Final master thesis

Student manual

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I. PART I

1.1 Objectives of the Thesis

A principal component of the Master's degree programme is the thesis. It marks the culmination of your development in skills, knowledge and attitudes related to the competencies used by professionals in the social work field. You are free to choose a topic. However our preference is that you investigate a realistic task that will benefit your client organisation.

Whatever the topic is, you will need to conduct the whole process with professionalism over a sustained period. This is a major academic and professional challenge for you but it also allows you to demonstrate your capabilities to the full.

The thesis is a testimony of your ability to work independently and professionally while meeting the master level intellectual and cognitive requirements. It is an opportunity for you to develop specialist knowledge in an area of social work. Also you will be expected to approach the phenomenon objectively, critically and creatively from multiple perspectives. The thesis is part of developing into a truly reflective practitioner.

The thesis topic or assignment is mutually agreed between you and your supervisor. Suggested general areas to investigate are:

- Intercultural or ethical aspects of Social Work in European contexts
- Comparative Social Work practices across Europe
- European approaches to dealing with Social Inclusion
- New approaches to combating poverty in a European context
- New insights into project management in Social Work in European contexts
- European social policy perspectives
- European social work in a global context

In particular it aims to develop your abilities to:

1. Examine the context of the investigation
2. Define and justify the rational and relevance of the research
3. Define a complex "problem" area and set out suitable research questions
4. Select, synthesize and **critically** review up to date, relevant, academic / scientific literature
5. Select and apply appropriate investigatory methods
6. Analyse outcomes from multiple perspectives
7. Exercise critical judgement
8. If possible, produce an advice for the organisation

You will also be required to:

- Explain how your findings relate to, build on, or differ from previous work done in relevant aspects of the field of Social Work.
- Consider how the findings might contribute to further research.
- If applicable, justify the advice proposed.

1.2 Thesis Process and Procedures

The whole process of thesis preparation can be divided into several stages:
1) Choice of the theme and allocation of a supervisor and reader;
2) Preparation and approval of Thesis Proposal;
3) Preparation of the thesis and submission to the examiners;
4) Assessment of the Thesis.

Each student will have a thesis supervisor from her/ his home university and a thesis reader from a partner university. The supervisor must have a PhD. Both supervisor and the reader will be examiners of the thesis. The supervisor will be the first examiner and the reader – the second examiner.
The student is responsible for preparation of master thesis. The supervisor provides guidance and advice. Good communication between student and supervisor during the thesis preparation process is essential.

In the following the student will be referred to as 'candidate'.

1. A supervisor who will act as guide and first examiner will be allocated to each candidate by the university in which he/she is enrolled. The area of investigation and supervisor should be chosen on the basis of mutual interest and agreement between a candidate and a supervisor. All potential supervisors must hold a doctorate degree (PhD.). The names and special area of expertise/ specialisations of all potential supervisors from all universities will be posted on the consortium website. The candidate will approach the supervisor that he/she would like to have. The theme/title of the thesis should be discussed between candidate and supervisor. On agreement, the candidate must inform administration of Home University[1] through the local coordinator about the choice (title and name of supervisor). This must be carried out in the first semester of Year 2.
2. A candidate may not have a supervisor who is from a different university. However they will automatically have a lecturer from another university as the reader/ second examiner. The candidate is free to express a preference for a specific lecturer from another university in the consortium for their reader on the basis of that lecturer's specialist area of knowledge only. This request will be taken very seriously and when possible be honoured. **Besides these two examiners there will always be an examiner from Hanze University. If the supervisor or second examiner is not a teacher from Hanze University , there will be added a teacher from Hanze University .**
3. The thesis proposal must be submitted in digital form in Week 3 of the second semester.
4. The supervisor will provide feedback on the proposal within 14 days. The reader will not be in direct contact with the candidate at any time in the process. The reader will give feedback for the candidate to the supervisor who will decide how to pass that feedback on.
5. The process of supervision will be agreed explicitly between the candidate and the supervisor. However no supervisor will dedicate more than 15 hours for the entire process. This includes the meetings with the reader**(s)** to prepare the final mark and the oral examination. Both the supervisor and the reader will award a preliminary mark, independent of each other. The candidate will be able to see these marks and the assessment criteria and comments before the oral exam.
6. The candidate will submit a draft of thesis three weeks before the final date so that **the** examiners have sufficient time to give the candidate feedback.

[1]The ' Home University' is the university in which student is primarily enrolled. Partner universities are universities involved in consortium "European Master in Social Work"

7. The candidate should consider that the thesis process should take them not more, but not less, than 672 hours or approximately 17 weeks of full time work. The process is spread out over 5 calendar months (20 weeks) in the second semester. The deadline for submission of the final version of the thesis is in Week 24 The candidate should submit a hard copy of the thesis to the local coordinator and place an electronic version of it on the website of the consortium.
8. If passed, the oral exam is week 26
9. If failed resit of the written exam is in week 28 and the oral exam in week 35.
10. The number of ECTS for the entire process is 24.

1.3 Thesis Proposal Outline

The first step on the process of a thesis is the making of a research proposal. The word length of the main text is a minimum of 2,000 and a maximum of 4,000 words. However, depending on the complexity the outline can be adjusted and extended. The Thesis Proposal needs to be approved by the supervisor and the reader. The following is a suggested format (see Appendix 2). You are free to deviate from it.

(Preliminary) Title
The title should be a summary of the research goal and give a clear indication of content and approach.

I Introduction

Background / Rationale
Background: Describe the client organisation if there is one. Give an overview of relevant information and facts regarding services, internal organisation, etc. In your discussion also include arguments in favour of the main problem.

Rationale: If there is no client, define the context and rationale of the study including why it is relevant and for whom.

Literature Review / Theoretical framework
The literature review should include relevant publications, both analytical and empirical. Obviously, you should not simply summarize books and articles in your literature review, but instead identify key issues, researchers' theories, experiments, etc. If there is a gap in previous literature / studies that you will fill then indicate what the gap is.
Further, if you can, do attempt to make a visual representation of how concepts, theories and models may frame / support the investigation.

Problem definition / Thesis statement
The problem statement is a key part of a proposal. Not only does the problem need to be defined in terms of its rationale but also in the literature. Thus, if you have identified a gap, link that to the thesis statement.
The subordinate research questions will follow.

An overview of the rest of the paper will round off this section. This is the end of the introduction.

II Research methodology

Primary and secondary data are needed to answer your research questions. For each question, you have to describe which data-collection methods you are going to apply. Quantitative and qualitative instruments of data collection are acceptable as well as a combination of both.

You have to explain why each data-collection method is used, and how it is going to be implemented. This includes sampling and sampling techniques. Also validity issues should be addressed.

This section is not just a description of the methods. On the contrary, it is about the logic of those data-collection and data analysis methods in relation to the main hypothesis/ problem. You should be able to demonstrate the appropriateness of your choices.

Please be sure to indicate any potential problems or limitations of the methods.

