



Research Project Planner: A step by step guide



About the Planner:

This planner is designed to help you through all the stages of your research project, from starting to think about your question through to final submission. At each stage there are useful prompts to help you plan your work and manage your time. Throughout the planner there are also blank spaces that you can use to plan your dissertation.



Getting Set

TASKS	TIMETABLE	NOTES <small>How Will You Do This?</small>	Complete?
Brainstorm potential research questions. Discuss the feasibility of the research question(s) with relevant academic staff.			
Confirm your research supervisor. Check their availability during your dissertation period and how you can contact them.			
Check availability of training/guidance. Are there programmes, books or courses that can help with your dissertation? For example resources on research methods and referencing.			
Create your dissertation plan – try using a timeline, calendar or mind map to highlight the key stages, specific milestones and deadlines for your dissertation.			



Starting Your Research

TASKS	TIMETABLE	NOTES <small>How Will You Do This?</small>	Complete?
Timetable meetings with your supervisor at the start of your project/research. These meetings will allow you to check that the project is going in the right direction.			
Start by breaking down the research - what do you have to do? Literature search, fieldwork/placement, survey(s), interviews, desk research, lab work?			
Keep track of your notes, sources and data. Find a system that works for you.			
Consider your emergency plans - what will you do if there are unexpected delays or results? Know whom to speak to and by when.			



The Writing Process

TASKS	TIMETABLE	NOTES <small>How Will You Do This?</small>	Complete?
Create a rough outline of sections and the main points and findings. Use these to plan your content.			
Start to fill in your outline - create initial drafts. These can be reviewed and amended as your thinking and knowledge progresses.			
Get feedback - timetable in meetings to get feedback on your drafts from your supervisor.			
Checks - have you addressed your dissertation title? Are all your sections relevant? Does each section flow into the next? Anything missing?			



The Final Stages

TASKS	TIMETABLE	NOTES <small>How Will You Do This?</small>	Complete?
Check with your programme handbook or staff for guidance on the appropriate referencing and citation method to use.			
Double check that you have used the correct font / format / layout conventions for your dissertation. Refer to your programme handbook or staff for guidance.			
Always leave time for a final proofread and time for final corrections.			
Check submission dates (electronic and/or paper copy). How long will it take to print and bind your dissertation?			



Useful Notes

My supervisor is:

Their contact details are:

They are available from:

My Research Questions is:

Dissertation deadlines is: