
6. Write up methods	January – May
7. Analysis/synthesis	May- July
8. Discussion & conclusion	July – August
9. Final changes	August
10. Submit Dissertation for marking	September

The plan above is an example and you may decide to start work on your dissertation later in the year. However, starting early means you have more time to study.

Please do not overlook the amount of time it can take to proof read and submit your dissertation.

Other things to consider

- It takes time for your dissertation proposal to be reviewed by the academic team, for comments to be sent out and for you to make any necessary changes
- It is important that you let your supervisor know when you are planning to take your holidays, and similarly, to ask your supervisor when they may be having time away (keep in mind that in the UK, July and August are a popular time for people to take their holidays – therefore you cannot expect your supervisor to be available just because your submission date is approaching)

- You need to follow the information in the sections above to check that you do or do not require ethical and other regulatory approval. If you do, then you must account for this in the planning stages of your dissertation – it takes at least several weeks from submitting your application to receiving the decision
- Changes in your working or home life might put pressures on your time at certain periods in the year

If there are any exceptional factors affecting your studies and progress, please notify your supervisor, the course unit lead or the programme administrators at the earliest opportunity. Please refer to **Mitigating Circumstances** section below.

Presentation, Submission and Marking

Presentation of your Dissertation and word count

The University requires dissertations to be presented in a standard way. This is an important academic and professional skill for you to develop. It also facilitates the marking process and students can lose valuable marks if their presentation is poor. Looking at examples of previous dissertations available to you in Canvas, and at published academic papers and reviews can give you better insight into this. Examiners will also look at the way in which you present your references. On this programme, we prefer references to be presented in the Harvard format. However, Vancouver is also acceptable.

Guidance on writing your dissertation is available throughout the year, using this document, during the dissertation days, and with your supervisor. However, prior to submitting your work you should refer to the University's [Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Dissertations](#).

All dissertations are to be written in English, although quotations may be given in the language in which they were written.

As per the University's Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Dissertations, the final word limit **must** be included at the bottom of the contents page.

Important: The word count for the dissertation is **10,000 to 15,000 words**.

In some special circumstances, it may be appropriate to exceed the upper word count limit. However, please consult with your supervisor prior to submission if this is acceptable. If you don't agree this with your supervisor before submission, and you present your dissertation with a word limit substantially exceeding the upper banding, then your dissertation will be marked but 1% will be deducted from the mark for every 100 words over the limit given.

Submitting your Dissertation

Dissertations must be submitted electronically to Canvas and are subject to the University's plagiarism detection software. Students can produce bound versions for their own purposes if they wish.

The University is not responsible for any aspects of printing, binding and submitting your dissertation, nor any costs incurred.

You must submit your dissertation on or before the submission deadline: **2pm (BST), Wednesday 3rd September 2026.**

You are strongly advised to ensure your work has been submitted at least 3 hours before the deadline. This will allow for any technical difficulties you might encounter. Such difficulties cannot be relied upon as mitigating circumstances in the event that your work is submitted after the deadline.

Work submitted after the deadline without prior approval will be subject to a late penalty, as outlined in the [School of Health Sciences Postgraduate Dissertations Student Handbook](#).

Dissertation submission links

There are 2 submission links available in the Dissertation Submission area in Canvas:

DRAFT Dissertation and FINAL Dissertation.

You have the opportunity to make DRAFT submissions. These submissions are not marked, but allow you to view a Canvas Similarity Report only. This is to help you check the originality of your work and to improve your academic writing and referencing techniques.

Once you are happy that you have been able to update your work following receipt of your similarity report and in consultation with your supervisor, you must submit your finalised version to a FINAL Dissertation link. We advise you to do this well before the deadlines to avoid late or missed submission.

How to submit your dissertation

Once logged into the dissertation unit in Canvas, navigate to Dissertation Submission area from the left-hand menu.

Uploading Files to Canvas Assignments

Whether it's an essay, a lab report, a critical review, or a dissertation, at some point you will need to submit a document you've written for assessment. Thankfully, Canvas makes this process very simple.

When you open an assignment, you will see several important pieces of information, such as the due date, the number of marks, and what you are expected to submit – in this case, a file. If the number of attempts has been limited by your instructor, you will see how many attempts you have, and how many you have already made.

The screenshot shows the top section of a Canvas assignment page. On the left is a sidebar with 'Home' and 'Modules' links. The main header area displays 'Fundamentals assignment' with a right-pointing arrow icon and a 'Start Assignment' button. Below this is a table with assignment details:

Due	12 Jan at 14:00	Points	100	Submitting	is optional	Attempts	0
Allowed attempts	0	Available	12 May at 0:00 - 12 Jan at 12:00				

Beneath this are the instructions for the assignment and, if your instructor has attached one, the rubric that will be used for marking. Read through both of these carefully before writing your assignment, and if you have any questions, contact your instructor to get clarification.

