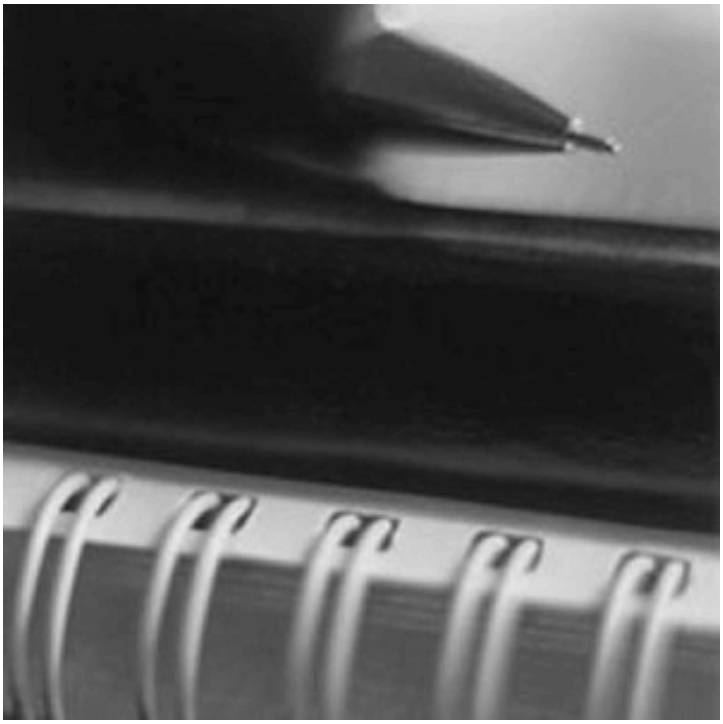
LEARNING AND TEACHING GUIDES

Guiding Student Dissertations

Dr Eileen Kennedy
Roehampton University



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This guide was authored by:

Dr Eileen Kennedy

Dr Eileen Kennedy Eileen Kennedy is Director of the Centre for Scientific and Cultural Research in Sport in the School of Human and Life Sciences at Roehampton University, London, UK. She has a background in Philosophy (BA, University of Essex) and Women's Studies (MA, University of Kent) and gained her PhD in Sociology of Sport from De Montfort University for her thesis, Gender in Televised Sport. Since then, her research and publications have focused on the intersections of nation, class and race in the discursive construction of masculinities and femininities in the sport and exercise media. Eileen is interested in the significance of the body and the senses in the consumption of media sport, and has begun to focus on the mediation of sport through sporting spaces and digital sportscapes. She is co-author, with Laura Hills, of Sport, Media and Society (published by Berg).

The advisor on this guide was:

Dr Lesley Lawrence

Dr Lesley Lawrence is Associate Director, Teaching and Learning at the University of Bedfordshire, UK. She qualified as a physical education teacher, before completing her PhD and working on commercial leisure/sport research projects at the Chelsea School (University of Brighton). She then lectured in Leisure Studies and Sport at the University of Luton where her research focused on: leisure education; real and virtual space environments in leisure; serious leisure; and leisure and cult fandom. She co-chaired a Leisure Studies Association Conference and has co-edited four LSA volumes. She then moved into central support and teaching and learning roles at Luton/Bedfordshire. Her main research interest now is assessment in HE and how students can be more supported where assessment is concerned. She has been working with colleagues in applying leisure psychological theory (flow) in education contexts.

Contents

What is a Dissertation?

Introduction

Most students on undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes in hospitality, leisure, sport or tourism are required to undertake a dissertation. If you are in your third year, you are probably thinking about how to begin your dissertation now. However, even though you may having been hearing a lot about dissertations at college, you may be unsure of what a dissertation is, or how to go about completing one.

A dissertation is a large-scale written assignment that is presented in a specific format that follows academic conventions. Students must stick to the established structure for the dissertation. Your degree programme includes a dissertation because you can demonstrate that you have achieved some of the following:

- You have decided on the focus and direction of your study
- You have carried out work on your own – although usually supported by your tutor
- You have undertaken a substantial amount of research involving the collection of primary data and/or the analysis of existing/secondary data.
- You have been able to demonstrate a more in-depth engagement with your topic than with other kinds of coursework, like essays or reports

For more go to http://www.socscidiss.bham.ac.uk/s2.html

The Dissertation and 'Originality'?

One of the requirements of the dissertation is often that it contains some element of originality. 'Originality' in your dissertation should be present in two ways:

1) The dissertation must be your own work. You will get help from others – particularly, guidance from your tutor – but you must acknowledge the help you receive and the reference all published material you use.

2) Some aspect of the content of the dissertation should be original. This could be the presentation of new research findings or a new interpretation of existing research findings, the application of an existing theoretical or analytical perspective to a new area, or the demonstration of a new problem/question that arises from existing research.

Contributing to the Field

If you are conducting a dissertation on a postgraduate programme, there are greater expectations of originality. For postgraduates, your dissertation should add something to existing knowledge among academics or practitioners within the field of hospitality, leisure, sport or tourism.

You can contribute to the field in many ways throughout your dissertation. This table presents some them):

- You say something no one has said before
- You do empirical work that has not been done before
- You synthesize things that have not been put together before
- You make a new interpretation of someone else's material ideas
- You take an existing technique and apply it to a new area
- You work across disciplines, using different methodologies
- You look at topics that people in your discipline have not looked at
- You testing existing knowledge in an original way
- You add to knowledge in a way that has not been done before
- You write down a new piece of information for the first time
- You give a good exposition of someone else's idea

(Phillips and Pough, cited in Murray, 2006:59)

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Thinking of your Project

Do	Don't
Focus on a topic that will hold you interest for a substantial period of time	Assume that your idea is completely new – look to see what has been done before and fill the gaps
Find your own angle	Think you are on your own - discuss your ideas with your tutor
Find your own angle	Expect to find previous research that is exactly the same as your project – you want to show that you can build on existing knowledge
Think of a topic that will support your plans for after you graduate	Be over-ambitious in your aims – you can achieve greater depth with a tightly focused small scale study

Task - to be completed and discussed with your dissertation tutor

What can I write about 'originality'? My work is/will be original in the sense that… My work is/will not be original in the sense that… Write for five minutes

(Murray, 2006: 59)

Further Reading

Murray, R. (2006) *How to Write a Thesis*, Open University Press

Parsons, T. and P.G. Knight (1995), 'What is a Good Dissertation and Why Do I Have to Do One?' in *How to do your Dissertation in Geography and Related Disciplines.* Cheltenham: Stanley Thomas

Woolhouse, M. (2002). “Supervising Dissertation Projects: Expectations of Supervisors and Students”, in *Innovations in Education and Teaching International.* Vol.39, No.2, 137-143

http://www.essex.ac.uk/myskills/skills/writing/dissertationChecklist.asp

Structure: What Does a Dissertation Look Like?