Appendix 2 identifies key terms for the entire thesis. The methods section of this appendix offers headings and sub-headings that you can use to structure the methodology.

III Project time-scaling - Scheduling

Keeping a schedule is a key aspect of writing a thesis. Creating a rough timeline or checklist will help you focus on deadlines, both university-determined deadlines and those you have set for yourself. It is also helpful to put this timeline in a place where you will always see it, in order to be constantly reminded of your work.

You might consider organizing your timeline into five sections:
1. preparing for the thesis
2. writing the proposal
3. preparation for the research (field work)
4. conducting research
5. writing the thesis
6. revising the thesis

Give yourself enough time for each section and stay on schedule!
The following website may be helpful to you:
The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/dissertation.html

A basic planning chart can look like this. It identifies research activities with appropriate allocation of deadlines for your fieldwork period. In your planning you should include the required preparation to contact the gate-keepers or informants etc.

Description of Activity	**Start of activity**	**End of activity**
Activity 1	Start date activity 1	End date activity 1
Activity 2	Start date activity 2	End date activity 2
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

(As this is a proposal there are no results or discussion sections)

IV Reference list

The reference list should be balanced in terms of relevant sources, like handbooks, periodicals, research journals, professional magazines, company reports and websites. The APA system of referencing should be applied.

There are many good websites to help students with APA. See appendix 4 for some links.

1.4 Questions for thinking through and organising the research process and thesis
(adapted from Miller, 2003)

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is the problem clearly stated?
2. Are the hypotheses clear and testable?
3. Are the objectives clearly stated?
4. Are the research questions clear and unambiguous?
5. Is the assignment acceptable to the client? (if applicable)
6. How much time do I need to complete the research?
7. Is the assignment trying to do too much? Too little?
8. Can the data be collected from available sources?
9. Will I have access to these sources?
10. What primary data do I need?
11. How do I gather what I need? By questionnaire, survey, interview, policy documents, or experiment?
12. What do I do if my data collection methods fails?
13. How can the data be displayed? (graphs, charts, tables…)
14. How do I analyse my data?
15. What depth is expected? Hence, what analysis will support the topic, not be trivial, and have the level of complexity required?
16. Will the analyses be sufficient for a relevant, coherent and in-depth discussion of outcomes or the solutions?
17. Are sample data analyses sufficient for non-trivial conclusions?
18. What statistical tests are possible with the results?
19. What can I do with inconclusive results?
20. How much time do I need to write-up my research?
21. What happens if I fail to collect sufficient data (but have some)?
22. What can I potentially propose for implementation? (forecast specifically)
23. What has my research achieved?: evidence and arguments for outcomes?

1.5 Keeping a Research Log (optional but recommended)

The Log: Ideally you should make or buy a notebook that will be used exclusively as your research log with a set of tabs. Some students make an electronic file on their own PC. There will be a place on the Virtual Learning Environment for you to keep the log. This last option is probably the best since you can share your log files with a fellow student with whom you are in a buddy system to help each other during the thesis process.

The Entries: No matter what your individual style is, a good log will contain certain key elements, including, time, date, place, - specific data information, - and personal notes.

Reasons for keeping a Log:
These might be clustered into 3 areas. Each area has its own functions.

I - To keep track of **people** and **organizations** that you have contact with.

II - To keep track of the **sources** you have used and those you still need to locate or contact. To keep track of various **catalogues, indexes, and other electronic tools** you have consulted and the search terms you used in each. To record **what you expect** to find in a source (including people) and how the source actually panned out.To bring **clarity** to your thinking about specific issues and problems and to try out **new ideas**. Don't forget that at most universities you can get a training in sourcing tools such as RefWorks. Also there are handy tools to help with transcribing and analyzing interviews such as Voice Walker and Atlas-ti.

III -To reflect on actions, events, turning points.
To record **frustration, surprise, or excitement** as the project unfolds.

Some possible Categories: ***in 3 Cs***

Section 1: Contacts
Who have you spoken to, when, where, and what are their future contact details?

Section 2: Commentary
What models, concepts have come to your attention? What search terms have been helpful? What ideas are coming up while you are busy with the project? Which ideas are changing and why? Which ideas are you going to drop?

Section 3 Chronology
If possible once (if you can twice) a week sit down and record the events, activities and turning points as they happen. What were the high points of this week? What was stimulating and encouraging? What were low points? How am I feeling at this specific moment in the process? What do I intend to do next week?

1.6 Assessment

Thesis assessment will be done in two ways: the written text will be evaluated and it will be defended during an oral examination.

1.6.1 I The text of the thesis

The written thesis will be assessed in three steps:

Step 1. The prerequisites set out below as minimal requirement and plagiarism rules must be met. If these requirements are not met, the examiners will return the thesis to the student without further assessment. It will be registered as a fail (see Step 1. Minimal Requirements and Plagiarism Notes).

Step 2. The thesis will be evaluated on a quantitative scale followed by some qualitative comments, by both examiners, independently. These two assessments will be given to the candidate (see Step 2. ASSESSMENT FORMS).

Step 3. The thesis mark will be agreed by the examiners in a meeting. It can be adjusted either up or down in relation to the first independent assessments.

Step 1. Minimal requirements and Plagiarism Notes

MINIMAL REQUIREMENTS

1. On the basis of a first reading of the text, the use of English grammar, spelling and punctuation appears to be satisfactory. If the language is too poor to follow the assessors will immediately return it to the student, without further assessment.
2. All of the required sections have been completed. Lay out requirements have been met.
3. The report is within the required range for length : between 20 and 30 thousand words of basic text, (60 to 70 pages) including the Preface, excluding the Executive Summary TOC, Reference list, Appendices. There is a comprehensive Executive Summary of up to 3 pages.
4. All references are in correct APA style, on the basis of first reading there is no evidence of plagiarism.
5. The report is the work of one student, working on their own, it is not co-authored.
6. Originals of references can be produced on demand. **Evidence of plagiarism will lead to an immediate fail.**

STRUCTURE & LANGUAGE

1. Consistent build up of each section, well developed and coherent paragraphs
2. Secondary sources are strategically chosen, up to date, relevant, in-text citing is synthetic and grammatically correct
3. Reference list is correct according to APA guidelines
4. Spelling and grammar are reasonably correct
5. Style is appropriately formal
6. Vocabulary is sufficiently precise & varied to carry out the task in a client oriented manner
7. Lay out, font etc. follow APA Style guidelines

Plagiarism notes

You must avoid plagiarism all times. We define plagiarism as:

- *Copying* other people's texts more or less literally, without referring to the sources constitutes plagiarism. Quotations ***must*** be appropriately marked within the text.
- *Paraphrasing* other people's texts (reproducing other people's ideas in one's own words), ***without*** referring to the sources constitutes plagiarism.
- *Borrowing other people's ideas* ***without*** referring to the sources constitutes plagiarism. In this respect, the following applies:
    a. Ideas that are generally accepted and are regarded as common knowledge within the domain do not have to be acknowledged, unless they are quotations or paraphrases from specific sources.
    b. The source of the ideas should be traceable within reason.
- *Quoting* (i.e. borrowing more or less literally) ***excessively*** from other people's texts, even when referring to the sources, is not permissible. In this respect, no more than 10% of the report may consist of direct quotations.
- *Source references/-acknowledgements* ***must*** also be made within the text, so that it is clear what information comes from what source.
- The plagiarism rules also apply to ***non-textual information***, such as multimedia, program lines, scripts, etc

