

Guidelines for Writing the Project Dissertation **BSc Medical Education**

Presentation of the dissertation

Your project must be written up in the form of a dissertation. As a general guide, the dissertation should be:

- up to 5000 words in length
- typed 1.5-spaced
- on one side of each page
- minimum of 11-point font
- spiral bound

Knowledge of the field, critical engagement with the literature and discussion of the results are all important as well as the results themselves. The examiners are aware that in a short time it is difficult to collect extensive primary data – it is the way in which you handle the data you collect that is important.

Order of contents of the dissertation

Your report should normally appear in the following sequence and in not more than 5000 words (excluding abstract, contents pages, statements, references, acknowledgements, figures, tables and appendices).

1. Title Page – title, author, institution and statement that it *is “presented in partial fulfilment of the BSc in Medical Education”*
2. Abstract - a maximum of 300 words contained on a single page
3. Acknowledgements – anyone who you want to thank/acknowledge
4. Supervisor’s Statement – your supervisor (or one of your joint supervisors) should write and sign a brief statement indicating to what extent this was your own work (and any other relevant matters relating to completion of the project and its outcomes i.e. any papers/presentations).
5. Statement of Originality – signed by you that this work is entirely your own (i.e. not plagiarised).

“I hereby declare that the work presented in my project is entirely my own except where specific acknowledgement is given to the work of other students or staff. I confirm that any material directly used from other sources (journals, books and internet sites) is clearly referenced and enclosed within quotation marks”.

6. Table of contents – Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables, List of Appendices
7. Introduction
8. Literature review

9. Methods
10. Results
11. Discussion (and/or Conclusions)
12. Bibliography / references
13. Appendices

If your dissertation is in the form of an extended literature review, then the above headings may not be appropriate. However, it will remain important that the reader is informed of the processes of the literature review and outcomes in terms of synthesis and discussion. The exact structure of dissertation and the headings to be used should be agreed with your supervisor.

Guidelines for references

You may use Vancouver or Harvard.

List the articles you have used for your research under 'References'.

If using Vancouver - refer to them using superscripted numbers in appropriate place within the text.

Article in Journal:

Shanahan FY, Deem R, Nayersina R, Leman B & Targan S. Human mucosal t-cell cytotoxicity *Gastroenterology* (1988) 94: 60-67.

Article in multi-authored book:

Brandtzaeg P. The B cell system; in *Food Allergy and Intolerance*, eds. J Brostoff & SB Challacombe (1987) p 18-25, Bailliere Tindall, London.

Book:

Walker-Smith JA. *Diseases of the small intestine in childhood* (3rd Edition), Butterworth's, London 1987.

World-Wide Web:

Give full URL.

A good guide to Harvard is -

Pears R. and Shields G. (2005) *Cite them right: the essential guide to referencing and plagiarism*. Pear Tree Books: Newcastle upon Tyne.

If your results are to lead to a publication, or if they are to be presented at a national or international meeting, this should be mentioned in the report.

Writing the abstract

Generally a well-prepared abstract enables a reader to identify the basic content of a document quickly and accurately, to determine its relevance to their interests and hence whether they need to read the entire document. In your case, an examiner will be greatly aided by a well-written abstract, as it is also a table of contents in paragraph form

that will act as a map to guide the reader through your manuscript. An abstract should be viewed as a mini version of the project dissertation, providing a brief summary of the main sections:

It should:

- State the principal objective(s) and scope of the investigation
- Describe in outline the methodology employed
- Summarise the results
- State the principal conclusion(s)

It should not:

- Be written in anything other than the past tense, as it refers to work done
- Give any information or conclusion that is not stated in the dissertation
- Cite references to the literature (except in the rare instances, such as modification of a previously published method)
- Exceed 300 words in length (1 side of A4)
- Describe research minutiae at the expense of the broader picture

The abstract will be marked as a separate component of your submitted dissertation as it is one of the most important features of an educational publication. It is a mark of your skill in research literacy, not your research endeavours. You would be advised that the abstract is the last section of your dissertation to be written

DEADLINE for your dissertation submission is:

4.pm on Monday May 11th 2009