This section offers you a model on how to lay out and structure your dissertation. However, your course will provide specific guidelines for structure. The guidelines provided by your University will specify the length of the dissertation, so you should check these.

There is a generic structure for the dissertation. Your dissertation should loosely follow this format. There may be variations, however, that are specific to your University, your course and your academic discipline.

Title Page
Abstract
Table of Contents
Acknowledgements
List of Abbreviations (if any), alphabetically ordered.
List of Tables (if any)
Introduction
Literature Review
Methodology
Findings (either a certain number of chapters or an extended essay which has clearly identified sections)
Discussion

Conclusions and (if appropriate) recommendations
Bibliography (a list of all the books, journal articles, web sites, newspapers and other sources that you have used in your dissertation)
Appendices (e.g. questionnaires, interview transcripts, pilot reports, detailed tables etc.)

Students in hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism undertake dissertations in a range of subjects spanning science and social science. Scientific and social scientific dissertations may have slightly different formats, particularly those that adopt a very interpretative approach. In these cases, the findings of the research may not be so easily distinguishable from the discussion of the findings. As a result, the findings/discussion chapters may need to be structured around themes that arise from the research.

The Typical Content of the Dissertation

Given the variety of subjects within Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism, the range of topics for dissertations and the specific approach your University takes to the dissertation, there can be no definitive guide to the content of a dissertation.

The following general advice has been developed from guidance provided at http://www.uwic.ac.uk/ltsu/u_area/studyskills/unit11.html , however you should use this advice only to supplement rather than replace your own course guidelines:

Abstract

A dissertation often includes a summary or abstract. It should contain a description of the research, what was done, how it was done, what was found out and the major theoretical analytical implications. The abstract is usually around 200 - 300 words long and indented, however this may differ, so check your course guidance.

Contents Pages

The Contents Page/s should list and give page numbers for every part of the dissertation, including, where relevant, the Abstract; Acknowledgements; Chapter Titles and Section Headings; Bibliography; and Appendixes. Separate lists of tables, figures and illustrations should also be provided as part of the Contents Page.

Acknowledgements

It is usual to acknowledge those people who have provided special help and support - for example, subjects of interviews who have given a lot of time answering questions, people who have loaned you special books or records; those who have provided advice and suggestions that have significantly influenced your work; and individuals who have provided practical help, such as typing. If used, acknowledgements should be simple and restrained.

Abbreviations

If you refer through your dissertation, and frequently, to different organisations etc for which you can use acronyms, you will need a page to list them all. The first time you refer to an organisation you must write the name in full, bracketing the abbreviated form afterwards. For example: The International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Figures, Tables and Illustrations

Figures, tables and illustrations may be used in the dissertation. Care should be taken to ensure a good standard of presentation. Each type of inclusion should be titled and numbered consecutively through the text.

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction should explain why you undertook the study – what your aims were. It should answer the following questions:
This chapter is very important and is possibly best compiled by answering a series of questions as follows:

- What was the problem to be solved or issue to be addressed?

- Why was it important?
- How will your dissertation solve the problem or address the issue, e.g., collect data, analyse data?
- What will your dissertation add to what is already known?

Since you will be in a better position to answer these questions when you have completed the dissertation research, it might be easier to write the introduction at the end. It could be the last thing you write.

Putting Yourself in the Picture

Sometimes a dissertation arises from your personal interest in a particular topic. Dissertations like this may be interpretative in approach. For example, you may have a passion for running and you have undertaken to research the experience of runners in public parks. Maybe you volunteer at a local museum and you have researched the reasons visitors give for going to museums. In these cases, you might want to include a statement of your motivation for undertaking the research in your introduction. In this way, you can demonstrate that you have an investment in the research, and you are aware that this has helped shape the research. This will help you demonstrate your awareness of the process of research and your role in it.

Chapter 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This is a review of what is already known about your topic and of the main themes or issues that have arisen in previous research. It summarises articles from relevant journals, books, newspapers and other sources. This chapter should be written early in the research process. However, you can add to it throughout your dissertation research as you come across important material. You should summarise the argument that the author has presented, evaluate its merits and show its relevance to your study. You should highlight the findings that are relevant to your study and point to any questions that still remain to be answered.

- Identify the gap in the literature that your study will fill.
- Define and justify your project.

Useful guidance on conducting a literature review can be found at
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/litrev.html
http://www.ssdd.uce.ac.uk/learner/New%20page.htm

Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY

This is a description and justification of the methods, techniques and procedures used in the investigation.

- Explain your method, instrument, method of inquiry.
- Show links between your method and others.
- Justify your method – show why it is the most appropriate one for you to use.

One of the key issues is to choose between quantitative or qualitative research methods.
These two approaches of research can be defined in the following ways:

- Quantitative research is the kind where you measure things or count them, perhaps use statistical tests on your data, and then write up the results using tables, figures, graphs and bar charts.
- Qualitative research usually results in verbal descriptions, and might use quotations from people you interviewed or pictures of things happening.

Chapter 4 FINDINGS

What was observed and what was discovered/found out?
This is usually a presentation of the data only rather than a discussion in this section.
For dissertations involving the collection of quantitative data (for example, sport science) this section may involve the creation of tables, charts, histograms, etc., each of which should have an appropriate title or heading.

- Report what you found.
- Include additional material in an appendix.

Chapter 5 DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

In this section you present your interpretation of findings. What patterns have emerged? You can refer back to the literature review section and show the similarities or differences between your findings and those of other authors. You should show how your findings change ways of thinking about your topic.

- Interpret what you found
- Justify your interpretation

Remember if your dissertation is very interpretative in approach, you may wish to combine the findings and discussion chapters. Instead you may have two or three chapters structured around themes that have arisen from the analysis of your findings. In this way, you can present what you found and your discussion of your findings together.

Chapter 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This section should summarise your main findings and present your conclusions and directions for further research

- Conclusions, Implications, Recommendations
  - For future research
  - For future practice
- Report issues which were beyond the scope of this study

Finally, after the last Chapter, you should include

References

The reference section should be a formal detailed list of all the documents which have been referred to in the writing. It should be presented in your University's preferred referencing format.

Appendices

Appendices should be preceded by a sheet containing the word APPENDIX or APPENDICES, capitalised and centred on the page. Each appendix is given a designating letter: APPENDIX A, APPENDIX B, APPENDIX C and so on. Each appendix should be clearly labelled. Tables and raw data, documents, copies of letters and questionnaires, transcripts of interviews or tapes, which provide evidence of research but are not essential to the understanding of the dissertation, may be placed in the Appendix.

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Structuring your Project

Do	Don't
Familiarise yourself with the chapter headings that make up a traditional dissertation	Feel that you can't experiment a little with the chapter headings
Try to convey as much information as possible to the title	Make your title too long
Write the abstract last	Write just an overview of the study but also the argument behind it
Look at past dissertations – it helps to visualise the final product	Assume that existing dissertations you read achieved a good grade – you might be able to improve on them

Tasks to be done and discussed with your dissertation tutor

Search for and locate a past dissertation from your library. Read it and then think of your own structure and prepare a draft version of it. Discuss your ideas with your tutor.

Further Reading

http://www.uwic.ac.uk/ltsu/u_area/studyskills/unit11.html

http://www.usd.edu/ahed/qualguide.cfm

Piantanida, M. and Garman, N., B. (1999), "The Qualitative Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty", London: Corwin Press

Building an Argument

Remember that you are constructing an argument from the beginning to the end of your dissertation. Keep your argument in the forefront of your mind as you conduct your research and when you write the various chapters of your dissertation. Each section of your dissertation should relate to your argument. The literature review should show why your study is justified and necessary, as well as leading logically to your research question. Your methodology chapter should show why your chosen methods are the most appropriate ones to answer your research question. Your findings should present the results of your research and your discussion chapter should relate them to the literature you presented in your review. Your conclusions, therefore, should show how your study adds to the existing research. Your structure should lead the reader through your argument logically and persuasively.

Your dissertation requires you to show your skills of critical thinking. You should be able to critically evaluate the arguments of others, and present your own. In order to build your own argument, you should look at research that has been published and consider how the author uses evidence they have collected in support of their position. This will guide you to do the same.

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Critical Thinking and Building your Argument

Do	Don't
Consider how the authors you read have constructed their arguments	Follow just one author's perspective without questioning it
Try to unpack the steps of the arguments you encounter	Confuse critical thinking with criticism – you need to look for strengths as well as weaknesses
Compare different perspectives on your project	Present only one side to a problem
Develop your own independent position	

Tasks to be completed on your own and discussed with your dissertation tutor

Choose an article published in a hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism journal and read it. Then answer the following questions. Ask the same ones when working on your thesis.

Can you identify a structure in the research article that corresponds with the dissertation structure (eg. introduction/ literature review/ methodology/ findings/ discussion/ conclusion)?
What is the stated aim of the research?
How does this aim relate to previous research?
What is the argument of the author?
What kind of evidence does the author base the argument on?

Further Reading

Crème, P. and Lea, M.R. (1997), 'Writing for Different Courses' in *Writing at University: A Guide for Students*, Buckingham: Open University Press

http://www.academic-skills.soton.ac.uk/studyguides/Writing%20Your%20Dissertation.doc
http://wid.ucdavis.edu/handouts/critthink.htm

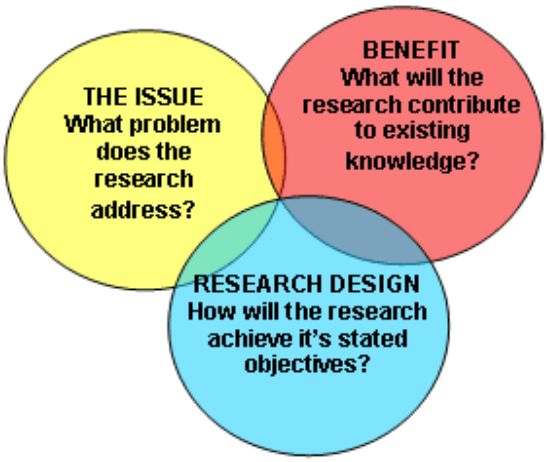
Section 2

Planning Your Dissertation

The process of conducting a dissertation often starts with a research proposal. This might be part of your formal assessment for your dissertation, or it might be a stage you go through to make your research project clear in your mind (and that of your tutor's). Your course might ask you to produce a research proposal in your second year of study, so that you are well prepared for your dissertation in your final year, or you may need to write a proposal just as you begin your dissertation to justify your project and plan ahead.

Your Research Proposal

Three interlocking questions underpin a good research proposal:



(www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au)

Breath and Depth

If you are required to produce a research proposal, your course will have specific requirements, which you should check. However, a typical proposal should address the 'what', 'why', 'how' and 'when' of the research. That is:

- What are you going to do?
    - Explain the problem in a way that shows why it is important
    - Include the aims and objectives of the research

Why are you going to do it (your rationale)?

- Discuss the shortfalls of existing research in the area and show that your research will contribute to resolving the problem in some way.

How are you going to do it (your methods)?

- Describe the appropriateness of your research methods for conducting the research.

When are you going to do it (your timescale)?

- Include a schedule showing the dates by which key milestones in your research (e.g. data collection) will be completed

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Preparing a Dissertation Proposal

Do	Don't
Convey a sense of what your completed dissertation will look like	Be vague or hesitant
Be clear about what you are going to do	Expect the reader to have prior knowledge of any aspect of your project
Write in a way that is easy to follow	Use overly complex or simplistic language
Set out your arguments clearly	to dazzle the reader with too much contextual information
Use any headings you are given in your course or University's guidelines for dissertations or proposals	presentation – make your proposal look professional
Tell the reader what you are going to do	Be too abstract and ignore the concrete – remember what, why, how & when

Further Reading

http://www.ssdd.bcu.ac.uk/learner/writingguides/1.07.htm

Achieving Congruence in Your Proposal

The successful completion of the dissertation depends to a large extent on the quality of the research proposal. The research proposal should be a carefully thought-through, succinct statement of the research question, summary of previous literature and plan of the method/analysis to be completed.

There should be a clear internal logic to the proposal, for example the questions you ask should help plug the gap in existing research that you have identified the methods you choose should be appropriate to the theoretical framing of the proposal. Keep your dissertation project well focused – do one thing consistently throughout the project.

What to Cover in Your Proposal

Your research proposal should include the following parts:

- Critical review of the key literature
- Research questions/hypotheses and aims and objectives
- Conceptual/theoretical framework
- Definitions of the key concepts
- Ethical issues
- Outline of research design and methods of data collection, including sampling
- Justification for the choice of design and methods
- Outline of methods of data analysis
- Timetable
- Limits to conclusions that might legitimately be drawn from the project

Components of a Well Written Research Proposal

- Title: short, snappy and accurate
- Structure: the different parts of the proposal should connect together
- Narrative: the text should flow fluently; the story should unfold
- Focus: the research question or hypothesis should provide an ongoing point of reference
- Treatment of key concepts: identify and define these

- Use of literature: in the literature review to describe context for proposed research and in other sections to, for e.g. justify methods, explain ethical position etc.

Task to be Completed and Discussed with Your Dissertation Tutor

Produce a draft proposal/plan:

1) See if you can justify and explain each part of it.
2) What questions and gaps do you have?
3) What is still to be fleshed out?
4) Draw up a plan of action to work on the elements that are not fully developed.

Draw up your own draft proposal under the following headings. Remember these are as yet notes which you can flesh out.

(Wisker, 2001: 48-49)

Further Reading

Coley, S.M. and Scheinnberg, C.A. (1990), *Proposal Writing*, London: Sage

Hart, C. (1998), *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*, London: Sage

Wisker, G. (2001), *The Postgraduate Research Handbook*, London: Palgrave

Ethical Considerations

To do research you need access to information. Some of the information you need will have been collected by others and other information you will collect yourself. The fact that information exists or is obtainable does not, however, mean that you necessarily have an automatic right to obtain it or make use of it. Gaining access to information always incurs obligations. In designing your project, you need to be aware of the rights

and responsibilities associated with each set of information you might need. You need to plan your work around information that can be collected legitimately and ethically.

Ethical Issues that Should Take Into Account

Universities often insist that ethical approval must be obtained before any staff or students undertake activities involving:

- any research projects using animals or human beings as participants;
- any teaching involving the use of animals or human beings or personal data relating to human beings;
- any form of clinical practice, treatment or counselling;
- sources and conditions of research funding.

As researcher that carries out research, you could enter into personal and moral relationships with those who are participating in your research. You should take into account that although researchers are committed to the advancement of knowledge, that goal does not, of itself, provide entitlement to override the rights of others.

Anonymity, Privacy and Confidentiality

The Code of Professional Conduct in Socio-Economic Research advises that:

> *Those who participate in the research process should expect to have anonymity and privacy. Personal information concerning research participants should be kept confidential. In some cases it may be necessary to decide whether it is proper or appropriate even to record certain kinds of sensitive information.*
>
> *Guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity given to research participants must be honoured unless there are clear and overriding reasons to do otherwise.*
>
> *Researchers must be aware of the possible consequences of their work. Researchers should anticipate and guard against harmful consequences for research participants.*

Special care should be taken where factors such as age, social status and powerlessness make research participants are particularly vulnerable.

(www.respectproject.org/standards/prof_conduct.pdf)

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Taking Ethics into Account

Do	Don't
Find out about your University's ethical procedures and follow them	Assume ethics procedures do not apply to you – if you are not researching with people or animals, you may still need to state this
Create an informed consent form to include with your ethics application	Start from scratch: adapt the sample informed consent forms for your purposes
Base your research on freely given information	Start the data collection without having informed the research participants of their right to refuse participation whenever or for whatever reason they wish
Allow research participants the right to refuse the use of data-gathering devices (e.g. video cameras)	Neglect to give participants an information sheet so they can make an informed choice as to whether to participate in part or all of your project

Task to be completed and discussed with your dissertation tutor

Sample Informed Consent Form

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title and brief description of Research Project:

Name and status of Investigator:

Consent Statement:

I agree to take part in this research, and am aware that I am free to withdraw at any point. I understand that the information I provide will be treated in confidence by the investigator and that my identity will be protected in the publication of any findings.

Name ……

Signature ……

Date ……

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation, please raise this with the investigator, or with the supervisor of the project who is:

Name: ……
Contact Address:. ……
……
……
Direct Phone No: …… Email: ……

Further Reading

Walford, G. (2005), 'Research Ethical Guidelines and Anonymity', in *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, Vol. 28, No.1, pp. 83-93

www.respectproject.org/standards/prof_conduct.pdf, accessed 12/12/2007

Managing Your Project: Timescales and Practical Issues

Writing a dissertation is a major undertaking. It is a long project and you are likely to have months before it is due for submission. As a result, the process can present challenges for you in terms of time management – even for people normally good at meeting deadlines!

Time Management

It is crucial that you organise your time carefully if you are to complete your dissertation on time. List the tasks involved in your dissertation and estimate the timescale involved for each so that you can set milestones by which you and your supervisor can assess your progress. Time is your worst enemy in your dissertation and you will find that good time management will help you considerably. Make sure you allow enough time to write up your dissertation and also to get it word-processed and bound by the submission date

(www.uwic.ac.uk/ltsu/u_area/studyskills/unit11.html)

Checklist

In order for you not to lose track with your timescale see the following list with the stages that you will go through:

- Decide on the general area of enquiry
- Carry out a bibliographic search and do as much reading as possible
- Cecide on the research question or formulate your hypothesis
- Select the most appropriate method of data collection
- Formulate a clear plan of action and submit your research proposal

- Complete the writing of the introduction and lit review chapters
- Plan the methods and procedures for field work etc
- Complete investigative procedures
- Write up remaining chapters
- Re-draft where necessary
- Proof-read
- Present your dissertation according to your University's requirements (eg. bind it in the appropriate colour) and submit

Productivity

It is a good idea to think about when, where and how you work best. The following tips come from www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/dissertation.html

1. Work on your dissertation during times that you are most productive.

Do you write well in the morning, or are you too sleepy to do academic work? Can you work in the evening after a 9-5 day, or do you really need a break? Do you like to read/research on the same day that you write and, if so, do you prefer to write first and then turn to other sources, or the reverse? Once you determine the hours that are most productive for you (you may need to experiment at first), try to schedule those hours for dissertation work. If at all possible, plan your work schedule, errands and chores so that you reserve your productive hours for the dissertation. Directors of Graduate Studies and other employers may be pretty sympathetic to this desire to schedule your best hours for your dissertation—after all, the dissertation is your reason for being here and should be your number one priority.

2. **Work on your dissertation in a space where you can be productive.**

Figure out where you work well and plan to be there during your dissertation work hours. Do you get more done on campus or at home? There's no sense in planning to work at home two days a week if you wind up watching Oprah every time you try to work at your kitchen table. Similarly, if you do your best work in your home study, try to avoid planning your days so that you are stuck on campus all day every day, without access to your best work space.

Carrels work well for some people because they limit distractions—but others find them intolerably quiet and austere. Figure out whether or not one might work for you.
If your work space is at home, make every effort to remove it from your bedroom. Many people don't sleep well if their work space and their sleep space are in the same room—their anxieties about their work can prevent them from getting to sleep quickly and having a restful night.
Wherever you work, make sure you have good lighting, a comfortable, "healthy" chair, a sturdy desk, and whatever wrist-rests, mouse pads, and so on you need to keep you posture and health in good order. The University Health and Safety office offers guidelines for healthy computer work. If you get "stuck," try a change of scene. Take a book you've been meaning to read to a coffee house, to one of the campus libraries, to a park bench, etc.