END OF STEP 1 : BOTH EXAMINERS HAVE AGREED THAT MINIMAL REQUIREMENTS

/PREREQUISITES HAVE BEEN MET YES NO

1ST SUPERVISOR/ EXAMINER ____

2ND READER/ EXAMINER ____

Step 2. ASSESSMENT FORMS: quantitative and qualitative

	CONTENT	5	4	3	2	1	n/a	
1	Topic / Issues covered in depth / Question answered							Superficial treatment of topic / questions not answered
2	Clear understanding of client's problem AND/ OR : Problem formulation is sufficiently complex, strategic and multifaceted							Weak grasp of client's problem AND/OR: Problem formulation is too superficial, tactical or narrow, lack of complexity
3	Introduction is coherent and convincing Rational/ relevance made clear							Introduction weak or inadequate Rational/ relevance are unclear
4	Relevant, up to date literature is reviewed comprehensively, coherently and critically							Literature is reviewed in a mechanical and disconnected manner / some literature is not up to date or relevant
6	Data is validly collected and presented							Data is not validly collected / poorly presented
6	Original thought / Critical thinking are evident							Little evidence of originality and/ or critical thinking
7	Evidence of in depth analysis							Analysis is mostly descriptive
8	Discussion points are well supported and convincingly argued							Discussion points are weakly supported by data or are poorly argued
9	Conclusion demonstrates how the intended aims are achieved							Conclusion is absent or inadequate
10	Potential for future research and/or applicability of findings for the wider field are evident							Little indication of future re-search directions or applicability of findings in wider field
11	Sources accurately quoted Reference list is completely correct							Sources repeatedly inaccurately quoted / Poor , incomplete or inaccurate reference list

	STYLE AND PRESENTATION	5	4	3	2	1	n/a	
12	Succinct writing :Text is well structured : with well developed paragraphs							Unnecessarily repetitive / unfocussed writing :Text lacks coherence Paragraphs are poorly developed
13	Good lay out i.e. of page numbers, section headings, font. etc. Tables, charts and graphs are correctly presented							Page numbers and section headings are absent or incorrect Captions are absent / inappropriate/ tables are too small or large decimals are not given correctly
14	Grammar / spelling is correct (English) Style is appropriate							Grammar / spelling is poor (English)/ Style is poor

Total points out of 70 :_______

Conversion Scale from points to percentage:

66 - 70 points	95 - 100% distinction
65 - 69 points	90 - 94 outstanding
60 - 64 points	85 - 89 % Very good
56 - 59 points	80 – 84 % Very good
51 - 55 points	79- 72 % Very satisfactory
50 - 54 points	71 - 78 % Very satisfactory
49 - 45 points	70 - 65 % satisfactory
44 - 40 points	64 - 58 % pass
39 points	**55.7 lowest pass mark**
35 points	50 % fail
34 to 11 points	49 to 15 % bad fail
10 points	Incomplete / 14 % or below

Qualitative COMMENTS

Section/page	
Section/page	
Section/ page	
General / throughout	

Step 3: Final comments / explanation of adjusted mark:

*student*____
*date:*____________________

first examiner ____
*signature*_________________________

*second examiner:*____
*signature:*_________________________

***(optional) third examiner:*___________________________________**
***signature:*_________________________**

This represents 80% of the final mark

In case the grade is higher than 8, please indicate if the thesis is suitable to put forward for nomination: Suitable? Yes No

Holistic Assessment Criteria:

FIRST 8.0 + This grade indicates work of very high quality, which demonstrates some—though not necessarily all—of the following:

- it shows that the student fully understands and deals with all the points of the topic/question
- it gives a well-argued viewpoint supported by evidence (original texts, examples and documentation in the original language)
- it shows the capacity to evaluate evidence and base realistic advice on it (original texts, examples and documentation in the original language)
- it gives an original viewpoint convincingly presented including concrete and feasible proposals
- it shows the capacity to adduce evidence from other fields and provides a significant measure of original illustrative material
- it shows independent thought of high quality
- it is formally well presented and shows a high degree of literacy

UPPER SECOND CLASS 7.0 – 7.9 This grade indicates a very competent piece of work, which demonstrates some—though not necessarily all—of the following:

- it deals with the points raised by the topic/question
- it is coherent and well organised and focuses upon material relevant to the topic/question
- it makes critical use of sources
- it displays a capacity to evaluate evidence and present realistic advice based on it (as above)
- it provides some measure of original illustrative material (as above)
- it shows evidence of concrete and feasible proposals
- it is formally well presented and written

LOWER SECOND CLASS 5.5 – 6.9 This grade indicates work of an acceptable standard, including sound knowledge of the subject, but of uneven quality:

- It deals with most of the points raised by the topic/question
- it sets out relevant material
- it contains discussion of points relevant to the topic/question
- it contains some supporting evidence (as above) which may be evaluated only partially
- it may omit some relevant material or contain some irrelevant material
- it may show inadequacies of presentation and style
- the bibliography may be incomplete and/or inconsistent

FAIL below 5.5 The work demonstrates some knowledge and understanding, but contains several of the following weaknesses:

- it addresses very few points relevant to the topic/question, and a considerable amount of the material is irrelevant to the topic/question
- key points of advice are missing including making realistic proposals
- it contains inaccurate material relating to important points
- assertions are made without supporting evidence
- it is too simplistic or too brief
- it draws upon too limited a range of material
- it lacks clear organisation
- it is sloppy in presentation (e.g. inaccurate or incomplete bibliography) and its style lacks coherence

1.6.2 The oral examination Guidelines

Topic: Presentation and defence of Master Thesis

The oral exams consists of a presentation of 15 minutes and an examination and discussion of the thesis and its results of 30 minutes.

A Presentation
The candidate prepares a 15 minutes presentation of the master thesis focussing on:

- Point of departure – description of problem and professional context
- Open questions and personal research interests
- Theoretical framing of the core thesis
- Procedure and choice of empirical research
- Explanation of methods used and methodological reflexion
- Presentation of data collection and interpretation
- The outcomes and their theoretical and practical impacts for the field
- Consequences for further research
- Critcal self assessment of writing and research process

There should be some visualization of the presentation, candidates are free to chose adequate methods (power point, poster, flip chart etc.)

B Discussion
After this presentation, there will be an exchange and critical discussion of the presentation (15 minutes).

Teachers might also refer to details of the thesis that remain unclear or they want to make comments on.

Students will also ask questions and demand eplanations and positioning on part of the teachers.