When you are ready to submit, click the 'Start Assignment' button, next to the title of the assignment.

This screenshot shows the upload interface. The header is identical to the previous one, but the 'Start Assignment' button is highlighted with a red box. Below the header, on the left, is instructional text about uploading a file. On the right is a dashed box containing a rocket ship icon and the text 'Drag or click here to upload a file'.

Once the file has uploaded, you will see the file name replace the picture of the rocket. If you have uploaded the wrong file, click the X next to the name to remove it and try again.

If you have been instructed to upload more than one file, click '+ Add another file' to select the next thing to upload. This is not very common for assignments however, so check the instructions carefully.

If you see a statement asking you to confirm the assignment is your own original work, tick the box.

Finally, click the 'Submit Assignment' button.

If you see confirm, your assignment has been submitted.

The screenshot shows a confirmation dialog box with the title 'Sign up to be notified that your Canvas Assignment file'. It contains the text 'This assignment submission is my own original work' and a checkbox. At the bottom are 'Cancel' and 'Submit assignment' buttons, with the latter highlighted by a red box.

You can confirm this by looking at the 'Submission' section of the assignment's description, where you can see the date and time you uploaded the file. You can return to the assignment at any point to check this confirmation message.

The screenshot shows the 'Submission' section of an assignment. It displays a green checkmark icon followed by 'Submitted!', the date and time '27 May at 9:45', a link for 'Submission details', and a link to 'Download 1234567_Essay.pdf'.

If you need to resubmit and you have attempts left, you can open the assignment and click the 'New Attempt' button, then follow the same process as above.

If you get stuck, remember you can click 'Help' in the global navigation menu, then click 'Canvas Support Centre' to access online guidance. Articles related to the part of Canvas you're looking at will be prioritised to make it easier to find the help you need.

The screenshot shows the Canvas global navigation menu. On the left is a dark sidebar with icons for Home, Modules, Studio, and Search. On the right, under 'OTHER RESOURCES', are links for 'Chat with a Skilled Canvas expert for queries about Canvas', 'Chat directly with Canvas', and 'Canvas Support Centre'. The 'Canvas Support Centre' link is highlighted with a red box and labeled with a red '2'. The 'Help' link in the sidebar is also highlighted with a red box and labeled with a red '1'.

Once submitted no changes/resubmission can be made. Please ensure that you inform your supervisor once you have submitted, by forwarding the digital receipt email. This submission will be marked and graded in 30 working days from the due date or from the submission date if submitted late.

MFOM

MSc Occupational Medicine students ONLY: Once the Examination Board has awarded your MSC, you can submit your MSc dissertation for the award of MFOM. Please refer to the details at the FOM [website](#).

References and Hyperlinks

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Chapman, S & McNeill, P. (2003). Research Methods. London. Routledge.

Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions <https://training.cochrane.org/handbook>
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CRD's guidance for undertaking reviews in health care.
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Hall, GM (2013) How to write a paper, 5th Edition. Online course via University of Manchester Library

Research Methods Knowledge Base Guidelines for Presenting Quantitative Data.
<https://www.hfes.org/Portals/0/Documents/HF1998GillanGuidelines.pdf>

Rudestam, KE and Newton, RR (2015) Surviving your dissertation: a comprehensive guide to content and process, 4th Edition available online via the University Library

Swetnam and Swetnam (2000) Writing your dissertation: the bestselling guide to planning, preparing and presenting first-class work, 3rd Edition, Available online via the University Library

Appendices: Examiner Report Forms (subject to changes)

Details for the Examiners for the degree of Choose an item.

Programme Director Choose an item.

Student Name

Student ID

Research based dissertation type

- Empirical Study
- Adapted Systematic Literature Review
- Research Grant Proposal

Title of Dissertation

The University and the student reserve the copyright and all other intellectual property rights in both the Dissertation and the data which it contains. The contents of the Dissertation and the data are proprietary, and must be held strictly in confidence. No copies may be taken, and no disclosure of the contents may be made without (in each case) the prior written permission of the University.

Examiner Report Form

The Master's degree is awarded on the basis of coursework and/or examinations plus a dissertation.

The examination system requires independent examination of the dissertation by two examiners, one of whom will be the supervisor. Following completion of the form, the examiners should confer to agree a final mark (see Guidance Notes).

There **MUST** be a seamless link between your written comments **AND** your mark. Please expand to ensure each section has supportive feedback.

The dissertation should be given a percentage mark according to the above marking scheme. Examiners who consider that the dissertation has passed at distinction (>70%), or merit level, should indicate this clearly.

NOTE: Under the terms of the Data protection Act, effective from 1st March 2000, all sections of this report will be made available to the candidate.