3. **Figure out how you work best, and try to work that way.**
Develop rituals of work that might help you get more done. Lighting incense, brewing a pot of a particular kind of tea, pulling out a favourite pen, and other ritualistic behaviours can signal your brain that "it is time to get down to business."
Critically think about your work methods—not only about what you like to do, but also what actually helps you be productive. You may LOVE to listen to your favourite band while you write, for example, but if you wind up playing air guitar half the time instead of writing, it isn't a strategy worth keeping.
Decorate your work space for productivity. Some people find that having pictures of family and friends on their desk helps—sort of a silent "cheering section"—while others find that a photo of Mom and Dad just makes them homesick or dredges up fears of inadequacy. Some people work well with neutral colours around them, and others prefer bright colours that perk up the space. Some people like to put inspirational quotations in their workspace or encouraging notes from friends and family. You might try reconfiguring your work space to find a décor that helps you be productive.
The point is, figure out what works and DO THAT. If something seems to keep you from working, GET RID OF IT. And once you have the "ritual that works," do it as often as you can when you write. Educational theorists have described "state-dependent learning," which essentially means that the conditions under which one learns

something are the conditions under which the individual is most likely to be able to remember and use that information. So working in a consistent setting can help you not only get great work done in discrete sessions but also pull together ideas from past work and use them constructively.

4. Don't let the fact that you know when, where and how you work best prevent you from working in other times, places, and ways.

Of course, while it's ideal to plan your days to enable you to spend your most productive work time in your most productive work space working in your most productive method, you can't always do that. So practice working elsewhere, and at other times. Being away from your favourite fountain pen is not an excuse not to write! Neither is losing your lucky rabbit's foot, having to work on campus, or having to schedule something during your "work time." Try to be flexible, and don't use your rituals as excuses

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Planning Your Dissertation

Do	Don't
Make a plan before you start	Proceed randomly hoping that you'll develop a plan as you go along
Write as you go along	Leave all the writing to the end
Try to write your methodology section before you start collecting data	Start collecting data before you've designed your entire project
Allow time for the practicalities of submission – printing, travelling and queuing	Plan to be working right up to the final deadline
Expect to make adjustments to your schedule	Schedule too tightly so that you cannot accommodate unexpected interruptions

Task to be completed and discussed with your dissertation tutor

Draw up a timetable and discuss it with your Supervisor

1) Organising your weekly schedule

Draw a typical week's timetable on a large sheet of paper. Show every day, whether or not you have any lectures or classes, and write or draw in the 'fixtures' for each week – your University timetable, and other regular commitments such as part-time work and regular social events.

Once you have marked in the essentials, as you see them, take a good look at where you could commit time. Look for slots of between 30 minutes and 2 hours (your brain starts to slow down when you have been working for more than 2 hours) – to spend on your dissertation. Look particularly for those odd hours which are easily frittered away doing nothing much, and see if you can turn these into study time, so that some clear chunks of time are left for you to relax, keep fit, go shopping, watch TV and so on.

Now fill in your timetable with personal study periods. When are you going to work on your dissertation, and when on your other commitments? Take account of when you are at your best for studying – for example, can you work early in the morning or late at night? Think, too, about where you will study, and make sure that you know of a place where you can actually get on with your own work, whether it is a study area at University, a library or computer room, or a quiet place where you live. Use colours to mark out on your weekly chart your free time and any other activities – it is easier to see the pattern.

Be realistic – do not aim for the impossible. But make sure you get a reasonable number of study sessions in each week in which you will only work on your dissertation.

Once you have found a reasonably regular pattern of study that suits you, look for ways of prioritising the work that needs to be done. Keep a list of everything you have to do, and everything that is not vital, but would be good to do (like background reading, additional research on the internet and so on). Use you first study session each week to

review the list, and make a note of what needs to be done that week, and anything additional that you would like to do. Use a diary to pencil in roughly how your study times will be used.

Use every trick you can think of to persuade – or bribe – yourself to stay committed to your study times. (You will probably want to review your study timetable every few weeks, to see whether it is working for you.) Regular work throughout your dissertation unit will mean less chance of any all-night, last-minute, nail-biting sessions during the week before it needs to be submitted.

2) Mapping out the weeks ahead of you

Do not just bumble along for the first few weeks, thinking you have months ahead of you to spend on your dissertation – time passes quickly.

At the outset, and preferably in collaboration with your supervisor, map out a timetable of sub-tasks and interim deadlines on the following grid, or something like it adapted to your own needs. Undergraduate dissertations are likely to be shorter and have less time for study and any primary research than postgraduate dissertations, so bear this in mind

Further Reading

www.academic-skills.soton.ac.uk/studyguides/Writing%20Your%20Dissertation.doc
www.uwic.ac.uk/ltsu/u_area/studyskills/unit11.html
www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/dissertation.html

Section 3

The Final Product: Writing up your dissertation

The dissertation has a very specific academic format, which includes the style of writing you use. You should adopt the conventions of academic writing in your dissertation.

Writing style and conventions

Writing does not come easily to most people because of our early training. To be 'proper' it has to be done to a certain set form – that of the academic style.

(Bolton, cited in Woods, 1999:45)

These tips for academic writing come from a booklet providing a lot of helpful advice on writing and punctuation at
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/dcs/teaching/movingon/7.pdf

Academic Writing Style

Academic writing style is more careful and considered than everyday writing and obviously, more considered than everyday speech. Academic language tends to:

- Use formal English
- Be precise and accurate –not chatty
- Be cautious rather than very direct and bold (use terms such as 'seems', 'appears to', 'may' etc.)
- Be careful and clear in establishing links between ideas, evidence and judgements
- Be concise, edits out unnecessary words
- Be objective rather than emotional or rhetorical (avoid terms such as 'wonderful', 'nice', 'natural'.
- Avoid personal expressions such as 'I/we' and 'you'. Instead use 'It can be seen that' etc.

- The art of referring to the words and ideas of other writers involves many rules and requires subtle uses of vocabulary (eg, words of attribution and evaluation) and grammar (eg, verb tense - past and present).

Proofreading

Making a good impression on the reader through careful proofreading and attention to accuracy and style is very important. The reader who feels that care has been taken with the work is more likely to be sympathetic to the content. They will not be irritated or disrupted by errors in presentation and can give their attention to the argument being presented. Never skimp or compromise on proofreading and editing and always allow time for this.