Assessment of oral exam

	Presentatiomn and Defence	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**n/a**	
1	Structured presentation of topic and knowledge interests							Topic and knowledge interests remain unclear
2	Theoretical framework around topic are referred to							Focus is confined to practical and phenomenological field
3	Sound and logical explanation of procedure and research methods							No reasons for explanation and choice of methods are given
4	Clear presentation of the outcomes and results of the research							Data is only presented and described, outcomes not clear
6	Capability of transfer of results to other problems or fields of social work							Discussion remains within one practical field – no transfer
6	Reflexion on consequences of results for practical field and further research							Further consequences of results for theoretical and practical debates are lacking
7	Reflexion on strength and of weaknesses of thesis – criutical self assessment							No critical self assessment , no criticall distance to proceudre and findings

	Performance	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**n/a**	
8	Quality of Communication: clear, open and directed to audience							Candidate is hard to understand, speaks to him/herself and is not clear
9	Prompt, clear structured and complete answers							Answers are incomplete and confusing
10	Visualization helps to get an overview and furthers understanding							Visualization is not helpful for underatanding the topic

Total points out of 50 :_______

Conversion Scale double to get a percentage see above

The oral exam will only take place if the thesis was awarded a mark of 5.5 or above.

The mark for the oral exam has to be given right after the exam.
It has to be at least 5.5
If the oral exam is a fail, there must be abundant feed back after the exam and the possibilty of a resit in the same semester.

In the transcript there will be one combined mark. This mark consists of 80% for the written part and 20% for the oral exam)

1.6.3 Resit Procedures of thesis

Resits will only be allowed when the original mark is between 5.0 and 5.4.

The candidate will be given **one** consultation meeting with the first supervisor to explain the reasons for the fail mark. The comments of the reader will be included into that session. The candidate will have four weeks to improve the thesis and re-submit it in the same academic year.

A candidate will not be allowed to ask for a resit if they have been awarded a passing mark of 5.5 or above, nor if the mark was below a 5.0.

Any candidate whose thesis awarded a 1.0 to 4.9 must re-enrol for the following semester of study. A new supervisor and reader will be allocated and a new topic of investigation found.

1.6.4 Grievance Procedures

Candidates who do not agree with the mark awarded to their thesis are free to submit a letter of complaint to the Examination Committee if and only if, they have failed.

If the nature of the grievance is that the candidate has received insufficient supervision, then evidence of such a lack must be demonstrated. This means that the local coordinator must have been made of aware of this problem in writing, during the supervision process so that he/she could have taken steps to repair the problem in a timely fashion.

II. Part II

2.1 Thesis Guide: Section by Section

The report is written in formal English. For the main points of academic/ formal writing you can consult: *Using English for Academic Purposes* website http://www.uefap.com/index.htm to refresh your memory on academic language functions, questions of formality, academic grammar and vocabulary support as well as APA rules and tutorials (for links see Appendix 4). You must not plagiarise.

In general the structure of the thesis can be divided in standard parts:

Introduction:

- Organisational context/ and or rationale & relevance
- Relevant literature for framing of concepts
- Problem definition resulting in Thesis statement and/or problem statement and research questions

Methodology
Results
Discussion
If applicable: Advice, Solutions and Implementation
Conclusions

Written report of the Thesis must also include
Title page,
Preface (optional),
Executive summary,
and Table of contents at the beginning
and Reference list, Appendixes at the end of the whole document.
For recommendations of presentation and style of the report see Appendix 1.

Title page
Do not put a number on the title page but start the numbering with it

Title page includes: Title, Name of student, ID number place, date, names of the supervisor and the reader, name of university and European Master in Social Work

- Inside back cover: This graduation assignment has been written to fulfil the requirements of the degree of European Master in Social at ……. The copyright belongs to the author. Both the university and the author declare that any information provided by third parties who these parties do not want to be made public will be kept in confidence.

Preface
This is optional and must not be an essential part of the report. It should be written in the first person and give any or all of the following: stimulus of the assignment, special circumstances, limitations, obstacles, acknowledgements (give the full name and title with a short description of how they helped or supported the student, give external people first then internal such as the supervisor) any personal comments of the author

Executive summary

- Informative and fluently written; stands on its own – independent of the main text
- Is given as a chapter in the graduation proposal but is not numbered
- 3 pages maximum
- An independent summary including answers to the following questions the first 3 questions take up one third to one half of the length and the last two questions take up two-thirds to one half of the length of the summary

  1 What is the relevance of the research and what is the main area of investigation (include the problem/ thesis statement) ?
  2 What is are the goals of the research?
  3 How was the investigation undertaken?
  4 What are the main results?
  5 What are the main conclusions & recommendations?

Table of Contents

- As clear as possible in terms of layout
- No more than 3 levels of subheadings : use decimals
- Headings must be short : abridged if necessary
- Page numbers must be on the right side of the TOC
- All sections must be listed in detail and formulated in the same wording as in the main text
- The reference list is a separate chapter but is not numbered
- Each appendix has a title and is numbered

2.2 Introduction

Make the importance of the topic clear, create a context. Use the present perfect tense where appropriate, have a strong opening statement, use supporting illustrations to go from general to specific. Follow the structure of introductory paragraphs.

A. Background – this section can be based on the background information given in the proposal, but it can add or revise that description.
B. Rationale this can be taken over from the proposal but may be adapted
C. Thesis statement and / or problem definition with research questions.
D. Overview - sequential outline of the structure of the rest of the thesis.

Some extra notes on parts of the introduction:

Organisational Context
A selective, focussed and if possible, critical analysis of the relevant (and only the RELEVANT) internal & external factors & forces [that is, people, processes & structures] in relation to the problem that needs solving for the client organisation.

Relevant literature for framing of concepts
The thesis should contain a "state- of –the- art" review of relevant literature and previous research. IT will not only describe, but provide a critical evaluation of this literature. The end report and its topic(s) for analysis should be situated in and be an extension of this body of work. So firstly you need to read widely to find the information and studies that are relevant to your topic. In the thesis you need to summarise these studies, properly cited. You need to include: who found out what, when, and how this developed the study of the topic.

Of course the quantity and quality of this section will depend on the nature of the problem and the issues that it raises for investigation. Academic books and, in particular, the academic research journals, must be used.

Review [that is synthesize and comment on] key studies, models or theories that help to illuminate or frame your investigation. Use only those studies that are relevant to your problem and your approach to investigating it. Do not automatically include literature from your previous studies. Any study you carry out, whether it is based on quantitative, qualitative or combined methods, cannot depend completely on your own data, but must be situated in a context of what is already known about the topic in question. This context is provided in the literature review.

It must not be simply a group of sources presented one after another in an arbitrary list of abstracts or mini-book reviews.

- Remember that the reader will want to know *why* you have included any particular piece of research here.

- It is not enough just to summarise what has been said: you need to organise and evaluate it. Think of how you can or will use the ideas and judge them in light of your needs to solve your problem.

- You must also justify its inclusion. For example, does it have a definition of a key term that you will use in your analysis of results? Does it confirm the findings of another important source that you are also using? Does it have any limitations or gaps that matter? Constantly, you need to draw out the relevance and significance of what the sources have provided. It is no use expecting the reader to locate the relevance or significance themselves. You must demonstrate this.

- You can also review methods that have been used in these studies that are relevant to your own study.

- Try to combine certain key theories or models into a conceptual framework of your own if possible. At the end of the review it is customary to provide a concluding section that draws together the main points in a “theoretical or conceptual framework”. You will finish with a conclusion, explaining how your research will be supported by the literature. Here, you should prepare the reader to understand the platform of previous knowledge from which the original primary research then takes off. (with thanks to Gillett, n.d.)

2.3 Methodology

RESEARCH STRATEGY & CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED – the methods used should be the same as the methods identified in the proposal only here the past tense is used instead of the future tense.

Headings:
Research design,
Sample/participants,
Materials (if applicable)
Procedures / process/ stages
Methods of data collection,

Methods of data analysis,
Limitations.

Follow guidelines and instructions on how to write this section (see Appendixes 2 and 3)

You should provide detailed information on the research design, participants, equipment, materials, variables, and actions taken by the participants. The method section should provide enough information to allow other researchers to replicate your experiment or study.

For example:

Design: Describe the type of design used in the experiment. Specify the variables as well as the levels of these variables. Explain whether your experiment uses a within-groups or between-groups design.

> For example:
>
> The experiment used a 3x2 between-subjects design. The independent variables were age and understanding of second-order beliefs.

Participants: Describe the participants including who they were, how many there were, and how they were selected. This can be a sample group. It can also be a description of the interviewees in a qualitative study.

For example:

> We randomly selected 100 children from elementary schools near the University of Arizona.

Materials: Describe the materials, measures, equipment, or stimuli used in the experiment. This may include testing instruments, technical equipments, books, images, or other materials used in the course of research.

For example:

> Two stories form Sullivan et al.'s (1994) second-order false belief attribution tasks were used to assess children's understanding of second-order beliefs.

Procedure: The next part of your method section should detail the procedures used in your experiment. Explain what you had participants do, how you collected data, and the order in which steps occurred.

For example:

> An examiner interviewed children individually at their school in one session that lasted 20 minutes on average. The examiner explained to each child that he or she would be told two short stories and that some questions would be asked after each story. All sessions were videotaped so the data could later be coded.

Tips:

1. Always write the method section in the past tense. Combine the passive and active voice, but use the passive more.

2. Provide enough detail that another researcher could replicate your experiment, but focus on brevity. Avoid unnecessary detail that is not relevant to the outcome of the experiment.

3. Remember to use proper APA format.

4. Place a rough draft of your method section on the Virtual learning Environment. This draft is for your thesis buddy who give carry out a peer assessment when you do a peer assessment of his/her section.

5. Proofread your paper for typos, grammar problems, and spelling errors. Don't just rely on computer spell checkers. Check each section of your paper for agreement with other sections. If you mention steps and procedures in the method section, these elements should also be present in the results and discussion sections.

   (partially taken from: Cherry, n.d.)

Language Hints

This is usually the section written first. It may well be the shortest one. Still it is very important, especially in interdisciplinary fields since methods are not as clear cut as in say mathematics. It may be acceptable to use the 'I' form here. Considering the verb structures note that the passive will be used a great deal as well as imperatives. There should be few citations and little commentary. You must be explicit.

The pace should be rather slow, do not assume too much background knowledge, especially if your approach is breaking new ground. Do justify and explain a lot. You may repeat terminology in this section for the sake of clarity. Make sure that this section, just like every other section has an introductory sentence and that the end of the section is rounded off with a short summary of the main points covered.

2.4 Results

You must display the data that was collected, providing commentary on initial findings. You should also provide some comment on the validity and significance of each result.

Give a detailed presentation of key results / findings with initial commentary only.
Cluster results in relation to research questions or by key theme.
A clear exposition of the data produced by the methods is required.

Do you give the impression that you fully understand the nature and relative importance of the findings or is it merely a straightforward re-statement of the data?

Are any limitations of the findings acknowledged? Have you consistently addressed the original issues for investigation? Are the findings consistently relevant?

Do not forget that qualitative results need to presently in the form of clusters or categories that you have found in interviews etc. Selected examples of statements made by respondents that illustrate your categories will add credibility.

- The results of the different aspects of the research should be presented with only a small amount of commentary. Initially, the data should appear in a relatively 'raw' from – showing aggregate totals and listing responses.
- In the second part of this section these can then be analysed with comparisons being identified and interesting, realistic, relevant findings being drawn out.
- The extent to which this chapter develops is dependent on the type of data collected.

Hints on Language
The language of probability will be needed you will also need to be able to describe graphs or charts or other statistical data (both of these types of language are practised in the web links provided). Verbs to qualify (weaken) or strengthen clams will need to be used as well (see Swales & Feak, 2004, Unit 4).

Do not forget that the results sub-section like all other sections needs an introductory sentence and a concluding sentence. There are several possible opening strategies for the results as Swales & Feak (2004) have shown. Remember that in general the results sub-section deals with facts by describing them while the discussion sub-section deals with interpretation. However you may well want to melt these two into each other so that presentation of raw data goes immediately over into analysis. Check with your supervisor on this issue as different supervisors may have different preferences.

2.5 Discussion

Discussion/ Interpretation of Results including an indication of validity of results in relation to research questions (RQs) (confirmed or supported) referring back to the literature to illuminate the analysis.

Analysis of findings and critical evaluation of the research process
Is the reasoning supported by the facts? Are the distinctions between fact, and opinion, interpretation and speculation clear? Are there facts and opinions which are inconsistent with the overall reasoning/argument?

Does the analysis consistently address the original issues for investigation or is it merely an interpretation of isolated research findings? Is it a balanced statement and interpretation which acknowledges the possibility of other "confounding" yet unmeasured variables? Is unnecessary and unsubstantiated evaluative terminology used?

If the results have led to possible solutions what kind of interim feedback was given?

Hints on Language & Structure
The opening statement of the discussion section varies according to the type of research. Sometimes the discussion begins with references to the literature, sometimes with a recap of the results. In terms of language, linking words (connectors) will be used a great deal to connect up ideas, data, comments and analysis of data.

Since this is the section where the researcher steps back from the data, the language structures associated with the logical modes of argument such as 'compare and contrast' and 'cause and effect' will be important. Make sure that the interpretation of results matches the research questions. You may give a subsection for each research question using the RQ as a heading. Under each subsection indicate whether your results confirm, reject or do not answer the RQ.

A good way to organise this is to use three moves

Move 1. Points that consolidate the research space that you have occupied (confirm/reject results)
Move 2. Points that limit your results (compare to other research /perhaps refer to methods)
Move 3. Points that identify further areas of research

You should always do Move 1 for each RQ but you can save Moves 2 and 3 for the general commentary in the concluding section if you like. Alternatively you may use the moves for each RQ recycling all three moves each time.

If applicable: Advice / Solutions and Implementation

This section must show how the research has led to solutions that are original, realisable and concrete including all possible consequences of operational implementation for the organisation / financial, organisational, time etc. factors. It contains the specific recommendations, which are described in detail with advantages and disadvantages evaluated objectively & critically.

2.6 Conclusions

This section summarise the various elements of the thesis and demonstrate the value and relevance of the advice/solutions/products. Outcomes of the assignment should be compared with what was already known and conclusions drawn out. It should also include: limitations of the investigation as well as the main contribution.
Recommendations for further investigation would be welcome.

Summary of main points from the research and recommendations for future research.
Try to answer the following:
- Are the conclusions supported by the empirical data?
- Does the text return to the original issues for investigation and questions asked?
- Does the text attempt to critically reassess or confirm initial assignment's problem statement?
- Does it successfully "round off the work" admitting both successes and limitations?

Hints on Language & Structure*:*
In the conclusions it is necessary to become more general and consider the wider implications of your results. The discussion section, conclusion section and the recommendation sections together should be structured like the mega-introductory sections were but in the opposite architectural order, this time the direction is from <u>Specific to General</u> while in the mega-introductory sections (General into, lit. review, issues and perhaps also methods) the direction is from <u>General to Specific.</u>

<u>The concluding section contains</u>
1. a restatement of the problem statement, and research questions : NOTE there must be no new information in the conclusion
2. the broader implications, not just for your field but wider social and scientific contributions
3. indication of limitations (if applicable)

Language: The language of generalisation and the language of limitations are needed (see Swales & Feak)

4. A final linking up to the problem statement to remind the reader what has been accomplished in relation to it is stylistically satisfying.

2.7 References & Appendices

References

There should be a concise reference list. References should be presented according to the APA system (see Appendix 4).

Appendices

Appendices should have a clear function to support the text. References to the appendices should be made within the text. The project proposal plans and sub-plans can be put here. Also SPSS details from surveys, transcripts from interviews and interview question protocol can be placed in the appendix.

2.8 Checklist (This is an adaptation of a checklist of Coen Sijtstra , 2005).

Content	Descriptors
Length	20,000 to 30,000 words of basic text (include word count)
Lay out	Professional and attractive: Times New Roman 12 or Arial 11 point font (1.5 spacing) correct use of headings see details below
Title page	All relevant dates & names, confidentiality and originality statements see no.4 below
Preface [not required] see 5. below	
Executive Summary see 6. below	3 to 5 pages; must meet all requirements
TOC	APA format see notes below
Introduction Description/ justification and logic of the research proposal	From general to specific Sufficiently descriptive Aims are relevant and significant Problem statement is derived from aims with clear boundaries Overview of the rest of the report is set out in a fluent manner Concrete, logical & transparent means of measuring , Reliable, feasible, valid
Situation analysis / Organisation background	Relevant data
Concepts and conceptual frameworks	Only relevant theories and models / well chosen and used with discrimination Must be up to date /important communication or organisation theories for the task at hand are not missing - dictionary definitions are usually insufficient
Methods	Possible Headings for a methods section Purpose & design; Subjects; Types of data (measurement instruments) ; Methods of data collection; Procedures Methods of data analysis ; Limitations
Results / Discussion – including Objective description and interpretation	Clear, readable, credible, valid reliable all details in the appendix; full transcriptions are not required. Evidence of critical analysis
Conclusions	Summarise the answers to the problem statement and research questions. No new information in the conclusion

Advice / Recommendations	Client oriented/ fitting to this client concrete, realistic, operational (feasible to implement) individual & original vision creative
In text citing : paraphrasing, direct quotes, and summaries	According to APA rules see no. below and APA rules See no. 9 below & Appendix
See Reference list	According to APA
Appendices	Relevant data that would disturb the flow of reading the main text
Figures, tables, charts, etc.	According to APA Style guidelines: with captions and proper referencing See no. 9 below & Appendix
Style	Text is flowing, consistent, precise & fluent, in character : Style and vocabulary are appropriately formal
Language	Professional and rich vocabulary : only minor grammatical errors
In-text rhetorical structuring	Logical organisation within sections. Sections and paragraphs are unified, and well developed Text is coherent, all sections are interrelated; explicit signposting to indicate the links between sections is carried out throughout the text
Depth of analysis and creativity of solutions	Must meet Master competencies in cognitive terms: descriptive and/or informative presenting of one dimensional issues is not sufficient, there must be comparative analysis/ critical thinking of complex / multidimensional issues & reflective evaluation

References

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Gillett, A. (n.d.) *Using English for academic purposes.* Retrieved, 15 September, 2009, from, http://www.uefap.com/writing/writfram.htm.

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Sijtstra, C. (2005). *Afstudeer Opdracht van de Opleiding MER*. Unpublished educational text adapted with permission from the author, Groningen: Hanze University Groningen**.**

Strunk , W. (1918). *Elements of style*. Librivox edition Retrieved, 24 September, 2011, from http://librivox.org/the-elements-of-style-by-william-strunk-jr/.

Swales, J.M., Feak, C. (2004). *Academic writing for graduate students: essential tasks & skills* (Second Edition). Michigan Series in English for Academics & Professional Purposes, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Appendix 1 PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION & STYLE HINTS

Standard of Professional English
We will automatically deduct marks if spelling mistakes which a 'spell check' programme would have found are included. 'Grammar check' facilities, included on most modern writing programmes, can also be useful, but will usually only warn you of possible problems. You still have to have a sufficient command of English writing to be able to correct possible grammatical and style shortcomings.

Structuring the Text
- Logical structure see above notes on sections
  Systematic and balanced chapters and sections with well developed and unified paragraphs – not choppy with too many short chapters (the maximum is 8).
- Each chapter or section has its own mini introductory paragraph. This introduction not only states the order of topics or points covered in the chapter but also its relevance for the main question/ problem statement and why it is necessary to have this chapter in this particular place in the text. Indicate its relations to earlier chapters and subsequent chapters . Thus, in principle the readers must always know why they are reading this particular slice of the whole at this specific moment. This is what gives unity, coherence and flow to the text which it is vital to the readability of the report.

Style and Wording of Headings and Sub-headings

A systematic mode of headings should be employed in writing dissertations, namely:

CHAPTER 1: CHAPTER TITLE	(left hand margin, justified, capitals, NOT underlined)
SECTION HEADINGS	(as for CHAPTER)
Sub-Section headings	(left hand margin, justified, lower case)
	Sub sub-section headings (centred, lower case, underlined)

Headings are written without full stops.
Typically, a chapter may include two or three sections, each with one or two sub-sections.

The structure chosen by you will be reflected in the section titles and headings. Keep the following guidelines in mind:
1. Only longer reports, require a table of contents (called a TOC) as well as internal headings. In that case, make sure that the TOC headings and headings in the report are exactly the same.
2. Numbered headings and sub-headings are used to structure your ideas, this means there should be some logic to that structure (see examples below). Most readers cannot follow the logic of headings such as "2.5.3.13 - Important Conclusions" and "2.5.3.14: Further Important Conclusions". In fact, Module Assignment Reports usually require headings on three levels at most. The minimum number of sub-headings per level is two (i.e. if there is a 1.1, there must be a 1.2).
3. Make sure the amount of text is in proportion with the number of headings. There should be at least a full paragraph to each heading, but at least 1 heading per page.