Please ensure that the comments on the written feedback form are in line with the actual marks given.

Examiner No. 1 Feedback

The examiners are required to give feedback to the student on the following aspects of the dissertation. Please expand to ensure each section has supportive feedback.

1. The extent to which the project reported on within the dissertation is based upon a clearly formulated problem/research question and sound rationale informed by a critical understanding of relevant existing evidence/knowledge base.
1. The clarity, depth and repeatability of methods of the study/review (including detail re: ethical/regulatory issues).
1. The clarity of key study/review findings and reporting of any statistical tests and or narrative/qualitative synthesis.
1. The depth of discussion including summary of key findings, critical appraisal of study/review reported upon in the dissertation, degree of self-reflection and implications for practice, policy and/or research.
1. In addition, please give further detail regarding the strengths of the dissertation providing encouragement and guidance for any future academic study, submission for publication and so on.

Examiner No.1 Marks

	Mark Weighting	Weighted Mark*
Introduction/Literature Review	15%	0.0
Case for the study/Hypothesis/Aims/Objectives	15%	0.0
Design of study or Methods (only a grant proposal would have costings in it)	20%	0.0
Results (this section is omitted for the Research Grant Proposal, with the 20% distributed evenly for Design of study and Discussion)	20%	0.0
Design of study or Methods (if Results section is omitted)	30%	0.0
Discussion	20%	0.0
Discussion (if results section is omitted)	30%	0.0
Presentation	10%	0.0
Total Weighted Mark %		0.0

Please ensure that you right click on 0.0 and choose "update field" in each relevant section **and the total weighted mark*

Examiner No.1 Name:

Examiner No.1 Signature:

Examiner No.1 Date:

Examiner No. 2 Feedback

The examiners are required to give feedback to the student on the following aspects of the dissertation. Please expand to ensure each section has supportive feedback.

1. The extent to which the project reported on within the dissertation is based upon a clearly formulated problem/research question and sound rationale informed by a critical understanding of relevant existing evidence/knowledge base.
1. The clarity, depth and repeatability of methods of the study/review (including detail re: ethical/regulatory issues).
1. The clarity of key study/review findings and reporting of any statistical tests and or narrative/qualitative synthesis.
1. The depth of discussion including summary of key findings, critical appraisal of study/review reported upon in the dissertation, degree of self-reflection and implications for practice, policy and/or research.
1. In addition, please give further detail regarding the strengths of the dissertation providing encouragement and guidance for any future academic study, submission for publication and so on.

Examiner No.2 Marks

	Mark Weighting	Weighted Mark*
Introduction/Literature Review	15%	0.0
Case for the study/Hypothesis/Aims/Objectives	15%	0.0
Design of study or Methods (only a grant proposal would have costings in it)	20%	0.0

Results (this section is omitted for the Research Grant Proposal, with the 20% distributed evenly for Design of study and Discussion)	20%	0.0
Design of study or Methods (if Results section is omitted)	30%	0.0
Discussion	20%	0.0
Discussion (if results section is omitted)	30%	0.0
Presentation	10%	0.0
Total Weighted Mark %		0.0

Please ensure that you right click on 0.0 and choose "update field" in each relevant section **and the total weighted mark*

Examiner No.2 Name:

Examiner No.2 Signature:

Examiner No.2 Date:

Final Agreed Mark (subject to Exam Board Ratification)

Total Agreed Mark %

Examiner Resolution of Discrepancy Comments

(please provide detail about how differences in marks were resolved between examiners, where there was a greater than 5% difference between the marks)

Comments/show how resolved:

Date of Discussion:

	Yes	No
Confirmation if 3rd Examiner is required to adjudicate between examiner 1 and 2 (marks > 5% difference)	•	•

Examiner No. 3 Resolution of Discrepancy (ONLY to be completed if "Yes" is marked in box above)

Examiner No.3 Name:

Examiner No.3 Signature:

Examiner No.3 Date:

Guidance notes and marking scheme

1. Mark the dissertation giving a separate percentage mark under each category marked on the report form, using the marking scheme provided. Note that separate descriptors are given for dissertation content and presentation.
2. Calculate the weighted total for each category and indicate this in the relevant box at the bottom of the form. Sum the weighted totals to give a final percentage mark.

3. Presentation – although the marking scheme refers to work that requires correction, such corrections will only be required if the dissertation is referred. Thus if a dissertation fails on the presentation element, but obtains a pass mark overall, the student will not be required to submit a corrected dissertation. However, in such cases where the student chooses to make the corrections, the original mark will not be altered.
4. Comment on the dissertation under each category 1 to 5 in the feedback section. Note that the whole of the dissertation examiner report is made available to the student.
5. On completion of the form confer with the other examiner:
 - a. Where there is a relatively small difference (i.e. $\leq 5\%$), the agreed mark is reached by taking the mean of the two marks.
 - b. In cases where the difference between the two markers is $\leq 5\%$ but one marker has awarded a pass and the other awarded a fail, then the final mark is agreed through discussion and negotiation.
 - c. Where differences are greater than 5% and in particular when they straddle critical boundaries, markers should endeavour to come to an agreed mark through discussion and negotiation.
 - d. Where agreement cannot be reached, a third internal marker, will examine the work (including the original examiners' reports, comments and marks) and award the mark.
 - e. The Chair of the Examination Board (or nominee) will have responsibility for the appointment of a third marker. In such cases, the third marker's decision is final.
 - f. All work where this occurs will be sent to the external examiner with an explanation of the original discrepancy between markers, the process that has been followed and the final mark awarded. The external examiner will be asked to particularly comment on any such pieces of work. In all cases of assessment feedback, students will be given one agreed mark only.
6. Fail (2016 PGT Regulations) – students may be referred for any marks achieved between 49-30%. Students achieving a mark below 30% for their dissertation are not permitted to resubmit and will be given an exit award.
7. Fail (2012 Regulations) – students may be referred for any marks achieved below 50%.
- 8. Referral** – A candidate who is referred may be given the opportunity to resubmit their dissertation within 6 months. The reasons for referral may be investigated by Faculty. In the case of referrals, assurances will be required that supervisory support is available to enable the student to attempt a revised dissertation.

N.B. When examiners recommend a referral, they must provide a statement (in addition to the report) which can be sent to the candidate. This statement should indicate quite clearly, what revisions are required to be made to the dissertation.

The following table gives a breakdown of the standard required to achieve a grade within a particular marking band:

Mark	Explanation
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Exceptional (allows award of distinction):

90-100% Exceptional work, nearly or wholly faultless for that expected at Master's level. Perfect presentation.

80-89% **Outstanding** (allows award of distinction): Work of outstanding quality throughout. Excellent presentation.

70-79% **Excellent** (*allows award of distinction*): Work of very high to excellent quality showing originality, high accuracy, thorough understanding, critical appraisal. Shows a wide and thorough understanding of the material studied and the relevant literature and the ability to apply the theory and methods learned to solve unfamiliar problems. Very good presentation.

60-69% **Good Pass** (allows award of merit): Work of good to high quality showing evidence of understanding of the research topic, good accuracy, good structure and relevant conclusions. Shows a good knowledge of the material studied and the relevant literature and some ability to tackle unfamiliar problems. Good presentation.

50-59% **Pass:** Work shows a clear grasp of relevant facts and issues and reveals an attempt to create a coherent whole. It comprises reasonably clear and attainable objectives, adequate literature review and some originality. Presentation is acceptable, minor errors allowed.

Referral: Work shows a satisfactory understanding of the research topic and basic knowledge of the

40-49% relevant literature but with little or no originality and limited accuracy. Shows clear but limited objectives, and does not always reach a conclusion. Presentation adequate but could be improved.

30-39% **Referral:** Work shows some understanding of the main elements of the research topic and some knowledge of the relevant literature. Shows a limited level of accuracy with little analysis of data or attempt to discuss its significance. Presentation poor.

Students starting their programme:

From September 2012

20-29% **Referral:** Limited relevant material presented. Little understanding of research topic. Unclear or unsubstantiated arguments with very poor accuracy and understanding. Presentation unacceptable.

10-19% **Referral:** Limited understanding of the research process. The topic is largely without evidence to support its exploration for research and the arguments are supported by poor sources of evidence. The dissertation is disjointed and does not demonstrate logical coherent thinking with unacceptable presentation.

From September 2016

Fail with no opportunity to resubmit: Limited relevant material presented. Little understanding of research topic. Unclear or unsubstantiated arguments with very poor accuracy and understanding. Presentation unacceptable.

Fail with no opportunity to resubmit: Limited understanding of the research process. The topic is largely without evidence to support its exploration for research and the arguments are supported by poor sources of evidence. The dissertation is disjointed and does not demonstrate logical coherent thinking with unacceptable presentation.

0-9%	Referral: The text demonstrates no understanding of the research process. The topic is totally inappropriate and there is no evidence to support its exploration as an area of interest for research. Presentation is extremely poor and is not in an appropriate format for submission as a Master's dissertation. The topic would need to be reconstructed and totally rewritten if it were to be presented for resubmission.	Fail with no opportunity to resubmit: The text demonstrates no understanding of the research process. The topic is totally inappropriate and there is no evidence to support its exploration as an area of interest for research. Presentation is extremely poor and is not in an appropriate format for submission as a Master's dissertation. The topic would need to be reconstructed and totally rewritten if it were to be presented for resubmission.
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