(http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/dcs/teaching/movingon/7.pdf)

Punctuation

Lack of punctuation, particularly in longer sentences, makes comprehension difficult. Too much punctuation, however, can be equally confusing. Use punctuation to help you convey the sense of your meaning and to prevent ambiguity. The reader should not need to work out the correct relations between words. Good punctuation should not be particularly noticed or missed.

(http://www.aston.ac.uk/lis/studentinfo/studyskills/5academic.jsp)

Referencing and intellectual honesty

Make sure that all of your references to other people's work are made accurate and in accordance with the academic conventions of referencing, citations and bibliographies appropriate for your subject. It is vital that all ideas and arguments drawn form the work of others are acknowledged, to ensure that you are not open to accusations of plagiarism, or passing off the ideas or words of others as if they are your own. Your dissertation should be your work, made up of your evaluation of evidence relevant to your central argument.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is copying or using others' work without acknowledging them as the original source. Plagiarism in the context of written work can occur intentionally

(e.g. you copy a section from a book without referencing it) or unintentionally (e.g. you paraphrase another person's work or ideas but fail to acknowledge them as the source).

(http://studentzone.roehampton.ac.uk/howtostudy/studyguide/HowtoStudy08.pdf)

The following can all be considered instances of plagiarism:

- Using sentences, parts of sentences, or larger pieces of text without attributing them. This includes cutting and pasting sections from websites.
- Citing the name of an author but not making clear which words are the author's and which are yours.
- Mixing and matching parts of sentences to create new ones: if you use recognisable phrases that are not your own then you are plagiarising.
- Using unattributed sentences with odd words changed.
- Quoting inaccurately. Even if you cite the author and source and put the quote in inverted commas, if you do not reproduce a quote faithfully then you have plagiarised.
- Failing to list all sources in your bibliography. Bibliographies should include websites visited, emails, CD-ROMs, radio/television programmes and listserv/chatroom messages as well as books and journals.
- Writing a piece of work with another student without acknowledging it.
- Submitting a piece of work written in whole or in part by someone else.
- Paying to have a piece of work written by someone else.

(Adapted from http://studentzone.roehampton.ac.uk/howtostudy/studyguide/HowtoStudy08.pdf)

Your University will have regulations covering plagiarism and you should take note of these and avoid plagiarism at all costs. Here are some tips to help avoid plagiarism when taking notes and paraphrasing adapted from http://studentzone.roehampton.ac.uk/howtostudy/studyguide/HowtoStudy08.pdf

When taking notes use some of the following techniques and try to avoid extensive paraphrasing:

- Identify all direct quotations very clearly in your notes, perhaps by using a differently coloured pen or separate sheet headed ‘quotes’. In this way you are clear that the information you have is the author’s words.
- If paraphrasing when taking notes as well as copying some sections and making your own notes, again try using a different pen colour for each type of writing (or a different colour font if typing). In this way when reviewing your notes at a later stage you will be clear which writing is yours and which is from others.
- After reading a section of a book or article you want to use, put it to one side and try to write what you have read in your own words. This will help to check your understanding of what you have written and help you to develop your skills at academic writing.
- When you get an assignment, before you rush to books, journals, databases, etc., try to write down your own thoughts and ideas about the topic. This is often called freefall writing: don’t evaluate as you write – just keep writing what your ideas are. When you have done this you can then do more reading and see if what others have to say either supports or contradicts what you have written.

Here are some strategies for avoiding plagiarism when quoting others’ work adapted from
http://www.hamilton.edu/writing/style/plagiarism/plagiarism.html

When you are using material from other sources:

- Select carefully. Quotations should give weight to your argument. In general, do not select quotations which only repeat points you have already made.
- Integrate all ideas from other sources into your own discussion.
- Introduce direct quotations with your own words.
- After quoting, explain the significance of quotations.
- Avoid quoting more than is needed. Most of the time, brief quotations suffice.

- Use direct quotations only when the author's wording is necessary or particularly effective.

Referencing Style

Your bibliography is the list of all the books, articles, and sometimes radio/ TV programmes, conference papers and websites that you have used in researching and writing your dissertation. It should appear at the end of your dissertation in alphabetical order by authors' surnames. All the information for the bibliography can generally be found at the front of books and journals. If you photocopy any of your reading, make sure you copy out the bibliographic details before you return the book/journal.

Your University will have its own preferred way of presenting information in a bibliography. This is known as a referencing style. There are some standard referencing styles that are commonly used and you can find details about the conventions used by two of them here:

Harvard referencing style:

http://education.exeter.ac.uk/dll/studyskills/harvard_referencing.htm
http://www.library.uwa.edu.au/education_training_and_support/guides/harvard_citation_style
http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/harvard.html

American Psychological Association reference style:

http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g_apaguide.shtml
https://ilrb.cf.ac.uk/citingreferences/apatutorial/index.html
http://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/psych/psycapastyle.html

You should check which form of referencing style your University prefers and reference all the documents you have consulted during your dissertation using the conventions of that system. Then you should compile your bibliography in the format that the referencing style dictates.

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Writing and Proofreading

Do	Don't
Divide the writing task into separate stages	Feel you have to start at the beginning – you might want to leave the introduction to last!
Set a date by which each part should be completed	Forget about additional sections, such as appendices
Proofread thoroughly	Leave too little time before submission to go through your dissertation carefully
Expect to have to make corrections	Submit your thesis without checking for errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation

Task – to be completed on your own

Revising and editing Once you have the first draft ready polish and edit your style by moving to smaller matters such as word choice, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You may already have passages that you know need further work. This is where you can use computer programs (with care) and reference material such as handbooks and handouts. Here are some tips:

1. Read passages aloud to see if you have achieved the emphasis you want.
2. Look for places to use short sentences to draw attention to key ideas, questions, or argumentative statements. If you can't read a sentence all the way through with expression, try cutting it into two or more.
3. Be sure to use spell check. It will help you catch most typos and many wrongly spelled words. But don't let it replace anything automatically, or you'll end up with nonsense words. You will still have to read through your piece and use a print dictionary or writer's handbook to look up words that you suspect are not right.
4. Don't depend on a thesaurus. It will supply you with lists of words in the same general category as the one you have tried-but most of them won't make sense. Use

plain clear words instead. Use a print dictionary and look up synonyms given as part of definitions. Always look at the samples of usage too.

5. Don't depend on a grammar checker. The best ones still miss many errors, and they give a lot of bad advice. If you know that you overuse slang or the passive voice, you may find some of the "hits" useful, but be sure to make your own choice of replacement phrases. A few of the explanations may be useful. But nothing can substitute for your own judgement.