4. Use parallel construction: i. e. write all the headings in the same grammatical farm (e.g. **not** development and presenting the new service; **but** "developing and presenting the new service").
5. Make the difference in heading levels clear by using a combination of variation in font size, bold type, underlining, or italics.
6. Choose a descriptive (topical) style, question style or summary style and consistently use only that style within any one report. Examples of three different styles are shown below. Think about the effect each style has on the reader.

Descriptive (topical) style: This style is good if the sub-topics are quite simple and straightforward.

Heading :	**I.**	**Industry Characteristics**
Sub-heading	1.1	Annual Sales
	1.2	Profitability
	1.3	Growth Rate

Question style: This style is probably the easiest .

Heading :	**I .**	**What is the nature of the industry?**
Sub-heading :	1.1	What are the annual sales?
	1.2	Is the industry profitable?
	1.3	What is the pattern of growth?

Summary style: This style is more difficult because you have to know the results before you write the relevant heading.

Heading	**I.**	**The airline industry is stagnating.**
Sub-heading	1.1	Market is large.
	1.2	Profit margins are narrow.
	1.3	Growth is modest

N:B: In some kinds of reports (especially financial ones) there are Sub-sub headings, but for a module assignment report this is not necessary.

1.3.1 Sales growth under 0.5% a year.
1.3.2 Growth in profits is flat.

Tables Figures, Charts, Graphs and Numbers

Tables should be used sparingly, with large tables on a separate page (or in the appendices), small tables centred in the text. A useful numbering system is Chapter/Table number (e.g. Table 2.2). Tables and graphs should be given a clear heading, as should figures and diagrams. **There must be a correct APA reference for all tables etc. taken from outside sources using 8 point font.**

Numbers

Remember that, in English, full stops and commas are used the opposite way to the system used in some European countries when writing numbers.

E. g. *one million two hundred and eighty-four thousand six hundred and three dollars and fifty cents,* is written as follows:

i.e. in German or Dutch	in English
$1.284.603,50	$1,284,603.50

In addition, *Three dollars and zero cents* is:

i.e. in German or Dutch	in English
$3,00	$3.00

System of Referencing: a very brief reminder

As you know, a systematic mode of referencing should be employed throughout the report. The APA Style of in-text citing and referencing should be used. Just to remind you a few points are highlighted below.

Whenever an idea is drawn from a source, but not directly quoted, it must be referenced using the surname of the author and the date of publication. E.g. (Smith, 2005). If you have used more than one item published by the same author in the same year, these are distinguished by the insertion of a letter. E.g. (Smith, 2005a).

Whenever direct quotations are used, these must include the surname of the author, the year of publication and the page number(s) where the quotation may be located. e.g (Smith 1999, p. 29).

All sources referenced in the body of the text must be clearly and fully identified in the References list at the end of the Dissertation in the following manner. (Books and Journal articles may be included in the same list, but are shown differently) The following examples are fictional but correct in form.

For books:

Smith, J. F.(2009).*Graduation theses are fun.* London: Fantastic Books.

For articles:

Smith, J. F. (2010). The skills of conducting interviews with 'over stressed' policy makers. *Journal of Social Policy Research, 10*(7), 167-192.

For references that are used not from the original but from some other source:
(Brown, 2001, cited in Smith, 2010, p. 170)

For electronic sources:

Smith, J. F. (2000). *How to write a really nice master's thesis in one month,* Retrieved 12 December, 2002, from, http://www.graduatewriting.com/J.F.Smith.htm

Report Style

The importance of style for your final report can hardly be overemphasized. There are many websites with guidelines and many good books as well. Check the academic writing blackboard pages for a selection of them. Think about Strunk's Classic *Elements of Style* and do not forget what Swales and Feak demonstrate in Chapter one on the significance of writing in the appropriate genre and of the many examples of writing throughout their book. In the first place do not use the first person unless you have a very good reason to do so. Avoid subjective, opinionated language and aim for a neutral and objective style. The use of the passive is common in texts of social scientists' writers and you must master the passive voice to achieve the correct tone.

Also do not use the second person pronoun (you) at any time and avoid informal commentary words like "Naturally" "Of course" etc. Informal English may begin sentences with and, or, but, and so, this is considered too chatty in formal writing. Use of formal linking words is very effective to improve formality. For example, use: therefore, thus, by contrast, nevertheless rather than ****so, still. Informality is also seen in the use of exclamation marks and question marks, which are not commonly used in formal English. Formal English `does it with language'.

Table 1 A Comparison of Formal and Informal Writing Styles

	Formal	Informal
Use	External reports, or when (some of) the readers do not know the writer very known to the writer well Legally-required documents	Internal reports, where all readers are known to the writer
Effect	Impression of objectivity, accuracy, professionalism and fairness Distance created between writer and reader	Feeling of friendliness, warmth, and personal involvement.
Characteristics	Avoids the first person whenever possible No contractions (e. g. Cannot instead of can't) A wide variety of linking words Use of the passive voice the research (e.g. the study was carried out) Almost complete absence of humour and figures of speech/ Emotionally restrained Relatively long, complex sentences	Use of the first person (e. g. I, we, etc.) Use of contractions (e. g. Can't, don't…) Mostly simple conjunctions Emphasis on active voice verbs (e. g. I carried out the study) Occasional use of humour and figures of speech/ less restrained Relatively short, simple sentences

General Formal Style:
What makes up a writer's style? Look up guidelines on any of the following that you do not understand.

1. *Language level*
    - Sentence length and sentence complexity
    - Paragraph length

    <u>Spelling</u>
    - Contractions (do not belong in formal writing)
    - Simplifications

    <u>Word choice</u>
    - Discourse level
    - Genre

    <u>Word order</u>
    - Active/passive tenses
    - Personal/impersonal
    - Direct/indirect
    - Variety

2. Contents level

Objective: reporting/argumentative/entertaining
Information density
Focused on the main arguments or loosely built up

Any tricks (these do not belong in formal writing)

Repetition
Rhetorical questions
'Charged' examples
Leading ('of course')
Degree of personal involvement?
Exclamation marks, questions, italics for emphasis

3. Compare the two examples the first is formal the second is informal.

Approximately 50 people will be interviewed	We will interview about50 people.
facilitate	make easier
discover	find out
investigate	look into
postpone	put off

This investigation discusses the communication between...In this investigation I will discuss ...
This is very unlikely / I do not believe this
This is discussed in Chapter 6 / I will discuss this in Chapter 6
This stakeholder is said to be rich/ They say he is a rich stakeholder.

not unpleasant / pleasant, nice
dispense with someone's services / fire someone

Interestingly, there was no difference / I found it interesting to see that ...