Adapted from http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/revising.html

Further reading

Luck, M. (1999), *Your Student Research Project*, Aldershot: Gower

Parsons, C.J. (1973), *Theses and Project Work*, London: George Allen and Unwin

Wood, P. (1999), *Successful Writing for Qualitative Researchers*, London: Routledge

http://www.education.monash.edu.au/students/current/resources/referencingconventions.html
http://www.academic-skills.soton.ac.uk/studyguides/Writing%20Your%20Dissertation.doc
http://studentzone.roehampton.ac.uk/howtostudy/studyguide/HowtoStudy08.pdf
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/dcs/teaching/movingon/7.pdf
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/revising.html

Presentation

Your examiners will want to see a dissertation that looks nice. They will want to see evidence that you have taken trouble over it and that you have the skill/knowledge to prepare a professional-looking report. Unlike marks that may be awarded for intellectual achievement, those for presentation are easy to earn.

(Parsons and Knight, 1995:13)

Your University will have its own guidelines on how to present your dissertation, and you should find out what these are and follow them exactly. However, here are some notes on the importance of appearance adapted from http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/revising.html:

- Looks do count. Give your examiner the pleasure of handling a handsome document - or at least of not getting annoyed or inconvenienced.
- If you have been asked to include a cover page, abstract and contents page – make sure they are all there in the format required
- Number your pages. You can usually omit the number for the first page of your paper (since it will be headed by the title), starting in with 2 on the second page. Often you will be required to double-space your text, including indented quotations, footnotes, and reference lists and leave margins on all sides of the page.
- Check your University requirements, and use a standard font in the size recommended.
- Check your University requirements, and make sure your reference list and appendices are presented in the appropriate format (for example, starting on a separate page) at the end of the dissertation.

(www.utoronto.ca)

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Presenting your work

Do	Don't
Check your University requirements for the presentation of dissertations	Assume that your dissertation will look fine on paper just because it did on the screen
Print individual pages again if you see an error you missed	Make a mistake on the cover page!

Further reading

Parsons, T. and Knight, P. G. (1995), *How to do Your Dissertation in Geography and Related Disciplines*, Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes

http://www.academic-skills.soton.ac.uk/studyguides/Writing%20Your%20Dissertation.doc
http://studentzone.roehampton.ac.uk/howtostudy/studyguide/HowtoStudy08.pdf
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/revising.html

Section 4

Life After The Dissertation: Benefits for Work or Further Study

Your dissertation has enabled you to research a topic or issue relevant to the field of hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism. Now you have completed the dissertation, you can reflect on what you have gained from the process. Your dissertation can be very useful in supporting your plans after graduating, because it shows that you have developed:

Knowledge – you should have in-depth knowledge of a defined area of study. You may have chosen a topic to research that is connected with your chosen career. If so, your knowledge could help you secure future employment. Alternatively, your interest in researching your topic might not stop at completing the dissertation. In this case, your dissertation could help you gain a place on a postgraduate course, where you could develop your research further.

Experience – you have undertaken a major piece of work, largely on your own but working under the supervision of your tutor. This has given you a wealth of experience of the kind of project that you might undertake in employment or in further study. Your research may have required you to meet and talk to a range of people or analyse data systematically. In addition, in order to complete the dissertation, you will have had to make a timetable, keep appointments and eventually meet your deadlines. All of these things are valuable experience of the world of work or further study.

Skills – your experience of completing the dissertation will have equipped you with a variety of skills that you can use in employment or further study. These may be the practical skills of going out and conducting your research. Or they may be intellectual

skills associated with comparing issues, synthesising existing literature or analysing your research findings. You will also have refined your skills of communication, both in writing and in interaction with others – talking through your ideas with your tutor or communicating your project to people involved in your study.

To get the most out of your dissertation, you need to let future employers or admissions tutors on postgraduate courses know what knowledge, experience and skills you have developed. Once you have reflected on these areas, you can draft a letter of application for work or further study, highlighting what you have gained from the process of doing a dissertation.

The Dissertation and Employment Skills

Completing a dissertation provides you with a range of skills that can help you gain employment in the hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism industries. Since the dissertation has been a largely independent project, it is very useful to show employers that you have developed the capacity to work on your own. You should reflect on what you have achieved during the process of planning your dissertation, conducting your literature review, carrying out your research, writing up your findings and presenting the final product. Make a note of the skills you have developed during this process.

Task – to be completed on your own and discussed with a careers counsellor

Make a note of your answers to the following questions and develop them into a letter of application for employment:

How did your dissertation help you develop your intellectual skills?

- What argument did you present?
- Did you challenge commonly-held assumptions?
- In what ways were you critical of existing research?
- In what ways were you able to identify and solve problems?

How has your dissertation helped you develop your practical research skills?

- What did you research and how?
- What approach did you use?

How has your dissertation helped you develop your analytic skills?

- What did you analyse and how?
- What techniques did you use?

How has your dissertation helped you to develop your skills of time management?

- How did you plan the timetable for completing your dissertation?
- What deadlines did you have to meet?
- Did you keep appointments with your dissertation tutor?

How has your dissertation helped you to develop your communication skills?

- Did you learn to present your arguments clearly?
- Did you discuss complex ideas with your tutor?
- Did you use academic conventions for writing your dissertation?

How has your dissertation helped you to develop your skills of working independently?

- Did you choose your own topic?
- Did you plan your own research?
- Did you work on your own initiative?
- Did you formulate your own argument?

Opportunities to Present Your Dissertation to Others

When you complete your dissertation, you may have opportunities to share your findings with others in the form of an oral presentation. These include:

- Giving a presentation as part of a interview for a job
- Giving a talk at an academic conference
- Giving a talk at a student conference or workshop

There are opportunities to attend conferences within the hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism sector and present your work. This is invaluable experience, and will help you to develop professional skills and consider the possibility of postgraduate study.

Go to the websites of professional organisations for your discipline and see if they hold conferences that encourage student contributions. Associations to consult include:

The Leisure Studies Association (LSA) holds an annual conference and one-day specialist events, and has prizes for undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations nominated by a tutor:
http://www.leisure-studies-association.info/

The British Sociological Association (BSA) Sport Study Group takes part in the BSA annual conference but also holds its own events, including a Sport Study Group Postgraduate Forum:
http://www.britsoc.co.uk/specialisms/Sport.htm

The British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) holds an annual conference, as well as an annual student conference. BASES also has an award scheme for undergraduate dissertations:
http://www.bases.org.uk/undergraduate.asp

The Council for Hospitality Management Education (CHME) holds both an annual research conference and an annual student conference:
http://www.chme.org.uk/StudentFocus.asp

Developing a Presentation from Your Dissertation

If you are planning to give an oral presentation based on your dissertation, you should remember that speaking and writing are very different forms of communication. You cannot present your dissertation research exactly as you wrote it. You need to convey your research in a way that is understandable to people listening to you. If your audience want to know more, you can give them the written dissertation to read. When academics give a presentation at a conference, they usually have a written version of the paper to back them up. As Dahlin says at http://www.cs.utexas.edu/~dahlin/professional/goodTalk.pdf:

> *"A conference talk's goal is to make the audience want to read your paper. The talk does not replace the paper."*

His advice on giving a good talk suggests that you:

Know your audience

You know your own work very well, but your audience does not and may have a different perspective than you do – imagine how they might hear what you have to say.