Appendix 2 KEY TERMS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Background and problem definition
Background of the organisation
Name of organisation and basic facts : (in an abridged form)
KEY Internal organisation/ structures and Key actors(in an abridged form)
KEY External forces (economic, social, etc. people. processes . products)
Non- disclosure agreement
Organisational supervision

Main issues/ Relevance
Thesis/ Problem statement
Research questions
Phase in the policy cycle (if applicable)
Stages, including consulting moments (if applicable)
Key research concepts/ terms

Research methodology /Possible Headings for a methods section

Purpose & design
General statement and explanation of whether the study uses a quantitative or qualitative design or some combination of these. Limitations of the design can be explained here as well.

Subjects (this can be presented here or later under the types of data if the research is qualitative)
Sample description
- Who will be studied? Age, gender, etc.
- How many subjects will be studied?
- Is this representative , if so why, if not why not?
- Other?

Types of data (measurement instruments)
Documentary data
- Primary source documents (brochures, policy docs. etc)
- Secondary sources (earlier studies, models etc.)

Empirical data
- Experimentation
- Surveys
- Interviews (individual or group)
  - Structured
  - Semi-structured
- Focus groups
- Participant observation
- Actions i.e. an intervention like a workshop
- Video recordings of interventions etc.

Methods of data collection
Selected from data bases, library search etc.
Face to face with a protocol / without protocol
Individual interviewer / multiple interviewers

By phone , email, mail shot, or social media sites
By presentation at fairs, events
Participant observation as outsider or leader of actions

Procedures
Frequency of data collection
Time frame of data collection
Sequence of data collection
Transcriptions of interviews or discussions
Keeping a journal of field notes (records of actions and immediate observations on actions)

Methods of data analysis
SPSS / survey data analysis
Documents Thematic / key words & phrases analysis
Documents Content analysis / Media analysis
Interview – key terms, recurring themes analysis
Observation analysis : field notes, observation protocols

Limitations
Stages or cycles of research (if applicable)
Anticipated Problems
Researcher's role in the research

Project time scaling
Table with columns or other presentation of the schedule broken down into phases – room is set aside for contingencies that could cause delays like illness
For Example: Colour Key = one background colour for each activity
Project Week no.- Calendar week no. –Activities - Deadline - Remarks – Contingency

Reference list
According APA, for examples see appendix 4

Appendix 3 METHODS LINKS

on line books, manuals, guides to research methods and evaluation.
http://gsociology.icaap.org/methods/books.htm

Most of these sites describe social research methods, or evaluation methods, including survey methods, qualitative methods. These are listed in 2 main sections: General Methods, and Evaluation. Many of the evaluation guides are also general methods guides. Each section is further subdivided into academic sites, government sites, or private organization or individual sites. This organization is used because there are a lot of sites, and this was one way to organize them. Within sections, sites are listed in no particular order.

I General Research Methods sites

Academic sites
Lecture notes on research methods http://faculty.ncwc.edu/toconnor/308/308lects.htm brief guide with links.

PPA 696 Research Methods http://www.csulb.edu/~msaintg/ppa696/696menu.htm#PPA 696 very nice overview on different research methods.

The research process http://www.ryerson.ca/~mjoppe/rp.htm brief guides to topics in research.

Research Methods WWW tutorial http://sociology.camden.rutgers.edu/main.htm tutorial on some basics of research methods. Not yet complete.

Educational research lectures
http://www.southalabama.edu/coe/bset/johnson/dr_johnson/2lectures.htm actually brief outlines of general methods, including qualitative, historical, statistical analysis, etc....

Susan Losh's home page http://garnet.acns.fsu.edu/~slosh//Index.htm lists a class:
basic research methods guides http://edf5481-01.fa02.fsu.edu/Overview.html introduction to different methods, eg, surveys, focus groups, some less structured methods.

CLIS 705 INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE SYLLABUS
http://www.libsci.sc.edu/bob/class/clis705/Clis705syll.htm
has pdf files (of powerpoint slides) on some research methods basics

Trochim, William M. The Research Methods Knowledge Base,
http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/index.htm . General research methods text, with chapters on topics such as survey construction, sampling, and a chapter on evaluation. If its a method, its probably here.

Research methods guide
http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/index.cfm?guides_active=empirical&category1=18&category2=19 written by students, brief guides to case methods, surveys, content analysis, reliability and validity, etc.

Research methods in the social sciences http://sesd.sk.ca/psychology/Psych20/page27.html a nice brief summary of different methods in social sciences. Another version is here http://sesd.sk.ca/psychology/Psych20/Ejournals/interactions__research_methods.htm on one page.

The research room http://www.uh.edu/~srama/index.htm This " is your reference source for information and resources about conducting social science research."

Methods Used in Instructional Assessment and Evaluation http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/how_to/methods/index.php brief description and how to's for document analysis, experiments, focus groups, interviews, surveys.

On line research methods http://www.geog.le.ac.uk/orm/site/home.htm aimed at understanding how to do research on line.

The University of Texas at Austin http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/how_to/methods/index.php has these guides on how to do various methods like interviews, surveys, observation, focus groups, etc. Specifically for Instructional Assessment and Evaluation, but these show how to do the general methods.

Private organizations or people

Audience Dialogue's techniques http://www.audiencedialogue.org/techniques.html includes guides on many different methods, such as questionnaire, fieldwork, sampling, etc. One section is Know your audience http://www.audiencedialogue.org/kya.html This is part of the audience dialog site http://www.audiencedialogue.org/index.html

school sociology methods http://www.scool.co.uk/topic_principles.asp?loc=pr&topic_id=22&subject_id=64&ebt=282&ebn=&ebs=&ebl=&elc=13 brief descriptions of different methods such as participant observation, experiments, sampling, comparative methods, and secondary data analysis. This is at s-cool, http://www.s-cool.co.uk/http://www.s-cool.co.uk/default.asp then click on A level methods, then sociology, then methods.

Methods for Social Researchers in Developing Countries http://srmdc.net/ "This site has been prepared specifically for beginning researchers in developing countries."

Appendix 4 APA LINKS

There are hundreds of links for APA. These are just a few selected to offer some choices. We also have several Guides in PDF.

A guide to referencing in APA style by the Communications Learning Centre (CLC) Central Queensland University

Check out the link: http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/apagd.php Retrieved, 10 October, 2009.

Please download the RTF of the University Library guide to APA referencing from RMIT University : mams.**rmit**.edu.au/szq3g615ahbdz.rtf

The APA tutorial of the University of Southern Mississippi is a good way to check your knowledge. It also uses the 6th edition of the APA Manual

http://lib.usm.edu/legacy/tutorials/apatutorial/tutorialindex.html

Purdue Online Writing Lab's start page for many sources for APA

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

An interactive APA citations site from the university of Ballarat in Australia

http://guerin.ballarat.edu.au/aasp/is/library/assignment_research/referencing/apa.php

From a great Community College site in Connecticut :

A Guide for Writing Research Papers-APA Style (Capital Community College): http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/apa/ (including *Guide to Grammar and Writing: http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/)

APA style sheet (PDF file): http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/apastyle.html

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