Know your medium

There is a big difference between written and oral communication and listener's cannot 're-read' something if they do not understand first time. People who have already heard two or three presentations may not have the energy to focus on your talk unless you make your points stand out.

You should a) keep it simple and b) repeat your main points. Tell them what you're going to tell them (forecast), tell them, and tell them what you told them (summary).

Cut material ruthlessly

The best talks are the ones where the speaker spoke slowly and confidently and made one point well. If you try to make too many points, your talk will be forgotten. A rushed talk can be good, but not great.

Plan on giving about two minutes per slide (not counting title and outline slides). Use around 12 slides for a 20 minute presentation.

Make one point (hierarchically)

Each talk should make one key point.
Each "talklet" of 3-5 slides should make one key point.
Each slide should make one key point.
The points of the slides should drive the point of the talklet.
The points of the talklet should drive the point of the talk.

You need to decide on what this point is going to be and state it explicitly. Do not expect your audience to work it out for themselves.

Transitions make the talk

You also need to develop transitions so that the slides fit together into talk as a whole.

Before you make a point, tell the audience what the point is and why you are making it.

Afterwards, remind the audience what the point was, and why it mattered.

Think a lot about the transitions into and out of slides, into and out of the talklet, and into and out of the talk.

Practice in public. Prepare.

It is a difficult job to reduce your months of dissertation writing into a 20 minute talk. You should plan to spend 3-4 weeks preparing for an important conference talk.

Even though it may feel awkward, there is no substitute to practising with a live audience. You will not get it right the first time (or the second). The actual event will always benefit from practice, and you may even feel more comfortable with a 'real' audience.

(Adapted from http://www.cs.utexas.edu/~dahlin/professional/goodTalk.pdf)

Dissertation Do's and Don'ts: Giving a Presentation

Do	Don't
Practice early and often	Finish it at the last moment. A talk finished the night before the session will never be as good as it could have been
Go to your friends' practice talks	Feel too shy to practice your own talk in front of your friends or tutors
Notice which talks you like and figure out why	Just read off your slides – take risks and try to emulate your preferred speakers
Attend seminars and conferences	Only attend talks in your area – it is useful

	to consider how the audience reacts when the subject matter is out of their comfort zone
Learn from others' mistakes and successes	Be put off if you stumble the first time – presentations always get better with practice

Task - to be completed on your own and discussed with your dissertation tutor

Think of your own dissertation and the points you would like to state at a conference presentation. You could use the following generic conference talk outline in order to prepare your own presentation.

Title/author/affiliation (1 slide)

Forecast (1 slide)
Give the gist of the problem and the insight found (What is the one idea you want people to leave with? This is the "abstract" of an oral presentation.)

Outline (1 slide)
Give the talk structure. Some speakers prefer to put this at the bottom of their title slide. (Audiences like predictability.)

Background

Motivation and Problem Statement (1-2 slides)
(Why should anyone care? Most researchers overestimate how much the audience knows about the problem they are attacking.)

Related Work (0-1 slides)
Cover superficially or omit; refer people to your paper

Methods (1 slide)
Cover quickly in short talks; refer people to your paper

Results (4-6 slides)

Present key results and key insights. This is main body of the talk. Its internal structure varies greatly as a function of the researcher's contribution. (Do not superficially cover all results; cover key result well. Do not just present numbers; interpret them to give insights. Do not put up large tables of numbers.)

Summary (1 slide)

Future Work (0-1 slides)

Optionally give problems this research opens up.

Backup Slides (0-3 slides)

Optionally have a few slides ready (not counted in your talk total) to answer expected questions. (Likely question areas: ideas glossed over, shortcomings of methods or results, and future work.)

http://pages.cs.wisc.edu/~markhill/conference-talk.html

Further reading

http://www.cs.utexas.edu/~dahlin/professional/goodTalk.pdf

http://pages.cs.wisc.edu/~markhill/conference-talk.html

http://pages.cs.wisc.edu/~markhill/conference-talk.html#badtalk

Writing for Publication

If you have written a very good dissertation, your tutor may suggest that you work together to publish your findings. However, getting published is a very challenging process. You may need to do more to your dissertation to make it appealing to a wider audience. If you can make connections with your research and current issues that society wants to address, you may have more chance. Here are some tips from Wisker (2001: 317):

1) Be clear about the area(s) in which you wish to write.

2) Can you give your favourite subject a topical spin?

3) Can you find something else that is topical and interesting, or of major importance, on which you are working?

Your dissertation won't be published as it stands!

Academic research is usually published in scholarly journals. Each academic discipline in hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism has its own journals. You will probably have consulted them during your dissertation research. Identify the journal that most appears to publish work like yours, and try to shape your dissertation into the kind of articles that it publishes. These tips come from http://gradpsych.apags.org/mar06/dissertation.html

- Many journals have their own style and submission requirements, so picking a journal and writing to its requirements from the get-go will save time.
- Through suggestions of mentors and peers, develop a list of potential journals, including some that may be outside your field but related in some way to your research. Pare your list down based on recommendations from your dissertation committee.
- Prune and prioritize content.
- Create a list of bullet points of your major facts and findings and select the most important ones by asking yourself: Does the reader really need to know this? Does the reader already know this? Is this so important that the reader needs to be reminded of it?
- If you can't find just a few, you may want to break your dissertation into several different articles.
- Use simple, direct language.
- Even after editing, dissertations revised for publication tend to be too long, with wordy, passive sentences, and lots of formatting errors, including flip-flopping between "I" and "we" and mistakes with references, say journal editors. Those kinds of mistakes aren't going to win you any fans.

Task - to be completed and discussed with your dissertation tutor

Make a list of the points you want to draw from your overall dissertation and then the changes you have to undertake to your script. Take into account the audience and the purpose of the journal that you want to publish your work.

Further Reading

Wisker, G. (2001), *The Postgraduate Research Handbook,* New York: Palgrave

http://gradpsych.apags.org/mar06/dissertation.html

http://portal.surrey.ac.uk/portal/page?_pageid=734,200542&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL